Explanations in textbooks, footnotes, scholarly introductions—all materials we normally assign to students when teaching Italian poetry, or refer ourselves to for textual explications and analyses - often, if not always, bring up complex poetic legacies, detail intricate heritages, underline a writer’s personal appropriation of poetic languages via borrowed or recurring words, as if the texts being read were somewhat like interlocking puzzles whose pieces seemingly refer back to quotations from other poets. More often than not, when analyzing modern and contemporary poetry, these materials also bring up the names of two of the so-called ‘founding fathers’ of Italian letters, Dante and Petrarch (the third being Boccaccio), as if even today, seven centuries later, their direct or indirect poetic influence (fuzzily labeled as ‘dantismo’ or ‘petrarchismo’) could not, and should not, be ignored. Why –the students’ silent, respectful yet puzzled gaze seems to ask- why is so much value placed on tradition and imitation in Italian poetry? Why *dantismo* so decidedly associated with Montale and Pasolini, to name some, or *petrarchismo* with Ungaretti and Luzi, or Zanzotto? Is it just a matter of language (of style), or do these critical connections betray a more deep-rooted relationship with the literary values embodied by these figures, with a way of understanding literature’s function and role? What kind of influence is it, and what does it mean? Although the answers are apparent to us instructors, these remain legitimate and important questions, that are seldom addressed head on in the classroom. Students who enroll in upper level courses in Italian (by virtue of placement or because of the contingent offer of classes in any given semester), in fact, not necessarily have had much exposure to a chronological history of Italian literature; most importantly, they may totally ignore any history of the language itself. This involuntary ignorance about the development of Italian as a language constitutes a formidable problem, since this language is uniquely intertwined with the development of the very literature they are studying, and more specifically with the language of poetry. Introductory classes on this relationship are, in my opinion, key to the student understanding of how Italian poetry works, and for any real appreciation of a poet’s lexical legacy (because legacies are invariably pointed out to them by different scholastic sources, instructors included). Given the unmistakable role that what we call Petrarchism had in shaping the destinies of Italian as an idiom and of Italian as a poetic language, I would argue that in order to teach it it becomes essential to frame it within the discourse of language composition, in particular the “questione della lingua” and its related ideological issues. To this end, instructors might want to take the proverbial bull by the horns in any poetry course (or in any literature course dealing with poetry) and include some discussion of the diachronic evolution of the Italian language as a prelude to what I feel should be then the unavoidable presentation of Petrarchism. Teaching Petrarchism, in fact, seems to me the *condicio sine qua non* for understanding Italian poetry from the 16th-century on, and, most importantly, for outlining Petrarch’s conspicuous ideological legacy in 20th-century literature (so that students might comprehend how this author’s works have been used, appropriated, possibly twisted—and why—to shape the literary debate). A module on Petrarchism may include three steps: a) a discussion of Italian’s history and key characteristics (to understand how the literary language
itself was shaped by Petrarch’s legacy); b) a presentation of the so-called “questione della lingua,” an outline of Bembo’s proposed resolution and, most importantly, its political/ideological corollaries (which explain the weight Petrarch’s literary model acquired); c) a discussion of the modalities through which the Petrarchan model was assessed (and either embraced or refused) in 19th- and 20th-century Italian literature and what this critical discussion means to us readers, interpreters, and teachers or students of Petrarch today.

Lepschy and Lepschy’s overview in *The Italian Language Today* (“Italian today,” 11-18, “An Historical View,” 19-40 and, in particular, 22-23, 35) is a good starting point for an historically-oriented approach. These synthetic chapters can be assigned to students prior to an in-class lecture on the inter-relationships between Italian’s own linguistic development, the creation of a national literature and the establishment of a literary canon.

To illustrate Italian’s key characteristics, however, instructors should also rely on De Mauro’s *Storia linguistica dell’Italia unita*, which provides an in-depth examination of phenomena like Italian’s morphological and lexical polymorphism or semantic hypertrophy (De Mauro 29) that have direct repercussions in the evolution of the poetic language and in the role that Petrarchism, as we’ll see, played in it by ultimately providing a model (‘norms’) for linguistic standardization.

It should be emphasized from the start how what we now refer to as “Italian” essentially developed as a written language that lacked linguistic selection as determined by everyday spoken usage. As a result, when a form had two or more variations, both were often incorporated into ‘tradition’ (in other words, into the language’s vocabulary, becoming part of its thesaurus). Where other Romance languages only had one form—such as in the case of ‘rivage’ or ‘ruisseau’ in French to refer to a ‘coast/bank’ and to a ‘brook’—Italian had several (respectively, ‘sponda, riva, ripa, lido, lito’ or ‘ruscello, rivo, rio, ’) with essentially the same meaning but with a usage that varied according to the poetic or prose context in which such lexemes should be used. In fact, this Italian polymorphism could take on a stylistic distinction and become incorporated into the language of prose or poetry depending on the linguistic register (for example, the use of headwords such as “uccello” in prose versus “augello” in poetry or, similarly, “anima” vs. “alma”). Often, however, no distinction was made. Italian, therefore, developed by additions, via steady lexical increments rather than by usage-driven substitutions as it is normal in spoken languages, where usage alone determines the language’s lexical rates of survival. While this hypertrophy contributed on the one hand to the richness and to a profusion of headwords in certain lexical sectors of the language, on the other it also had the detrimental effect of stripping Italian of linguistic immediacy, giving it a bookish, didactic quality. Literary prestige, not concrete spoken usage, determined what words could continue to circulate, and at what stylistic register. As a result, the language we refer to as “Italian” became a possession to acquire by literary means, that is, through either the scholastic, imitative, or rhetorical study of models. In this regard, the 18th-century Venetian playwright Carlo Gozzi was right in defining Italian as a “dead” language (“una lingua morta”, De Mauro 14), since, like Latin, it had to be learned exclusively through its literature. To underline the fundamental role that literary tradition played in shaping this “Italian” idiom across the centuries, instructors should explain how at the time of Italy’s unification, in 1861, Petrarch and Boccaccio and other 14th-century authors still reigned as the linguistic models for poetry and prose. (The fact that Dante, regardless of his status as the ‘father’ of the Italian vernacular, was left out, is another by-product of Petrarchism, as it will be discussed later on.)

According to De Mauro (219), 80% of the Italian vocabulary in 1861 still remained bound to lexemes dating back to the origins of the language. Such a high rate of occurrence shows that the most common words from the 14th-16th centuries were passed down (or
“preserved”) after the 16th century and that what we call Petrarchism today was directly responsible for an attempt to codify a fixed, conservative and supermunicipal language.

Italian Petrarchism, in fact, cannot be understood if it is not primarily seen through the lens of Italian’s linguistic development (or lack thereof), which also identifies with the many attempts at controlling the language itself via the literary medium for political reasons.

A contextualized frame of reference is necessary. It is important for students to know that until the late 19th-century, Italy (a nation that they generally assume to have always been integrated or “one” in terms of history and territorial identity) remained politically and linguistically divided and that, in fact, neither “Italy” nor “Italian” (as concepts referring to a nation or to a people or even to a language) existed as we understand them today. The birth of “Petrarchism” in Italy –i.e., the canonization of Petrarch’s vernacular works and their influence on literary tradition,- should be introduced at this point with an examination of the so-called “questione della lingua,” which is at its core. Instructors should clarify that the term is meant to refer to the debate over the selection of the literary idiom, that is, of the written language and style that was most suited to intellectuals and the literate of the Italian peninsula in the 16th-century, and that the focus of such a debate should be considered political as well as literary. A shared idiom (i.e. a national language) came to be seen as the unavoidable, inescapable binding condition for the creation of a homeland (or re-creation whatsoever –a modern renovatio imperii), whose leading, authoritative intellectual figures were to be found in a supermunicipal literary tradition to serve as a point of reference, as ancestors who could confer a sense of (linguistic) unity and ultimately provide (ideal) common roots and an inspiration to national rebirth (“Risorgimento”) for a people who were, as Alessandro Manzoni called them in “Adelchi” (1822) “un volgo disperso/che nome non ha.” This intrinsic, historical necessity of creating a (supermunicipal) literary canon must be fully underlined during the preliminary explanation of what Petrarchism became, if we want students to understand, on the one hand, the artificiality of the process of the Italian linguistic unification and, on the other, the (political) ‘invention’ of a nation. Once students are provided with an adequate background on this topic, they will begin to see Petrarch’s irresistible presence in Italian poetic language in less abstract terms, and will be able to assess how Italian literature and its language really are, at least at this point in time, the result of conscious choices of cultural politics.

Pietro Bembo’s treatise “Prose della volgar lingua” (1525) offered a solution to “la questione della lingua” by choosing Petrarch and Boccaccio as literary models for poetry and prose, a choice Bembo based on the 15th-century Humanist debate and resulting preference for Virgil and Cicero in the standardized use of Latin. The concept of standardization was of crucial importance in Italy, where linguistic fragmentation called for the adoption (or invention of) a common but highly refined language that was to be mostly closed and impervious to change. Bembo’s proposal of a Petrarchan model for language and its subsequent codification (resulting in a linguistic system devoid of the possible ‘contamination’ of a concrete, spoken everyday language), represented a degree of linguistic dignity that was considered to be complete and perfect.

Instructors should remark how Bembo’s plan was of course motivated by cultural politics. The canonization of Petrarch’s vernacular works also implied a hegemonic role for literary texts and those who wrote them, as the adoption of a fixed, Petrarchan idiom had to become the language par excellence for all literary endeavors and, therefore, the sole language of intellectuals and of the ruling classes in a country which, although politically and geographically divided, placed hope for national rebirth and unification in a common language and literature. Thus, Petrarchism became an instrument with which to forge a national identity. Bembo’s codification of Petrarch’s language in his “Prose” and its practical application in the “Rime” (1530) became essential to such a plan, which was favorably received by Italian intellectuals.
The rapid dissemination of Petrarchism according to Bembo’s plan was, at least on an ideal level, an indication of its success, resulting in the establishment of a transregional (ergo: national) community of letters in Italy and, transnationally, throughout Europe—what is commonly referred to as the res publica litteraria. Bembo’s Petrarch must therefore be considered the primary point of reference for the semantic fixity and the conservative course that the poetic lexicon was to take in later years. The Italian poetic language, embalmed by formalistic modes of expression, basically remained identical to itself until at least the late 19th-century. Thanks to Petrarchism’s widespread ‘dictatorship’ (along with the poetic mold it created), Petrarch’s presence in Italian poetry became so pervasive as to become almost indistinguishable from Petrarch’s own original poetic language or poetic imagination. As Giacomo Leopardi pointed out in the early 19th-century, Petrarch already appeared then to be his own imitator: “quelle tante espressioni racchiudenti un pensiero o un sentimento, bellissime ecc. che furono suoi propri e nuovi, ora paiono trivalissimi, perché sono infatti comunissimi” (Guglielminetti 192).

A backlash was only inevitable. The process of national unification of the Italian peninsula, which culminated after 1861 in the adoption of a national language based on Petrarch’s very own Florentine idiom, paradoxically resulted in the bitter rejection and reappraisal of the stagnant poetic Petrarchan model, a decline that was more ideological than linguistic. During the Risorgimento and post-unification periods of Italian civic and literary history, Dante, the exiled “poeta cive” and ‘father’ of the vernacular, re-emerged as an instrumental figure to provide for the fictionalized account of a continuous Italian struggle towards independence, of engagement towards unity, becoming a symbolic hero against the compromised intellectuals who had chosen the Ancien Regime and collaboration with tyrants. Petrarch was almost immediately shunned from the Risorgimento narrative as a consequence of the way he had been popularized by his own 16th-century “Petrarchist” imitators. He had been read almost exclusively as the poet of forms detached from reality, and as the inventor of a conservative language now (arbitrarily) identified with the Ancient Regime itself as the language of the divided nation and of aristocratic privilege. Petrarch’s relationships with the tyrannical lords was also interpreted as “collaboration” without direct antagonism, and it ultimately undermined his long standing literary popularity at this pivotal moment of (the creation of an) Italian (intellectual) history.

Instructors may wish indeed to frame Petrarch’s (mis)fortunes in post-Risorgimento Italy within a historical and ideological context. To this end, Amadeo Quondam’s approachable book, *Petrarca, l’italiano dimenticato*, provides a useful outline of Dante and Petrarch’s ideological polarization, explaining the political ‘exclusion’ from the formation of the Italian literary canon that Petrarch suffered during the Risorgimento period. Quondam’s chapter “A proposito di identità nazionale, di Petrarca e di Dante” (35-82) is particularly relevant to this debate: it can be assigned either in its entirety or in the form of the summary that I provide (in Table 1) and then discussed in class. This essay can help students comprehend the dual identity—literary, and historical-ideological—attributed to Petrarch and Dante by elucidating the stigmatizing and dichotomizing effect that it has had on literature, poetry, and related, ideological practices in the late 19th- and then 20th-century. Such a discussion can serve to illustrate how Dante immediately became aligned with the concept of “poesia impegnata” (engaged poetry), while Petrarch remained identified with an aristocratic disengagement from reality and from the evolution of the new nation; linguistically, Petrarch now became a signifier of the resistance to change the status quo of Italian (political) ‘captivity’. In-class discussions of Italian poetry’s textual references and citations often overlook the fact that, during this period, writing poetry implied an indirect, *a priori* alliance with either Dante or Petrarch and the related traditions, schools of thought, and languages on which their poetics are founded. By association, choosing
Dante’s, or Petrarch’s, language meant to underline an ideological alliance with the founding fathers, for two seemingly, mutually exclusive views to conceive literature and its social (ideological) role.

“Dantismo” or “petrarchismo” would, according to this context, reveal two very divergent ways of understanding history and the role to be played by intellectuals within Italian society; they would offer two opposing models of behavior—of which one, Petrarch’s, seemingly uprooted from any relation to history and only preoccupied with a life of forms, with literature that actually receives its value by its impermeability to reality.

The poet Andrea Zanzotto elaborates on this (damning) interpretation and offers a useful complement to Quondam’s historiographical position. In Zanzotto’s view, Petrarch’s proposed formalism is justifiable not only as a psychological “defense” but also as a conscious, intellectual revolt against the horrors of history—a sort of political statement with an apolitical intent. Zanzotto’s radical reading serves implicitly to refute the negative connotation of semantic elusiveness established as the defining characteristic of Petrarch’s poetry, the idea of an evasion from history or disengagement from reality. Zanzotto argues, instead, that the modern idea of poetry can be traced to Petrarch inasmuch as he discovered “una vita propria dello stile, delle forme, e infine una autonomia assoluta del fatto poetico” that was in opposition, or an alternative to, history itself: “[...] dal nulla della poesia nasce una creazione di senso non riducibile a quello prodotto dalla storia che conosciamo, e come tale ‘indicativa’ anche per la storia” (“Petrarca e i poeti d’oggi” 193-195). Not escapism, but critique. Petrarch must be re-envisioned as “colui che vede nell’atto poetico una via per sfuggire alla rete di condizionamenti posta dalle ‘potenze’ che gestiscono la storia, una storia che egli non può in alcun modo riconoscere come sua” (194).

Another poet, Antonio Porta, offers a depiction akin to Zanzotto’s, exploring the issue of Petrarchan formalism in historical terms and blaming Petrarch’s critical fortune itself (and what it is known as “Petrarchism”) for the misunderstandings that have distorted the original meaning of his poetry. Porta emphasizes the importance of engaging in a reading of Petrarch that goes beyond the clichéd anthologies that are responsible for reinforcing the stereotype of an immobile, poetic form. Porta encourages readers to move beyond issues of language and formal perfection that cast Petrarch, stigmatizingly, as retreat ing into himself and his poetry and to propose a reading of the poet as receptive to diverse forms (“forme mobili”) and experiences “verso l’esistenza e verso la storia”—that is, the very historical forms that have pigeonholed him: “È logico che la storia gli facesse paura, è logico che combattesse contro questa bestia indomabile e indomata e che, quindi, cercasse di ritrasformare tutto in un universo di forme, non di una forma. E questo universo di forme [...] è il Canzoniere, non è una singola poesia del Petrarca” (196).

Both Zanzotto and Porta help Petrarch overcome the estrangement from history caused by the filter of Petrarchism by redirecting interpretations of his poetry back to its original conception. And as Quondam suggests, Dante’s association with a specific intellectual model of

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1 Instructors may want to reinforce here the notion of critical reception of literary works, emphasizing Guido Guglielmi’s relevant observations that all readings are to be considered, intrinsically, un “atto di critica;” “i significati di un’opera si producono a livello della ricezione;” and “l’oggetto storico” can always be defined “in base a due storicità, la storicità dell’oggetto, del momento e del contesto in cui è nato, e la storicità del contesto in cui il giudizio viene espresso.” As the following citation (incidentally about Dante) shows, Guglielmi’s axiom can be applied to Petrarch (or to any author): “C’è per es. una lettura di Dante fatta da De Sanctis e una lettura di Dante fatta, poniamo, da Eliot. Si potrebbe dire, forse non troppo paradossalmente, che la lettura di De Sanctis è l’attualizzazione di Dante in un certo contesto storico, che ne imponeva, come oggi concordemente si riconosce, una interpretazione realistico-romantica; la lettura di Eliot è una attualizzazione del testo di Dante in un altro contesto, quello delle avanguardie anglo-americane che evidentemente avevano un’altra configurazione storico-sociale e partivano da un’altra idea della realtà e dei correlativi oggettivi dell’esperienza. Il senso quindi è prodotto proprio dalla storia. La Divina Commedia è un sistema di segni che si anima e produce un senso in rapporto a un lettore (5).”
poetry (the ‘poeta-cive,’ militantly engaged) has denied the field of critical research on Petrarch, who, instead, must be best understood if taken as a product of, rather than isolated from, history. Based on such an observation, it would be wrongheaded to characterize Petrarch’s works as an “evasion” from or impervious to history.

Finally, instructors should propose an examination of Contini’s essay “Preliminari sulla lingua di Petrarca” (1951), as it is essential to an understanding of 20th-century Italian Petrarchism and to its related, ideological corollaries under discussion. Because Contini’s investigation of Petrarch’s linguistic identity may prove too difficult or challenging to undergraduate students, I have designed a summary of the main points of Contini’s argument as a guide (Table 2). Instructors may even wish to assign it in lieu of reading the entire essay.

In the light of Quondam’s essay, Contini’s reading shows how the critical designations of “plurilinguismo” and “unilinguismo” –which have become to embody, respectively, Dante’s and Petrarch’s stylistic essence- bear strong, ideological implications, resulting in negative or positive evaluations of these two authors. Dante’s vernacular works are associated with an ‘expressionistic’ quality for incorporating a variety of idioms and registers, offering both a mimetic description of reality and theoretical reflections on usage and experimentation. Petrarch’s works, on the other hand, are marked by a “classical” taste and by a fundamental monolingualism based on a unity of tone and lexicon, devoid of theoretical justification and experimentation (“ove non sia quello di lavorare tutta la vita attorno agli stessi testi fondamentali”). In effect, Petrarch’s poetry is equated with the pursuit of an ideal form, as an obsessive, absolute experience. Contini’s (apparently objective) philological approach therefore pits a linguistically vital and expressionistic Commedia against a defensive Canzoniere (“ermetico—cioè antimimetic [... ] antireferenziale e antirealistico per eccellenza” Gardini 2002: 16), raising one key aspect of the Petrarchan experience, formal perfection, to the level of critical dogma or paradigm while negating its relationship to history. As a result, Petrarch (or should we say, more correctly, Petrarchism?) remains ideologically identified with specific (negative) periods of Italian history during which Italian literature embraces an intellectual model of isolation and unadaptability, with the refusal of historical reality (the Ancien Regime and Italy’s captivity, on the one hand; the Fascist dictatoship, for early 20th-century poetry, on the other).

As Giorgio Luti maintains, the determining factor in this process of recognition, “che ha fatto parlare di fondamentale ‘petrarchismo’ della poesia italiana moderna” (17), is political: in the evaluation of Petrarch’s role within 20th-century poetry “le tematiche saranno sempre collegabili al sentimento dell’assenza, dell’isolamento, del rifugio nella letteratura come una difesa contro la retorica della dittatura” (32). “Petrarchist,” as an adjective, keeps having an implicit, negative (and unfair, we might say) stigma. It is up to us as instructors (and readers of Petrarch) to correct, historicize, contextualize and fully explain the singular destiny of an author who now, seven centuries later,  

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2 Even with its (ideological) limitations, Contini’s essay nevertheless remains fundamental to an understanding of the various aspects of Petrarch’s language. Instructors are however strongly advised to frame it within the historical context it originated from. As Adelia Noferi points out, influence exerted on readings of Petrarch during the 1930s and 1940s came to represent the critical-exegetic tradition: “Se insomma Petrarca è divenuto, in recenti decenni del nostro secolo [nel Novecento], una sorta di alto emblema critico, è perché la poesia novecentesca, dalla prima alla terza generazione, da Ungaretti all’ermetismo, ha posto certi problemi sia di poetica che di linguaggio che hanno di sè nutrito, direttamente o indirettamente, le operazioni stesse di quella critica che nasceva accosto alla poesia, come versante riflessivo del lato poetico” (Noferi 227). Indeed, the new historical phase opened by the defeat of Fascism in the war, and the rise of a new Republic with renewed civil liberties, led to a new, poetic language and to the rejection of the ‘culto della parola’ and the “parola quasi assoluta” that Petrarch had come to represent in the stagnant, tragic moment of Italian history in favor of a “quasi automatico [...] passaggio a Dante [...] poeta di verbi più che di parole, a un poeta di azioni più che di fonemi” (“Petrarca e i poeti d’oggi” 195).
paradoxically seems to need our defense against interpretations, or ways of exploitations, that limit his fundamental, forward role in shaping our language and our literature.

*Table 1. Ideologization of Dante and Petrarch during the Risorgimento and post-Risorgimento periods (‘A proposito di identità nazionale, di Petrarca e di Dante,’ Quondam 35-82; in particular, 57-61)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dante</th>
<th>vs</th>
<th>Petrarch</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>invents Beatrice, a symbolic, iconic figure capable of taking on philosophical and ideological meaning</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>invents Laura, a figure unsuited to philosophical or ideological interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>becomes the “poeta di una poesia forte, virile, profetica, politica, civile. Dante poeta esule, mai incline al compromesso: come tanti esponenti dell’avventura risorgimentale”</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>becomes the “poeta di forme e di parole” who has chosen a “vita contemplativa” over an active life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lays the foundation for the civic mission of poetry (‘letteratura impegnata’)</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>reinforces the private, elitist, and initiatory mission of poetry (‘disimpegno’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>becomes identified with the “res publica reale” (a Humanist figure cast in a civic mold)</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>becomes identified with a transnational “res publica litteraria,” a meta-nation bereft of a local History.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>becomes the laic, middle-class symbol for Italian, national identity and for “valori profondi della storia patria”</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>becomes the definitive model for a closed system of language and poetry, expression of a negative Humanism, and symbol of an aristocratic, clerical society to overcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speaks the ‘lingua del popolo’</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>speaks the language of the rulers and courtiers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>becomes the ‘padre’ of the Italian people</td>
<td>vs</td>
<td>becomes a non-Italian</td>
</tr>
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Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dante’s poetic language</th>
<th>Petrarch’s poetic language</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Multilingualism. The contemporaneous use of Latin and the vernacular; “poliglottia degli stili e dei generi letterari” (Contini 171)</td>
<td>1. Monolingualism. The distinction in usage between Latin, “lingua normale anche della comunicazione,” and the vernacular, “non... passibile di usi pratici”, and “solo sede di esperienze assolute” (Contini 173)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The coexistence of a “pluralità di toni e pluralità di strati lessicali” (Contini 171-172). The mixing of linguistic registers and receptiveness to the practical and communicative basis of language (designated as Dantean ‘realism’)</td>
<td>2. “Se non monoglottia letterale, è certa l’unità di tono e di lessico,” the result of distancing itself from linguistic extremes and from a vernacular base that was “naturale, strumentale, meramente funzionale e comunicativa e pratica” (Contini: 173-74). A more select vocabulary focusing on a small number of entries designed for specific reference, rendering it “pronto per l’imitazione” (Coletti 62)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. An “Interesse teoretico,” “ansia di giustificarsi linguisticamente”, and “filosofia linguistica” (Contini 172). Clear philosophical and allegorical implications for the discourse on love (Coletti 57 )</td>
<td>3. The absence of a “razionale opera di riflessione” on language and the lack of a theoretical justification (Contini 174); love understood as individual, concrete, private; a form of psychological or interior exploration (Coletti 57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. “Sperimentalità incessante” associated with a “rapida derivazione delle esperienze” (Contini 172)</td>
<td>4. Antiexperimentalism. “Nessun esperimento, ove non sia quello di lavorare tutta una vita attorno agli stessi testi fondamentali” (Contini 174)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Semantic concentration</td>
<td>5. “Evasività semantica” associated with a “costante dominante ritmica, the “intraducibilità” of his verse (Contini 190)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Allegorical rendering of the love experience, theoretical considerations</td>
<td>6. “Dicotomia del verso” “antitesi,” and “ripetizione per somma di nomi, aggettivi o sostantivi” (Contini 179); verse whose rhetorical structure is more suited to states of mind and emotions rather than theoretical elaboration (Coletti 57)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Work Cited


