Zoe Langer

More is More: Francesco Sansovino's Editorial Additions as a Form of Authorship on Dante's *Commedia* (1564)

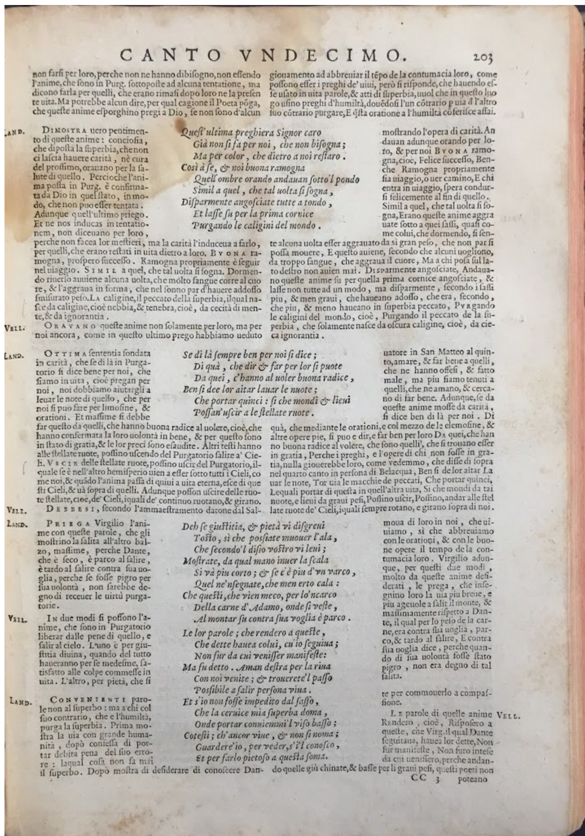
DANTE
CON LESPOSITIONE
DI CHRISTOFORO LANDINO,
ET DI ALESSANDRO VELLVTELLO,
Sopra la sua Comedia dell' Inferno, del Purgatorio, & del Paradiso.
Con tauole, argomenti, & allegorie, & riformato, riueduto,
& ridotto alla sua uera lettura,
PER FRANCESCO SANSOVINO FIORENTINO.

IN VENETIA, Appresso Giouambattista, Marchiò Sessa, & fratelli. 1564.

Figure 1. Title Page. *Dante con l'espositione di Christoforo Landino, Et di Alessandro Vellvtello, Sopra la Sua Comedia dell'Inferno, del Purgatorio, & del Paradiso. Con tavole, argomenti, & allegorie, & riformato, riueduto, & ridotto alla sua uera lettura, Per Francesco Sansovino Fiorentino. In Venetia, Appresso Giovambattista, Marchiò Sessa, & fratelli. 1564.* Venice, 1564. Folio. Houghton Library, Harvard University (Typ 525 64.316).

Introduction

After successfully venturing into the business of literary publishing with editions of Boccaccio, Petrarch, Ariosto, and Pietro Bembo, polygraph extraordinaire Francesco Sansovino collaborated with the Venetian publishing family, the Sessa, to produce a sumptuous folio edition of Dante's *Commedia* in 1564, 1578, and 1596 [Fig. 1].[1] Sansovino's edition not only offered an abundance of paratextual material such as a glossary, frontispiece portrait, biographies, tables, illustrations, and summaries, but also included – for the first time in the *Commedia*'s history – a double commentary that brought together the most illustrious commentators of the



CANTO VNDECIMO. 203

non farsi per loro, perche non ne hanno dibisogno, non essendo l'anime, che sono in Purg. sottoposte ad alcuna tentatione, ma dicono farla per quelli, che erano rimasi dopo loro ne la presente uita. Ma potrebbe alcun dire, per qual cagione il Poeta põga, che queste anime esporghino pregi a Dio, se non sono d'alcun giouamento ad abbreuiar il tẽpo de la contumacia loro, come possono esser i preghi de' uiui, però si risponde, che hauendo esse usato in uita parole, & atti di superbia, uuol che in questo luogo usino preghi d'humiltà, douẽdosi l'un cõtrario p uia d l'altro suo cõtrario purgare, E qsta oratione a l'humiltà cõferisce assai.

LAND. DIMOSTRA uero pentimento di queste anime: conciosia, che diposta la superbia, che non ci lascia hauere carità, nè cura del prossimo, orauano per la salute di quello. Percioche l'anima posta in Purg. è confirmata da Dio in quel stato, in modo, che non puo esser tentata. Adunque quell'ultimo priego. Et ne nos inducas in tentationem, non diceuano per loro,

Quest'ultima preghiera Signor caro
Già non si fa per noi, che non bisogna;
Ma per color, che dietro a noi restaro.
Così à se, & noi buona ramogna
Quell'ombre orando andauan sotto'l pondo
Simil a quel, che tal uolta si sogna,
Disparmente angosciate tutte a tondo,
Et lasse su per la prima cornice
Purgando le caligini del mondo.

mostrando l'opera di carità. Andauan adunque orando per loro, & per noi BVONA ramogna, cioè, Felice successo, Benche Ramogna propriamente sia uiaggio, o uer camino, E chi entra in uiaggio, spera condursi felicemente al fin di quello. Simil a quel, che tal uolta si sogna, Erano queste anime aggrauate sotto a quei sassi, quasi come colui, che dormendo, si sente alcuna uolta esser aggrauato da sì gran peso, che non par si possa mouere, E questo auiene, secondo che alcuni uogliono, da troppo sangue, che aggraua il cuore, Ma a chi posa sul lato destro non auien mai. DISPARMENTE angosciate, Andauano queste anime su per quella prima cornice angosciate, & lasse non tutte ad un modo, ma disparmente, secondo i sassi piu, & men graui, che haueano adosso, che era, secondo, che piu, & meno haueano in superbia peccato, PVRGANDO le caligini del mondo, cioè, Purgando il peccato de la superbia, che solamente nasce da oscura caligine, cioè, da cieca ignorantia.

perche non facea lor mestieri, ma la carità l'induceua a farlo, per quelli, che erano restati in uita dietro a loro. BVONA ramogna, prospero successo. Ramogna propriamente è seguir nel uiaggio. SIMIL a quel, che tal uolta si sogna. Dormendo riuerso auuiene alcuna uolta, che molto sangue corre al cuore, & l'aggraua in forma, che nel sonno par d'hauere addosso smisurato peso. LA caligine, il peccato della superbia, ilqual nasce da caligine, cioè nebbia, & tenebra, cioè, da cecità di mente, & da ignorantia.

VELL. ORAVANO queste anime non solamente per loro, ma per noi ancora, come in questo ultimo prego habbiamo ueduto

LAND. OTTIMA sententia fondata in carità, che se di là in Purgatorio si dice bene per noi, che siamo in uita, cioè pregan per noi, noi dobbiamo aiutargli a leuar le note di quello, che per noi si puo fare per limosine, & orationi. Et massime si debbe far questo da quelli, che hanno buona radice al uolere, cioè, che hanno confermata la loro uolontà in bene, & per questo sono in stato di gratia, & le lor preci sono esaudite. Altri testi hanno alle stellate ruote, possino uscendo del Purgatorio salire a' Cieli. VSCIR delle stellate ruote, possino uscir del Purgatorio, ilquale se è nell'altro hemisperio uien a esser sotto tutti i Cieli, come noi, & quãdo l'anima passa di quiui a uita eterna, esce di questi Cieli, & uà sopra di quelli. Adunque posson uscire delle ruote stellate, cioè, de' Cieli, iquali de' continuo ruotano, & girano.

Se di là sempre ben per noi si dice;
Di quà, che dir & far per lor si puote
Da quei, c'hanno al uoler buona radice,
Ben si dee lor aitar lauar le nuote;
Che portar quinci: si che mondi & lieui
Possan'uscir a le stellate ruote.

uatore in San Matteo al quinto, amare, & far bene a quelli, che ne hanno offesi, & fatto male, ma piu siamo tenuti a quelli, che ne amano, & cercano di far bene. Adunque, se da queste anime mosse da carità, si dice ben di là per noi. Di quà, che mediante le orationi, e col mezzo de le elemosine, & altre opere pie, si puo e dir, e far ben per loro DA quei, che hanno buona radice al volere, che sono quelli', che si trouano esser in gratia, Perche i preghi, e l'opere di chi non fosse in gratia, nulla giouerebbe loro, come vedemmo, che disse di sopra nel quarto canto in persona di Belacqua, Ben si de lor aitar Lauar le note, Tor uia le macchie de peccati, Che portar quinci, Lequali portar di questa in quell'altra uita, Si che mondi da tai nuote, e lieui da graui pesi, Possino uscir, Possino, andar alle stellate ruote de' Cieli, iquali sempre rotano, e girano sopra di noi.

VELL. DEBBESI, secondo l'ammaestramento datone dal Sal-

LAND. PRIEGA Virgilio l'anime con queste parole, che gli mostrino la salita all'altro balzo, massime, perche Dante, che è seco, è parco al salire, è tardo al salire contra sua uoglia, perche se fosse pigro per sua uolontà, non sarebbe degno di receuer le uirtù purgatorie.

VELL. IN due modi si possono l'anime, che sono in Purgatorio liberar dalle pene di quello, e salir al cielo. L'uno è per giustitia diuina, quando del tutto haueranno per se medesme, satisfatto alle colpe commesse in uita. L'altro, per pietà, che si

Deh se giustitia, & pietà vi disgreui
Tosto, sì che possiate muouer l'ala,
Che secondo'l disio vostro vi leui;
Mostrate, da qual mano inuer la scala
Si và piu corto; & se c'è piu d'vn varco,
Quel ne'nsegnate, che men erto cala:
Che questi, che vien meco, per lo'ncarco
Della carne d'Adamo, onde si veste,
Al montar su contra sua voglia è parco.

moua di loro in noi, che uiuiamo, sì che abbreuiamo con le orationi, & con le buone opere il tempo de la contumacia loro. Virgilio adunque, per questi due modi, molto da queste anime desiderati, le prega, che insegnino loro la uia piu breue, e piu ageuole a salir il monte, & massimamente rispetto a Dante, il qual per lo peso de la carne, era contra sua uoglia, parco, & tardo al salire, E contra sua uoglia dice, perche quando di sua uolontà fosse stato pigro, non era degno di tal salita.

Le lor parole; che rendero a queste,
Che dette hauea colui, cu'io seguiua;
Non fur da cui venisser manifeste:
Ma fu detto. Aman destra per la riua
Con noi venite; & trouerete'l passo
Possibile a salir persona viua.
Et s'io non fosse impedito dal sasso,
Che la ceruice mia superba doma,
Onde portar conuiemmi'l viso basso;
Cotesti; ch'ancor viue, & non si noma;
Guardere'io, per veder, s'i'l conosco,
Et per farlo pietoso a questa soma.

LAND. CONVENIENTI parole non al superbo: ma a chi col suo contrario, che e l'humiltà, purga la superbia. Prima mostra la uia con grande humanità, dopò confessa di portar debita pena del suo errore: laqual cosa non fa mai il superbo. Dopò mostra di desiderare di conoscere Dante per commouerlo a compassione.

VELL. LE parole di quelle anime Rendero, cioè, Risposero a queste, che Virg. il qual Dante seguitaua, hauea lor dette, Non fur manifeste, Non furo intese da cui uenissero, perche andando quelle giù chinate, & basse per li graui pesi, questi poeti non

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Figure 2. Dialogue format with Landino (LAND.) and Vellutello (VELL.) in the left margin and one VELL. in the right margin. Detail from *Purgatorio* XI in 1578 edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578), 203r.

Day – Cristoforo Landino and Alessandro Vellutello.[2]

Although Sansovino rigidly adhered to the medieval commentary layout, with a block of text surrounded by commentary, he also crafted a highly original approach to the arrangement of each author's contribution. The editor presented each commentator as though in a dialogue, even though their interventions were more than sixty years apart.[3] Sansovino devised a layout in which each commentary was labelled with the name of the author in the margins, such that it appeared that they were speaking to each other across time [Fig. 2].[4] An examination of Sansovino's use of the dialogue format, along with other editorial additions in all three editions reveals how he used these features to claim his own authorship as an editor and intellectual. His visual and verbal interventions further illuminate how editors and publishers defined their practice and status through the presentation of the book.[5] Therefore, Sansovino's visual strategies for presenting Dante's *Commedia* contribute to our knowledge about the publication and reception of the poet's works in the mid-sixteenth century.[6]

The critical literature on Sansovino is varied and wide-ranging, appearing in studies of literature, book history, portraiture, politics, and Venetian history.[7] This perhaps reflects the prolific nature of Sansovino's editorial activities. Recent studies have concentrated on two main lines of inquiry: the editor's relationship to literary and editorial networks in Venice and his historical works, such as his very popular *Venetia Citta Nobilissima* (1581).[8] Elena Bonora has written an important monograph on Sansovino's early formation and the factors that led to his entrance into the world of publishing in mid-sixteenth century Venice.[9] She shows how Sansovino's personal and commercial relationships influenced his historical writings and served as an inspiration for the *Secretario* (1564)[10], a work in the genre of *Il Cortegiano* and *Il Galateo*. Adriano Moz provides a good general background to Sansovino's biography and publications, highlighting his histories of Venice and the Ottoman Empire.[11] Along these lines, Paul Grendler has also written about Sansovino's contribution to what he calls "Popular History."[12] This article along with his more general observations on "popular books" importantly show how editors such as Sansovino used the book's material form and organization of content to reach broad and varied audiences.[13] With the exception of Sansovino's editions of Boccaccio's *Decamerone*, current scholarship has overlooked the editor's contribution to the publication of sixteenth-century literary editions of medieval authors.[14] Most scholars agree that Sansovino's *Commedia* was a successful work, having been published three times in 40 years. Despite this assessment, a detailed analysis of this edition or of

the factors that led to its success has not yet been undertaken.

By placing his activities within the context of other *poligrafi*, commentators, and editors in Venice and Florence, Brian Richardson and Deborah Parker's analyses provide a starting point from which to understand Sansovino's motivations for editing vernacular texts and publishing the 1564 edition of the *Commedia*.[15] Sansovino felt strong ties to Venice, having moved there from Rome at a young age with his father, the famous architect Jacopo Sansovino, and subsequently having made a name for himself by working with other Venetian publishers and founding his own press. It is for this reason that he is primarily considered a Venetian publisher in the critical literature. However, Sansovino also strongly emphasizes his Florentine origins, often referring to himself as "Fiorentino," as on the title page of the *Commedia*.[16] While he possibly spent some years in Florence, his chosen epithet was largely opportunistic as it allowed him to claim the legacy of his father and to capitalize on Florence's political and cultural influence in this era.

Although there were numerous approaches to editing the *Commedia*, the Venetian and Florentine publishers monopolized the industry and were often in competition. Sansovino's multiple affiliations – Roman, Venetian, Florentine – perhaps informed the way he mediated between these views in the *Commedia* and how he appealed to multiple reading publics. The glossary, or *Tavola delle voci oscure*, became a hallmark of Sansovino's editions. The *tavola* was just one of many features that allowed Sansovino to specialize in literary editions and appeal to both niche and more general markets. Scholars have also noted that Sansovino rarely employed a simple presentation for his publications and built his reputation on producing rich and beautiful books.[17]

The *Commedia* was by far the most monumental of his literary editions due to its size, illustrations, commentaries, and decorative divisions. The unique presentation of the *Commedia* came at a pivotal moment in Sansovino's career. By 1560, Sansovino had already published the works of Boccaccio and Petrarch;[18] however, what *corpus* would be complete without Dante? Through the *Commedia*, Sansovino sought to achieve equal status with the previous masters in the editorial profession, such as Aldo Manuzio, Alessandro Paganini, and the Giunti and Giolito presses, who had all curated their own collections of vernacular classics.[19] Each series, consisting of different authors, thus reflected a specific interpretation of the canon and an evaluation of Dante's place within it. While Aldo included Dante and Petrarch among ancient authors Virgil and Horace, equating the poem to the Latin classics, the Giolito press chose instead to include Dante among contemporary authors interpreting the *Commedia* as a more modern work. Vellutello started his career with his edition of Petrarch's *Rime* (1523) and once he established himself published his edition of the *Commedia* in 1544. Therefore, the *Commedia* provided the opportunity for Sansovino to make his career serving as the crowning achievement of a decade-long trajectory of literary editions.

However, the act of publishing Dante in and of itself was not enough to rival his predecessors. Sansovino thus crafted a monumental edition of the poem, one that would be exceptional in both its formal and textual properties. The present study begins, to show how the publication of Dante's poem was crucial to Sansovino's aims for authorial, personal, commercial, political, and literary success in the competitive and high stakes environment of publish- ing in early modern Venice. The examination of the book's formal presentation allows us to understand more fully how Sansovino, and other editors of the time, asserted their authorship and could achieve success through both the form and content of their editions.

Authorship and Authority in the 1564 *Commedia*

Before analyzing the edition in detail, a definition of authorship must be established. Sansovino's *Commedia,* by virtue of its being a commentary, still depended heavily on medieval conceptions of authorship. In the medieval period, an author (*auctor*) both possessed authority and was an authority (*auctoritas*).[20] As Albert Ascoli notes*, auctoritates* consisted of a limited number of classical and religious texts that "had accrued cultural capital and with it the status of guarantors of truth and models for imitation over the centuries."[21] Starting in the Duecento, commentators such as Brunetto Latini asserted their status as authors and authorities.[22] In his commentary on Cicero, *La Rettorica*, he claims "l'autore di questa opera è doppio."[23] Although he mentions Cicero first, Latini asserts that he is an independent author "il quale mise tutto suo studio e suo intendimento ad isponere e chiarire cio che Tulio avea detto." Some two hundred years later, Cristoforo Landino named himself *before* Dante in the title of his 1481 commentary, a claim to authority that neither Vellutello nor Sansovino made.[24] By the time that the 1564 edition was published, Dante had achieved the status of an *auctor*, and his *Commedia,* an *auctoritas*.[25] Sansovino lists Dante as an "*autorità*" in his glossary to the *Decamerone* (1546) and as an historical source in the "Autori Citati" sections of his other works.[26] The multiple interpretations present in the three editions also would have contributed to the *Commedia*'s standing as a model of vernacular poetry. Indeed, only *auctoritates* such as Cicero, Virgil, and the Bible merited a long history of commentary.[27] While the authors of this edition had to contend with Dante's supreme status, they simultaneously made moves to exploit Dante as an *auctor* and the authority of the poem as an *auctoritas.* Writing in the vernacular and on the *exemplum* of vernacular *auctoritas* also supported their own claims to authority as vernacular writers, commentators, editors, and ultimately, as "authorities" on Dante and his poem.

An author – by which I mean any person that intervened in the work including publishers, editors, artists, commentators, translators, and readers – shaped the way the *Commedia* was presented to different audiences.[28] In contrast to modern concepts of authorship, which generally rest upon ideas of individuality and originality, the concept of authorship as expressed in the 1564 edition of the *Commedia* was premised upon collaboration and collective participation. Authorship was in fact shared and dispersed among the volume's contributors. Yet a clear hierarchy of authorship was present in the book that delineated each individual's role; categories of authorship had expanded substantially in this period, and in the printed economy of books, authors assumed multiple roles and moved between a number of different genres, languages, and practices.[29] Giorgio Vasari, for example, described Sandro Botticelli's drawings as a form of commentary on the poem in his *Vita* of the architect: "commentò una parte di Dante, & figurò lo inferno & lo mise in stampa."[30] In a similar manner, this volume points to the complexity of the term "commentary," as well as how artists, poets, commentators, publishers, translators, and editors could all be considered authors in the early modern period.

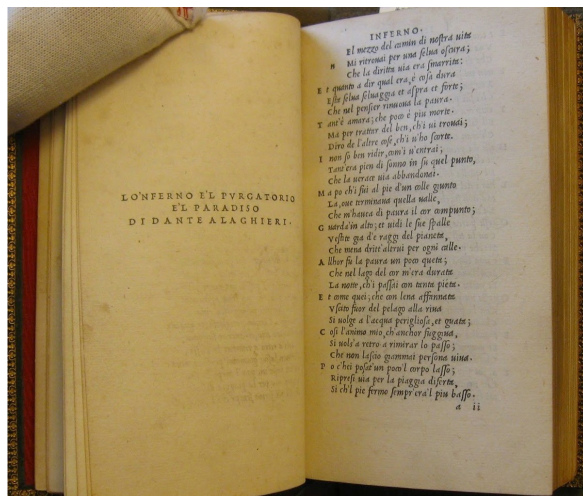
Sansovino's *Commedia* was by nature a hybrid entity, simultaneously maintaining the conventions of the medieval literary genre of commentary and incorporating Cinquecento editorial practices.[31] This double commentary edition highlights Sansovino's role as a unique type of author – not a writer as such, though he did provide his own interpretations and responses to the poem in the form of summaries and tables – but as a mediator between a medieval genre and modern medium, between the two commentators, and between a medieval author and a Renaissance audience. In this intermediary role, Sansovino expressed his *auctoritas* by asserting that he had published the au-

Figure 3. First pages of *Inferno* I with woodcut illustration on the left and text and commentary on the right. Detail of 1564 Edition. John J. Burns Library Special Collections, Boston College.

thoritative account of Dante's poem through the status of Landino and Vellutello. He also occupies the dual role of *auctor* and actor, speaking as the *portavoce* for the book to multiple authors and audiences.[32] Perhaps Sansovino can also be described as a kind of stage director, orchestrating a multitude of different actors, including publishers, backers, commentators, illustrators, and Dante himself, for a Renaissance audience.

In the manner of the theatre – to which tomes of knowledge were often compared – the material presentation and organization of the book's content reflects Sansovino's editorial vision for the *Commedia*.[33] An early modern take on the medieval "compilator," he determines who is on the stage and who the public sees as the principle actors in the production.[34] Through additions, or *aggiunte*, he occupies a primary speaking part, and also directs the play of his own creation, one that was bigger in folio size and better – with additions such as glossaries, tables, illustrations, and summaries – than any production of the *Commedia* of his time. The particular way Sansovino asserted his authorship through commentary, and especially his own additions, therefore calls attention to the way the practice of editing a text was also an act of interpretation and authorship in the age of print.

Opening to the first page of Dante's poem, it becomes clear that the reader confronts not a single interpretation at one discrete moment in time, but rather an accumulation of conversations that combine different interlocutors, thus constituting what I want to suggest represent multiple 'authorial' moments across time [Fig. 3]. Mikhail Bakhtin's association of dialogue and "polyphony," or the presence and interaction of multiple voices in a text, is particularly useful for understanding Sansovino's use of the dialogic genre in a book that was not actually a



LO'NFERNO E'L PVRGATORIO
E'L PARADISO
DI DANTE ALAGHIERI.

INFERNO.
N El mezzo del camin di nostra uita
Mi ritrouai per una selua oscura;
Che la diritta uia era smarrita:
E t quanto a dir qual era, è cosa dura
Esta selua seluaggia et aspra et forte;
Che nel pensier rinuoua la paura.
T ant'è amara; che poco è piu morte.
Ma per trattar del ben, ch'i ui trouai;
Diro de l'altre cose, ch'i u'ho scorte.
I non so ben ridir, com'i u'entrai;
Tant'era pien di sonno in su quel punto,
Che la uerace uia abbandonai.
M a po ch'i fui al pie d'un colle giunto
La, oue terminaua quella ualle,
Che m'hauea di paura il cor compunto;
G uarda'in alto; et uidi le sue spalle
Vestite gia d'e raggi del pianeta,
Che mena dritt'altrui per ogni calle.
A llhor fu la paura un poco queta;
Che nel lago del cor m'era durata
La notte, ch'i passai con tanta pieta.
E t come quei; che con lena affannata
Vscito fuor del pelago alla riua
Si uolge a l'acqua perigliosa, et guata;
C osi l'animo mio, ch'anchor fuggiua,
Si uols'a retro a rimirar lo passo;
Che non lascio giammai persona uiua.
P o c'hei posat'un poco'l corpo lasso;
Ripresi uia per la piaggia diserta,
Si ch'l pie fermo sempr'era'l piu basso.
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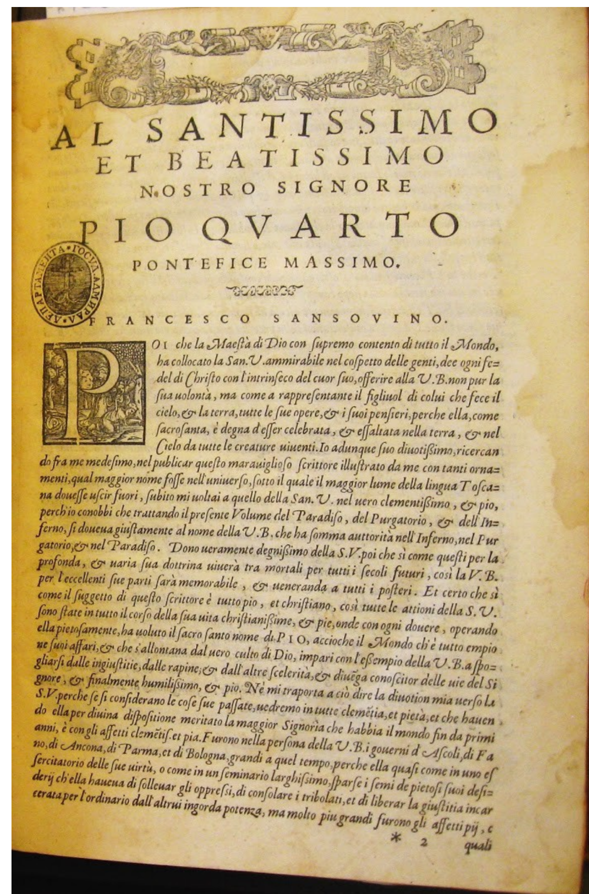
Figure 4. *Le terze rime di Dante*, Aldo Manuzio, Venice, 1502. 8°. Houghton Library, Harvard University (*IC.-D2358.472c.1502 (A)).



AL SANTISSIMO
ET BEATISSIMO
NOSTRO SIGNORE
PIO QVARTO
PONTEFICE MASSIMO.

FRANCESCO SANSOVINO.

POI che la Maestà di Dio con supremo contento di tutto il Mondo, ha collocato la San. V. ammirabile nel cospetto delle genti, dee ogni fedel di Christo con l'intrinseco del cuor suo, offerire alla V. B. non pur la sua uolontà, ma come a rappresentante il figliuol di colui che fece il cielo, & la terra, tutte le sue opere, & i suoi pensieri, perche ella, come sacrosanta, è degna d'esser celebrata, & essaltata nella terra, & nel Cielo da tutte le creature uiuenti. Io adunque suo diuotissimo, ricercando fra me medesimo, nel publicar questo marauiglioso scrittore illustrato da me con tanti ornamenti, qual maggior nome fosse nell'uniuerso, sotto il quale il maggior lume della lingua Toscana douesse uscir fuori, subito mi uoltai a quello della San. V. nel uero clementissimo, & pio, perch'io conobbi che trattando il presente Volume del Paradiso, del Purgatorio, & dell'Inferno, si doueua giustamente al nome della V. B. che ha somma auttorità nell'Inferno, nel Purgatorio, & nel Paradiso. Dono ueramente degnissimo della S. V. poi che sì come questi per la profonda, & uaria sua dottrina uiuerà tra mortali per tutti i secoli futuri, così la V. B. per l'eccellenti sue parti sarà memorabile, & ueneranda a tutti i posteri. Et certo che sì come il suggetto di questo scrittore è tutto pio, et christiano, così tutte le attioni della S. V. sono state in tutto il corso della sua uita christianissime, & pie, onde con ogni douere, operando ne suoi affari, ella pietosamente, ha uoluto il sacro santo nome di PIO, accioche il Mondo ch'è tutto empio & che s'allontana dal uero culto di Dio, impari con l'essempio della V. B. a spogliarsi dalle ingiustitie, dalle rapine, & dall'altre scelerità, & diuēga conoscitor delle uie del Signore, & finalmente humilissimo, & pio. Nè mi traporta a ciò dire la diuotion mia uerso la S. V. perche se si considerano le cose sue passate, uedremo in tutte clemētia, et pietà, et che hauendo ella per diuina dispositione meritato la maggior Signoria che habbia il mondo fin da primi anni, è con gli affetti clemētis. et pia. Furono nella persona della V. B. i gouerni d'Ascoli, di Fano, di Ancona, di Parma, et di Bologna, grandi a quel tempo, perche ella quasi come in uno essercitatorio delle sue uirtù, o come in un seminario larghissimo, sparse i semi de pietosi suoi desiderij ch'ella haueua di solleuar gli oppressi, di consolare i tribolati, et di liberar la giustitia incarcerata per l'ordinario dall'altrui ingorda potenza, ma molto piu grandi furono gli affetti pij, e
* 2 quali

Figure 5. Dedication Letter to Pope Pio IV by Francesco Sansovino. 1564 Edition. Houghton Library, Harvard University (IC D2358 472c 1564).

dialogue.[35] In this edition, these multiple voices, or "polyphony," coexist within one text; yet they also stand separate from one another, as if asserting their independence and advancing their own interpretations of Dante. While Landino and Vellutello had their own aims, driven by their own particular time and place, Sansovino appropriates them as editor, rendering him the latest ostensible author of Dante's poem. In Bakhtin's consideration of Dostoevsky, the Russian author does not impose himself on the characters of work, letting them live and take shape, whereas Sansovino inserts himself, quite literally, into the dialogue and converses with his fellow commentators.[36]

However, given the number of authors of the volume and nearly one hundred pages of prefatory texts which included reprints of multiple dedication letters, biographies, descriptions of Hell, poems, and letters, this polyphony makes it difficult for the reader to parse out who authored which part.[37] Comparing this edition to the *Commedia* published by Aldo Manuzio and edited by Pietro Bembo in 1502 throws this complexity of authorship into relief [Fig. 4]. At a glance, the presentation of the book expresses a different approach to the work of "authoring" I take these interventions to comprise. Unencumbered by commentary, the poem is given one title and one author *Le terze rime di Dante.*[38] Yet Aldo conspicuously bookends the volume with the dolphin and anchor, his printer's mark, in order to emphasize his activity as another "author" of Dante's poem. Nonetheless, the experience of Dante's authorship in the *Aldina* is much more straightforward for readers of the poem.

To Sansovino, the authors of this *Commedia,* and its readers, it mattered not only who was speaking, but in what register and with what authority. Sansovino made certain to demarcate his authorship. He made these claims most plainly on the title page and in his dedication letter to Pope Pious IV [Fig. 5]. In his dedication

Sansovino proclaims, “ricercando fra me medesimo, nel publicar questo maraviglioso scrittore illustrato da me con tanti ornamenti, qual maggior nome fosse nell’universo, sotto il quale il maggior lume della lingua Toscana dovesse uscir fuori.” In comparison to Sansovino’s other literary editions, he is relatively brief in outlining his editorial policy. We might read the letter as an attempt to emphasize Dante’s Christian faith and the theological nature of the *Commedia*, which had come under increased scrutiny at this time.[39] This context helps to explain the choice of dedicatee. The imitation of Vellutello, who also dedicated his work to a Pope, also doubly bestows Sansovino’s edition with sacred and literary authority.[40] More importantly, the lines above serve to affirm Sansovino’s role in bringing Dante to light both for the supreme Pontiff and for his readers. Now let us examine how Sansovino’s presentation constitutes authorship in the various sections of the book, starting with the title page and frontispiece portrait and proceeding to the first Cantica of the poem and the glossary.

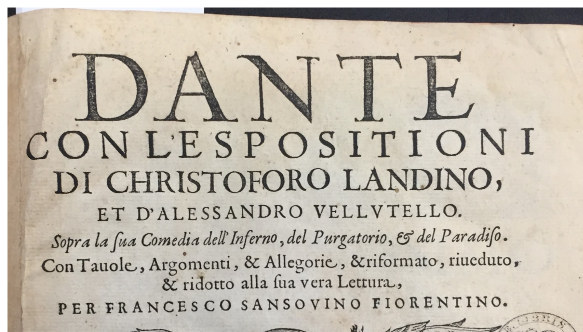


Figure 6. Detail of title page with the title “Dante” in 1578 Edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

Setting the Stage: Presenting the *Commedia*’s Authors on the Title Page

In his treatise on oratory, the *In materia dell’arte libri tre* (1564), Sansovino underscores the importance of the preface to an oration by stating that, like the entrance hall of a palazzo, “non prima s’apprasenta a gli occhi de’ riguardanti che essi da quella prendendo argomento fanno giudicio ch’il palazzo di dentro debbe essere ben ornato, con perfetta architettura composto, et insieme tutto corrispondente alle parti, così questa entrata dell’oratione è l’imagine e il dimostramento di quel che si dee dire e trattare.”[41]

Extending the architectural metaphor to the printed book, which can be considered a textual rendition of an oration, highlights the importance of the visual impact of the preface. The presentation of these materials not only provided the basis upon which the book was worthy of consideration, it also demonstrated “the image […] of that which needs to be said and discussed,” previewing the content of the book as well as each author’s contribution.[42] The *proemio* consisted of material from previous commentaries and editions of the *Commedia*, including dedication letters, letters to the reader, and lives of the author. All of these support Sansovino’s claim of offering the biggest, best, latest, and most correct version of Dante’s poem. The vast amount of prefatory material, as well as Sansovino’s additions, position the book as the culmination of a progressive evolution within the realm of the poem’s *fortuna*. Therefore, the editor had few pages to make an impression that could affect the book’s and the author’s success on the market. The title page, the first part of the preface, thus takes a heightened importance for the style, content, and marketability of the entire book.

Examining the visual hierarchy of the title page reveals how the complex of authorship functioned in the edition as a whole and in each individual leaf. Printed in the largest font and in Roman capitals, the most powerful statement of authorship and authority is the title of the book, Dante [Fig. 6]. Titles were an important part of identifying an author, but also attributing authorship.[43] Titles also entitled its author and were thus intrinsically linked to literary authority. As

Victoria Kirkham shows, titles became synonymous with certain authors, such that *Commedia* for example, was almost always associated with Dante.[44] Therefore, the enterprising use of the proper name should not be overlooked, as titling a work was among the most important of editorial tasks. One need only be reminded of the significance of Ludovico Dolce's decision to add "Divina" to *Commedia* in 1555. While there is precedence for the use of "Dante" as a title, it was not nearly as common as *Commedia*, nor was it so visually prominent on the page.[45] This visual attention to titling the work, in addition to Sansovino's decision to combine the title page with the author portrait, demonstrates its importance to the volume's presentation.[46] Font, script, and order comprise a visual rhetoric that directs the reader's engagement with the text. Such verbal and visual signs begin to establish the editor's claim for the book and articulate the authority of each author.

Similar to a theatre marquee, each headliner is listed on a distinct line, in capitals, and in fonts of decreasing size: Dante, Christoforo Landino, and Alessandro Vellutello. Font and placement signify the status of Landino's commentary as the more established and prestigious account. Indeed, the Florentine author's edition was reprinted many times and remained uncontested for 60 years until Vellutello published his commentary in 1544. Vellutello's commentary never achieved the success of Landino's, but his commentary and status as an intellectual were considered important enough to include with Landino in this particular edition. Francesco Sansovino is named after the commentators and the Sessa, the publishers of the volume, are named at the bottom of the page with the place of publication and the date.[47]

While at first glance their position might appear to subordinate Sansovino's authorship, their names serve to bolster his authority. If we continue the metaphor of Sansovino acting as a stage director, employing the best actors adds to the quality and prestige of his production. Also in all capitals, the keyword before his name, "PER" or "by, through, because of," demonstrates that it is *per* Sansovino's intervention that the audience is able to see these authors together for the first time on one stage, so to speak.[48] Placing Landino and Vellutello together was also a shrewd business decision, as it not only made the volume appear more authoritative, it would also be likely to sell more copies.

Furthermore**,** Sansovino declares that he has contributed the most to the volume, having added "tavole, argomenti, & allegorie" and "riformato, riveduto, & ridotto" the *Commedia* "alla sua vera lettura." Defining these terms help to identify how Sansovino positioned himself as an author in relation to the poem and its commentators. These terms, common to sixteenth-century editorial culture, also allow us to reconstruct how editors sought to establish and elevate their practice through the print medium and in relation to both traditional and contemporary paradigms of authorship.

The final three editorial interventions listed on the title page roughly translate as "reformatted, revised, and reduced to its true reading." I will limit my discussion to "ridotto" and "riformato," because of their visual implications for the organization of the book. Scholars have variously translated "ridotto" as "improved," "returned," or "brought back."[49] These issues of translation call attention to the complexity of *ridurre* as a term that had multiple meanings which depended on its context and its relation to other terms. Based on the Latin *reducere,* here the term implies a "return," "recovery," "restoration," and perhaps most accurately, a "recuperation" of the poem to its "true" state. "Vera lettura," encompasses all these meanings and further suggests that the "true reading" of the poem is one that returns the text to a linguistically pure and correct state. Indeed, the Accademia della Crusca edition, noted for being the most official and accurate text of the poem, claims only one intervention: that of "reducing" the poem to its "miglior lezione."[50] The meaning of *ridurre* as being primarily linguistic and

DANTE
CON L'ESPOSITIONI
DI CHRISTOFORO LANDINO,
ET D'ALESSANDRO VELLVTELLO.
Sopra la sua Comedia dell'Inferno, del Purgatorio, & del Paradiso.
Con Tauole, Argomenti, & Allegorie, & riformato, riueduto, & ridotto alla sua vera Lettura,
PER FRANCESCO SANSOVINO FIORENTINO.
IN VENETIA, Appresso Giouambattista, Marchiò Sessa, & Fratelli. 1578.
Filippus Butij Romanus Architectus Anno 1772.

Figure 7. Hand-colored frontispiece portrait. Detail from 1578 Edition. Beinecke Library, Yale University (1976 +143). Inscription below reads “Filippus Butii Romanus Architectus Anno 1772.”

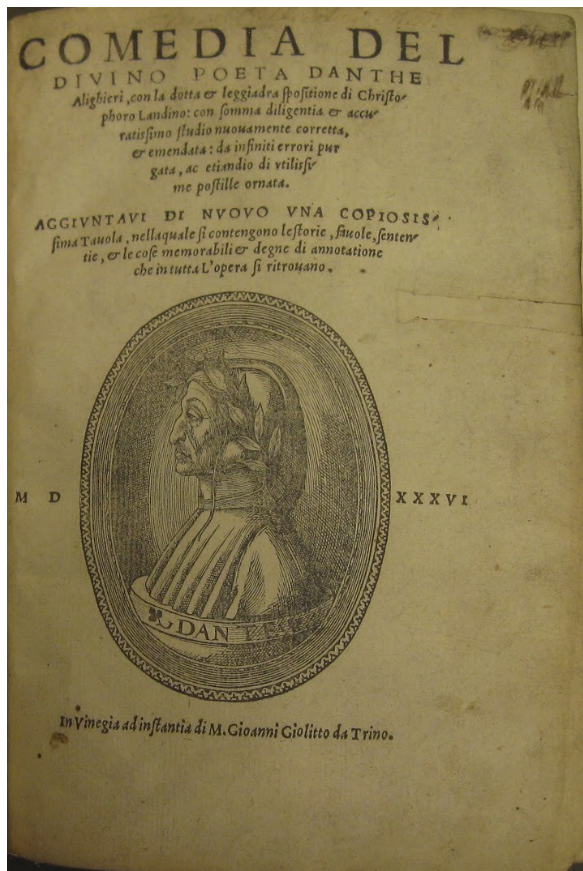
philological in nature, motivating direct interventions in the text, is further evidenced by its frequent pairing with “corretto” and “emendato.” As Paolo Trovato has shown, these were fairly common editorial terms and they were used in virtually all editions of the *Commedia* in the early modern period.[51] Furthermore, Bonora has shown how Sansovino’s additions formed an intense “impegno lessicografico” which culminated in his treatise on vernacular orthography in 1568.[52] Therefore, “ridotto” asserts Sansovino’s editorial and philological role.

It is interesting to note that Sansovino did not substantially intervene in the text. In this period, it was necessary and even more important to claim such interventions due to commercial pressures on turning out copies quickly and efficiently to satisfy readers demands for new and improved texts. In this sense, I suggest that “ridotto” was charged with critical and interpretative meanings, which embraced the presentation of the poem as well.[53]

Less common is the term “riformato” which involved changes in the use and placement of headers, commentaries, printer’s devices, columns, sizes and types of font, initials, and illustrations. The use of “ornamenti,” in the dedication letter also provides clues as to how this specific matrix of terms might have influenced the style and type of format used in the book. The use of “ornament” with “ridurre” and “additions” suggests both embellishment in the sense of making the book more beautiful, but also in a rhetorical sense, in a high style. Attention to both the visual and verbal meanings of these terms therefore establishes a broader picture of the motivations behind Sansovino’s editorial choices, including the decision to use the medieval commentary format for the three canticles of the *Commedia.*

Finally, directly impacting the visual rhetoric of the page is the medallion portrait of the author [Fig. 7].[54] The grand visual effect produced by opening the book and seeing the image of the author bolstered the editor’s claims to authorship. Sansovino, along with Vasari, was instrumental in popularizing the genre of the visual biography through his *L’historia di casa Orsina* (1565).[55] The monumentality of Dante’s portrait reaffirms Sansovino’s authority in this genre and also continues his project of providing authentic biographies of his literary subjects. Also interesting to note is that this particular volume was in folio as well. The portrait, as well as the dimensions of the book, asserts the editor’s positive evaluation of Dante’s status. Indeed, Sansovino capitalized on the portrait’s visual effect to make the book more attractive and fashionable, thereby engaging contemporary audiences.

The Renaissance taste for portrait medals influenced Dante’s representation


COMEDIA DEL
DIVINO POETA DANTHE
Alighieri, con la dotta & leggiadra ſpoſitione di Chriſto-
phoro Landino: con ſomma diligentia & accu-
ratiſſimo ſtudio nuouamente corretta,
& emendata: da infiniti errori pur
gata, ac etiandio di vtiliſſi-
me poſtille ornata.

AGGIVNTAVI DI NVOVO VNA COPIOSIS-
ſima Tauola, nellaquale ſi contengono leſtorie, fauole, ſenten-
tie, & le coſe memorabili & degne di annotatione
che in tutta L'opera ſi ritrouano.

M D XXXVI

DANTE

In Vinegia ad inſtantia di M. Gioanni Giolitto da Trino.

Figure 8. Comedia del Divino Poeta Danthe. MD XXXVI. In Vinegia ad instantia di M. Gioanni Giolitto da Trino. Venice. 1536. 4°. Beinecke Library, Yale University (1977 828).

Figure 9. La Divina Comedia di Dante. In Vinegia. Appresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, et fratelli, MDLV. Venice. 1555. 12°. Houghton Library, Harvard University (Typ 525 55.316).

throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Aby Warburg, writing about the Renaissance's encounter with classical antiquity, said "The figures of ancient myth appeared before Italian society, not as plaster casts, but in person, as figures full of life and color."[56] The fact that the portrait medal was the favored mode of Dante's representation emphasized his standing as an "antico." This is further enhanced by the depiction of Dante as a portrait bust which materially makes him a monument and also symbolically monumentalizes him as a great author of the past. However, Sansovino's elaboration of the motif of the portrait medal emphasizes Dante's relevance to modern authors and readers. There are visual strategies, too, that make Dante, to use Warburg's words, a figure "full of life and color."

Jutting forcefully out toward the viewer, Dante's dynamic pose presents a more enlivened portrait than that in the Giolito editions of 1536 and 1555 for example [Figs. 8 & 9].[57] In this portrait the woodcutter clearly cites the Giolito model, but adds his own flair, replete with putti, festoons, cornucopia, volutes, and other *grottesche*. One of the most elaborate frames to appear in editions of the *Commedia*, it can also tell us about Sansovino's editorial strategies. The frame stylistically evokes the decorative divisions that initiated each canto, creating a sense of unity among the different parts of the book. This titling again calls attention to Sansovino's role, along with that of the publishers, in creating a monumental and visually coherent product. Similar to the way Aldo employed his dolphin and anchor device, by using the Sessa printer's mark in the headers for each section of 1578 edition, the publishers also symbolically frame Dante's portrait and works.

Fit for an emperor much less a poet, the sheer ostentation of the frame also recalls triumphal architecture. It is no accident that this volume was published in 1564, when one of the greatest triumphal processions ever assembled took place in Florence. In order to honor the death of Michelangelo, Italy's 'greatest light' of the arts, Giorgio Vasari and Vincenzo Borghini designed an ornate catafalque and sepulcher for the artist.[58] As the two monuments to "il divino," as Michelangelo was called, celebrated Florentine superiority in the arts, so too does Sansovino's monumental edition commemorate Florentine preeminence in literature through the portrait of its "divine poet."[59]

Further evidence of Michelangelo's funeral as a possible source of inspiration for the frame is the artist's quotation of Vasari's painted portrait of Dante (1544).[60] Here, Dante is celebrated as the supreme poet among his Tuscan contemporaries in poetry. The portrait shows a particular response to the language debates, or the "questione della lingua" and Petrarchism. Literary relations depicted in the painting can be contextualized by recalling Pietro Bembo's evaluation of Dante as an unsuitable linguistic model. In step with the ideals of the Accademia Fiorentina and the patron Luca Martini, Vasari creates an ideal literary history that represents an alternative reception of Dante, one in which he is the premier author.

As Leonard Barkan has shown, visual objects such as portrait medals, were considered authentic historical sources.[61] Here Vasari's painted image becomes the 'authentic' source for Dante's representation. Printed portraits were not solely copies. The choice of which source to interpret was deliberate.[62] By taking Dante out of the group context and installing a frame, Sansovino presents a new interpretation of contemporary visual sources.

It should be noted that there have been some questions regarding the source for the portrait, the model for the woodcut having also been attributed to Agnolo Bronzino.[63] This is also potentially supported by the initials A.B. on

CANTO DECIMOSESTO.

ALLEGORIA.

SANS. PEr Virgilio che esorta Dãte ad aspettar alcune anime, si nota che l'huomo dee hauer compassione a coloro che son condennati per qualche uitio, & si dee anco portar loro honore, quando habbiano qualche segnalata uirtù, la quale gli faccia apparir notabili alle persone. Per la corda della quale era cinto Dante, si dimostra la fraude della qual l'huomo si dee spogliare. Il mostro è la discrittione della fraude.

LAND. BENCHE sia mutato il canto: non dimeno ancor tratta il nostro Poeta della medesima materia: laquale ha trattato nel superiore XV. canto. Pone come

me, che cadea nel ottauo cerchio. Quando tre ombre si partiron correndo d'una torma di uioléti, che passaua sotto la pioggia del fuoco, & ueniuano uerso di loro gridando a Dante che si fermasse, pche a l'habito giudicauano che fosse, come ognun di loro era Fiorentino, Al che far esortato da Vir. ha parlamento cô quelle del pessimo stato della Città loro. Ma partite poi queste ombre, & essi giũti al fine del girone, oue l'acqua cade in esso ottauo cerchio, hauendo Vir. gettato in quello una corda, di che Dãte era cinto, uedono a tal segno uenir in su notando p aere, una molto mostruosa, & horribile figura, della qual nel seguente cãto poi uedremo. GIA era in luoco, onde s'udia'l rimbombo. Era il nostro Poeta già in luogo. ONDE, cioè del quale, s'udia il rim-

ARGOMENTO.

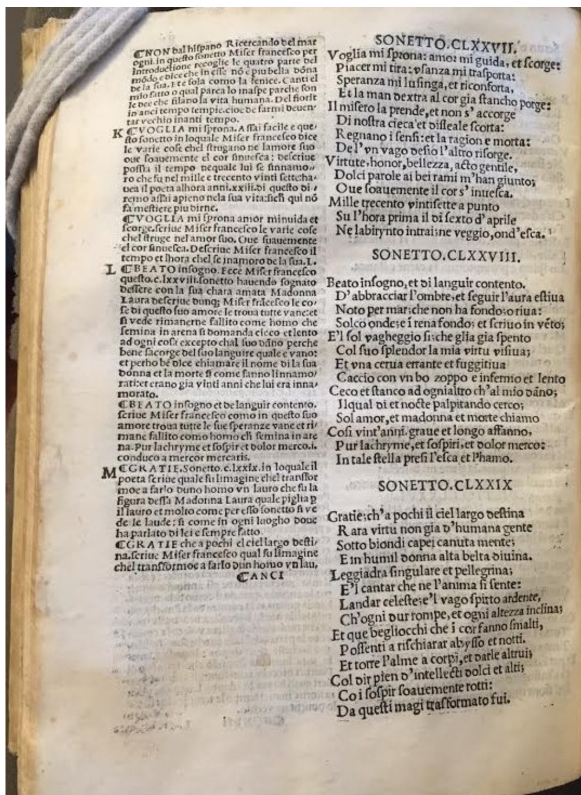
GIunto Dante quasi alla fine dell'ultimo Girone intãto che egli udiua il suono dell'acque del fiume, che cadeua nel cerchio ottauo, troua alcune anime di soldati che furono imbrattati dal uitio detto di sopra. Giunti al fiume Virgilio ui trasse dentro una Corda dellaquale Dante era cinto, & poco stante uidero notar giù per lo fiume, una figura horribile, & mostruosa.

GIA era in loco, oue s'udia'l rimbombo
De l'acqua, che cadea ne l'altro giro,
Simil a quel, che l'arnie fanno rombo;
Quando tre ombre insieme si partiro
Correndo d'una torma che passaua
Sotto la pioggia de l'aspro martiro.
Venian uer noi, & ciascuna gridaua,
Sostati tu, c'ha l'habito ne sembri

Figure 10. Detail of *Inferno XVI*. 1564 edition. PQ 4302 B64, UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

the bottom right of the frame. These initials are almost certainly those of the woodcutter, who has not yet been identified. Perhaps the woodcutter cites both Bronzino and Vasari. Regardless, both portraits assert Dante's *fiorentinità* and his renown in the poetic arts.

Furthermore, by recalling both current and historical visual moments in Dante's representation, the portrait supports the editor's claims for Dante as a modern author. Combined with Sansovino's editorial additions, the portrait is a visual way of updating the *Commedia* for contemporary readers. A detailed analysis of the title page reveals the way its visual and verbal effects set up the claims for the book and framed the readers experience of Dante's masterpiece. Let us now examine Sansovino's



SONETTO.CLXXVII.

Voglia mi ſprona: amor mi guida, et ſcorge:
Piacer mi tira: vſanza mi traſporta:
Speranza mi luſinga, et riconforta,
Et la man dextra al cor gia ſtancho porge:
Il miſero la prende, et non s' accorge
Di noſtra cieca et diſleale ſcorta:
Regnano i ſenſi: et la ragion e morta:
De l' vn vago deſio l' altro riſorge.
Virtute, honor, bellezza, acto gentile,
Dolci parole ai bei rami m'han giunto;
Oue ſoauemente il cor s' inueſca.
Mille trecento vintiſette a punto
Su l'hora prima il di ſexto d' aprile
Ne labirynto intrai; ne veggio, ond' eſca.

SONETTO.CLXXVIII.

Beato inſogno, et di languir contento.
D' abbracciar l'ombre, et ſeguir l'aura eſtiua
Noto per mar; che non ha fondo; o riua:
Solco onde; e i rena fondo; et ſcriuo in vẽto;
E'l ſol vagheggio ſi; che glia gia ſpento
Col ſuo ſplendor la mia virtu viſiua;
Et vna ceruia errante et fuggitiua
Caccio con vn bo zoppo e infermo et lento
Ceco et ſtanco ad ognialtro ch' al mio dãno;
Ilqual di et nocte palpitando cerco;
Sol amor, et madonna et morte chiamo
Coſi vint'anni graue et longo affanno,
Pur lachryme, et ſoſpiri, et dolor merco:
In tale ſtella preſi l'eſca et l'hamo.

SONETTO.CLXXIX

Gratie; ch' a pochi il ciel largo deſtina
Rara virtu non gia d' humana gente
Sotto biondi capei canuta mente;
E in humil donna alta belta diuina.
Leggiadra ſingulare et pellegrina;
E'l cantar che ne l'anima ſi ſente:
Landar celeſte; e'l vago ſpirto ardente,
Ch'ogni dur rompe, et ogni altezza inclina;
Et que begliocchi che i cor fanno ſmalti,
Poſſenti a riſchiarar abyſſo et notti.
Et torre l'alme a corpi, et darle altrui;
Col dir pien d' intellecti dolci et alti;
Co i ſoſpir ſoauemente rotti:
Da queſti magi traſformato fui.

Figure 11. Petrarcha con doi commenti sopra li Sonetti et Canzone. Impressum Venetiis per Gregorium de Gregoriis. MDVIII. Venice, 1508, 4°. Double commentary with repetition of "Voglia" in capitals and marked with a paragraph sign. Houghton Library, Harvard University (*IC P447C 1508b).

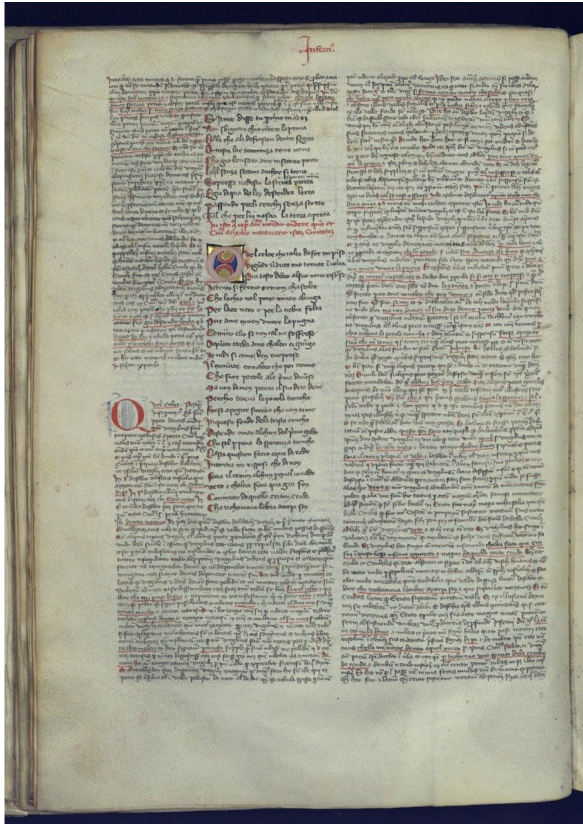
strategies for publishing the first double commentary on the poem.

The *mise-en-scene* of the Page: Combining Past Traditions and Modern Innovations

Due to the double commentary format, Sansovino was especially innovative in organizing the *mise-en-page* [Fig. 10]. Through the placement of both commentaries, illustrations, printer's marks, headers and titles, in addition to his own interventions, he asserted his multiple authorial roles as a commentator, editor, and publisher. The commentary, usually considered marginal to the poem in strictly textual terms, here becomes central, dominating almost the entire visual field of the page. One reason to use the dialogue format was to facilitate reading by clearly identifying each commentator's text. Other double and triple commentaries in manuscript and in print typically have the commentators follow each other, sometimes with repetition of keywords analyzed in the text, with little to no demarcation, as in the Petrarch double commentary of 1508 [Fig. 11]. Even more common, dating back to the medieval period, the first commentary is interspersed interlinearly in the main text with the other commentary surrounding both texts. Sixteenth-century readers might have been familiar with these layouts, because they were often used for Bibles and other significant texts. By further enhancing the distinctions between commentators, the dialogue format increases the reader's ability to find the author of each section on any given page. However, questions of spatial organization alone cannot explain Sansovino's appropriation of the dialogue format.

Considering how Sansovino's additions operate visually is essential to understanding his innovations. As Brian Richardson notes, additions were a way of putting one's "stamp" on new editions or reprints.[64] Additions were also vital to a book's success on the market and were considered to be improvements to the original work.[65] While "reducing" often meant "adding", for Sansovino and the earliest editors of the *Commedia*, the trend in later sixteenth-century editions actually comes closer to the modern definition of the word. In fact, most editions of the *Commedia* from 1560 to 1726 were small, austere, and contained minimal illustration.[66] Given this tendency, how can we explain why Sansovino produced such a large book, and one which upheld medieval convention?

The combination of the medieval format with the folio size, used for the *Commedia*'s fifteenth-century incunabula, underscores the association of the book with previous traditions both in manuscript and in print. As Deborah Parker observes, "these folio volumes of Landino's and Vellutello's commentaries come rather unexpectedly after decades of Dantini.



Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bibliothèque nationale de France

Figure 12. Commentary on Dante's *Commedia*. Probably late 14th-century. Parchment, 192 ff. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Manuscript Italien 77, 20v.

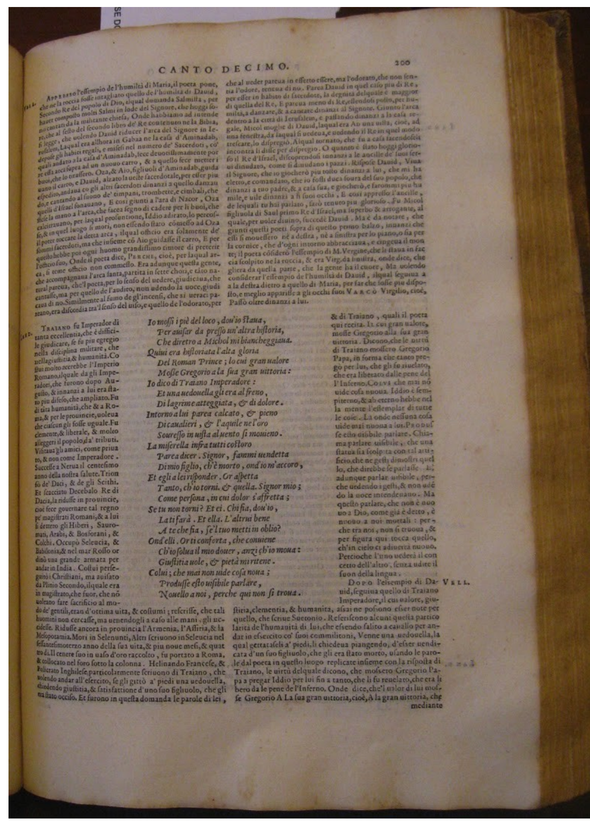


Figure 13. Detail of *Purgatorio X*. 1578 edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

One almost has the impression of a nostalgic return to the earliest printed Dantes."[67] The format of the book invests the edition with the prestige, authority, and luxury of the manuscript tradition. The folio size, rarely used in the sixteenth century for literary texts, was most often employed for illustrated books, choir books, and religious texts. It is likely that the book of this size was made for study, display, and/or to be read aloud. The presentation of the book and its visual links to other kinds of books reinforce Sansovino's claims of "illustrating" the *Commedia* with proper decorum. The association with the incunabula, and Landino's edition of 1481 in particular, also recalls a time when Dante's reception was at its height, which would have been viewed favorably by Florentine readers at the time.

The use of the medieval format and wealth of additions that Sansovino provides, including glossaries, summaries, and indexes, also conceivably comment on philological debates in the mid-sixteenth century. Starting in this period, there were discussions in the Academies regarding how to edit vernacular classics, such as Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch. Vincenzo Borghini, among others, argued that the editor's primary aim should be to correct the text through manuscript copies and variants.[68] It is notable that Borghini's ideas were published around the same time that Sansovino's second edition came out in 1578. Arguably, these new ideas about editing contributed to the *Commedia*'s use as classic text for scholars.[69] Given this context, the format also visually asserts the usefulness of commentary for the editor, as

a crucial space to critically engage with a text, as well as for the reader, as an aid for reading and imitating poetry. Perhaps, as Parker suggests, years of experience with unaccompanied text made this particularly edition, rich in numerous interpretations of the poem, desirable to readers at this time.[70]

Rather than restricting his audience to literary critics and academicians, Sansovino used the medieval layout, ample in commentary and additions, to appeal to a broader reading public. While some scholars have noted that much of Renaissance commentary is similar to its medieval predecessor as a critical and textual apparatus, the two traditions also often resonated visually, as in this case. In this fourteenth-century commentary on the *Commedia*, one can immediately identify the similarities in layout: the commentary engulfing the few lines of the poem, distinctions in script, and the spacing and organization of the header, poem, and commentary [Figs. 12 & 13].

A reception-oriented approach recognizes that encountering a book involved operations of both reading and beholding. Renaissance audiences would have possessed certain "equipment" they deployed in viewing and interpreting the various parts of the text.[71] The period's "horizon of expectations," as Hans-Robert Jauss has put it, conditioned the reception and legibility of the pictured text, the visual elements and conventions of the printed page.[72] Sansovino and the publishers, who were clearly thinking about both the visual and textual organization of the page, inserted signposts for the reader to follow. Attending to the way Sansovino both adhered to and broke with the conventions of printing a commentated text allows us to reconstruct how the material support of the book contributed to the *Commedia*'s meanings and interpretations and how these became legible to Renaissance audiences.

DELLA

COMEDIA DI DANTE
ALIGIERI PRIMO CANTO
DELLA PRIMA CANTICA
DETTA INFERNO.

ALLEGORIA.

SANS. PEr lo mezzo del camino s'intende la metà della uita nostra. Per la selua oscura il uitio, nel qual l'huomo uigorosamente preuale in quell'età. Per gl'animali, i tre uitij capitali, cioè, l'auaritia, la superbia, & la lussuria, i quali non lasciano che noi possiamo salire il monte della virtù ch'è difficile & aspro. Per Virgilio mandato da Lucia si comprende la dottrina dataci da Dio, accioche col suo mezzo conosciamo, & n'astegnamo da' uitij, & che con la sua guida s'indirizziamo a buona uia, secondo che possono le forze nostre.

ARGOMENTO.

HAuendo Dante smarrita la uia diritta in una oscurissima selua, mostra di trouar Virgilio, dal quale, raccomandatosi a lui, fu tolto in protettione, & difendendolo dalle fiere che lo haueuano assalito, promette di fargli ueder l'Inferno, & il Purgatorio, & che in ultimo sarebbe poi guidato da Beatrice nel Paradiso.

NEL MEZZO *del camin di nostra uita*
Mi ritrouai per una selua oscura;
Che la diritta via era smarrita;
Et quanto a dir qual'era, è cosa dura
Esta selua seluaggia, & aspra, & forte;
Che nel pensier rinoua la paura.
Tant'è amara, che poco è piu morte,
Ma per trattar del ben ch'i ui trouai,
Dirò de l'altre cose, ch'io v'ho scorte.

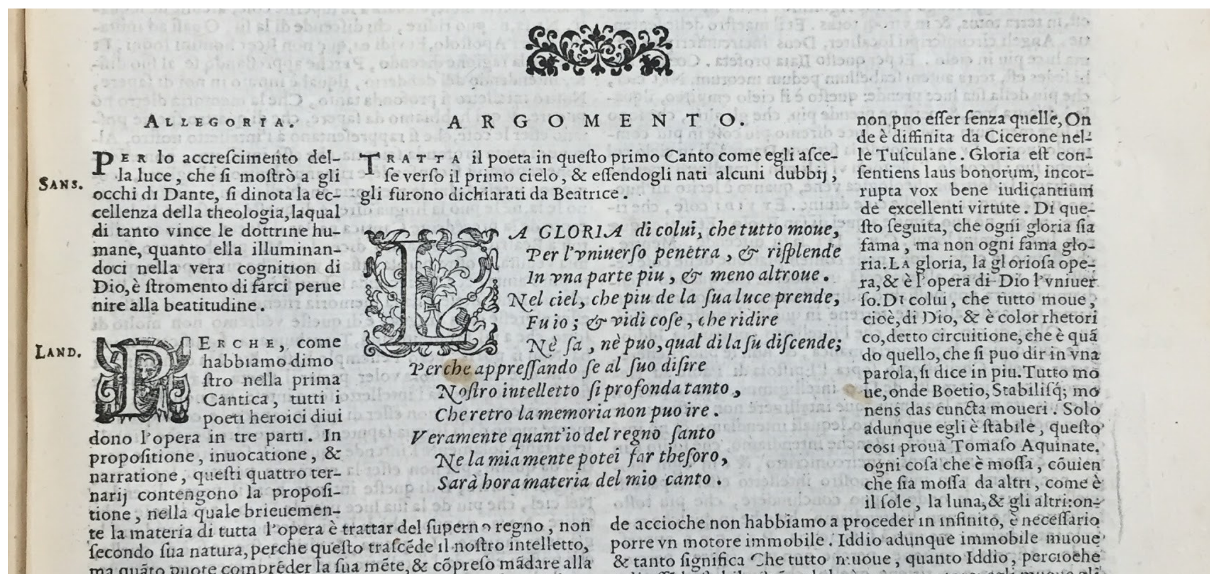
LAND. HAbbiamo narrato non solamente la uita del poeta & il titolo del libro & che cosa sia poeta, ma quanto sia antica, nobile & uaria: quanto utile cotal dottrina, quanto efficace a mouere l'humana mente: & quanto diletti ogni liberale ingegno. Ne giudichiamo da tacere quãto in si diuina disciplina sia stata la eccellentia dell'ingegno del nostro poeta. In che s'io sono stato breue: cõsideri chi legge che la infinita copia delle cose delle quali è necessario trattare, mi sforza, nõ uolẽdo ch'il uolume cresca, a inuiluppare piu tosto che distendere molte cose: & massime quelle, che quando ben tacessi, non però ne resterà oscura la espositione del testo. Verremo adunque a quella. Ma perche stimo nõ essere lettore alcuno, di si poco giudicio, che hauẽdo inteso quanto sia la profondità della dottrina, & la eccellentia dell'ingegno del nostro Fiorentino poeta: non si persuada che questo principio debba per grandezza essere pari alla stupenda dottrina delle cose che seguirano: però con ogni industria inuestigheremo che allegorico senso arrechi questo mezzo del camino & che cosa sia selua. di che ueggio nõ piccola differẽtia essere stata tra gli espositori di questa cãtica. Perche alcuni dicono, che il mezzo della uita humana è il sonno, mossi: credo dalla sententia d'Aristotile nell'Etica, nessuna differentia esser tra felici, & miseri nella metà della uita: perche le notti che sono la metà del tempo c'inducono sonno: & da quello nasce che ne bene ne male sentir possiamo. Perche uogliono che il poeta põga il mezzo della uita per la notte, & la notte pel sonno a notare che questo poema nõ sia altro che una uisione che gli apparue dormẽdo, per laquale hebbe cognitione delle cose da lui scritte in queste tre comedie. Dicono adunque che imita Giouãni Euangelista, ilquale dormendo sul petto di Christo hebbe uision delle cose celesti, oueramente ponga la notte dimostrando hauer cominciato il suo poema di notte, nella quale raccogliẽdosi l'animo in se medesimo & liberandosi da ogni cura meglio intenda. Ma benche tal sententia quadri al poeta, nondimeno le parole non la dimostrono se non con tanta ambiguità: che nõ par degna della elegantia di tanto poeta. Prima perche non seguita, che bẽche nelle reuolutioni del tempo tanto spacio occupino le notti quãto i dì, per questo dicẽdo io scrissi di notte s'intẽda io scrissi nel mezzo della mia età, perche & nel principio & nel fine dell'età humana sono le notti come nel mezzo & similmẽte i dì. Perche p la medesima ragione si potrebbe fare tale interpretatione pel dì come per la notte. Altri dicono che uolle pel mezzo del camino intender che nel mezzo dell'età dette principio al suo poema. Ma non è una medesima opinione del termine della nostra età: perche diuersi scrittori diuersamente sentono. Aristotile nella Repub. par che approui la sententia di certi poeti, che diuisono l'età per numero settenario, attribuendo i primi sette alla infantia, i secondi alla pueri-

A tia, i

Figure 14. First page of *Inferno* I. Detail of 1564 Edition. Houghton Library, Harvard University (Typ 525 64.316).

Characters in Dialogue: Sansovino as Author, Actor and *Auctor*

As art historian Michael Baxandall reminds us in his reading of Jacopo Sadoleto's description of the Laocoön, there is distance between the experience of visual objects and their description in language.[73] Indeed, the first question Sadoleto asked of the Laocoön was "what shall I speak of first, what last?" Asking this of Sansovino's edition helps to answer the following questions: How should we attend to all this visual information? How is authorship organized and expressed?



ALLEGORIA.

SANS. PER lo accreſcimento della luce, che ſi moſtrò a gli occhi di Dante, ſi dinota la eccellenza della theologia, laqual di tanto vince le dottrine humane, quanto ella illuminandoci nella vera cognition di Dio, è ſtromento di farci peruenire alla beatitudine.

LAND. PERCHE, come habbiamo dimoſtro nella prima Cantica, tutti i poeti heroici diuidono l'opera in tre parti. In propoſitione, inuocatione, & narratione, queſti quattro ternarij contengono la propoſitione, nella quale brieuemente la materia di tutta l'opera è trattar del ſuperno regno, non ſecondo ſua natura, perche queſto traſcēde il noſtro intelletto, ma quāto puote comprēder la ſua mēte, & cōpreſo mādare alla

ARGOMENTO.

TRATTA il poeta in queſto primo Canto come egli aſceſe verſo il primo cielo, & eſſendogli nati alcuni dubbij, gli furono dichiarati da Beatrice.

LA GLORIA di colui, che tutto moue,
Per l'vniuerſo penetra, & riſplende
In vna parte piu, & meno altroue.
Nel ciel, che piu de la ſua luce prende,
Fu io; & vidi coſe, che ridire
Nè ſa, nè puo, qual di la ſu diſcende;
Perche appreſſando ſe al ſuo diſire
Noſtro intelletto ſi profonda tanto,
Che retro la memoria non puo ire.
Veramente quant'io del regno ſanto
Ne la mia mente potei far theſoro,
Sarà hora materia del mio canto.

non puo eſſer ſenza quelle, Onde è diffinita da Cicerone nelle Tuſculane. Gloria eſt conſentiens laus bonorum, incorrupta vox bene iudicantium de excellenti virtute. Di queſto ſeguita, che ogni gloria ſia fama, ma non ogni fama gloria. LA gloria, la glorioſa opera, & è l'opera di Dio l'vniuerſo. DI colui, che tutto moue, cioè, di Dio, & è color rhetorico, detto circuitione, che è quādo quello, che ſi puo dir in vna parola, ſi dice in piu. Tutto moue, onde Boetio, Stabiliſq; mo nens das cuncta moueri. Solo adunque egli è ſtabile, queſto coſi proua Tomaſo Aquinate. ogni coſa che è moſſa, cōuien che ſia moſſa da altri, come è il ſole, la luna, & gli altri:on-

de accioche non habbiamo a proceder in infinito, è neceſſario porre vn motore immobile. Iddio adunque immobile muoue & tanto ſignifica Che tutto muoue, quanto Iddio, percioche

Figure 15. Detail of “allegoria” and “argomento” with SANS. in left margin from *Paradiso* I, 282v. Detail of 1578 Edition (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

Turning to the very first page of the *Commedia* proper, to *Inferno* I, we encounter the following elements: title, header, and decorative border, the first nine lines of the poem with the decorative initial, the “argomento,” or the summary of the canto, and the “allegoria” or the allegorical reading of the canto, both by Sansovino, followed by the commentaries of Landino and then Vellutello [Fig. 14]. It is significant that the woodcut illustration, which serves as a form of visual commentary, appears first and is placed on a separate page preceding the poem. For the first canto of each cantica the image is self-contained, and for subsequent illustrations, the images are integrated into the text, often initiating the canto. While outside the scope of this paper, the illustrations played a fundamental role not only as an organizing and didactic element, but as a complex visual interpretation of the poem.[74] At the same time, it must be recognized that illustrations did not always directly refer to the poem and expressed their own histories and agency.[75] The illustrations not only call attention to the placement of commentary, but also the parts of the text that are named, and more precisely, attributed to authors.[76]

If we read the layout as a dialogue or even a play, Sansovino would speak first. His appearance, while brief, serves to narrate the story he wishes to tell about himself and the poem. Indeed, the “argomento” gives a short description of the salient moments in the canto and its key characters. Yet this intervention is not specifically named here, but is mentioned on the title page. The “allegoria” is indicated by Sansovino’s name, by the abbreviation “SANS.” in the left margin [Fig. 15]. The naming of the allegory is curious. It is as though Sansovino becomes an allegory of himself, a character that is separate from the historical editor-Sansovino, similar to the dual identity of Dante poet and pilgrim.[77] One might also see this naming as an allegory for the editor, one who intervenes in the poem both from inside, as an interlocutor, and from outside, as physically composing the materials and persons that make the production of the book possible. The dialogue and the allegory specifically, also works to directly link editing with authoring.

The allegorical reading, that Dante himself applied to his poem, was considered a higher level of engagement with the poem than the literal reading.[78] This would of course give Sansovino claim to a more intellectual and authoritative position in relation to the hierarchical structure of the poem and the commentators.

We might also interpret this as editorial one-upmanship regarding Dolce's edition of 1555, which also had sections labelled "argomento" and "allegoria." Sansovino himself provided short summaries before each *giornata* in his edition of the *Decamerone* (1546), and therefore may even also be one-upping himself. Another way to interpret the allegorical reading is to consider the intellectual atmosphere of the mid-sixteenth century. In the 1540's and 1550's, several of the most prominent Academies in Florence published a series of *lezioni* by figures such as Giambattista Gelli and Pierfrancesco Giambullari that contained allegorical readings of the *Commedia*.[79] Through the "allegorie," Sansovino affirms his place within current Dante scholarship and editorial debates, while also appealing to multiple audiences by providing both summaries and allegories of the poem.

After the "allegoria," following the order displayed on the title page, Sansovino then inserts Landino's commentary, followed by that of Vellutello.[80] Scanning the visual field of the page, it becomes apparent that Landino overshadows both the poem and the page. While Sansovino ostensibly publishes both commentaries entirely, with only minor changes to the text, he has rearranged the blocks of the main poem such that both he and Landino seem more important.[81] This is further emphasized by the historiated initial, which signals the first letter of the canto and of Landino's commentary.[82] This xylographic detail was used across all three editions. While Sansovino did use Vellutello's illustrations from the 1544 edition, remarkable in their bird's eye view and circular shape, he decided not to use Vellutello's arrangement of Dante's poem, his edition of the text, or his script, which the commentator advertised as being fundamental to his contribution to the interpretation of the *Commedia*. These decisions, coupled with Sansovino's placement of Landino before Vellutello, relegate the *lucchese* commentator to a subordinate position on both the editorial and visual hierarchy.

Landino's importance is further emphasized by the fact that the dialogue in the main text is preceded by another conversation, but it is one in which only he and Sansovino take part. Sansovino republished Landino's "Apologia"; a lengthy defense of Florence in which he lists the most illustrious Florentine men of various fields, including poetry, art, religion, philosophy, and commerce. Inserting himself at the end of each section with the title "Aggiunta del Sansovino," the editor addresses Landino directly. He also speaks to his audience by updating Landino's list with great men who have achieved success to the present day. In Landino's 1481 edition, the *Apologia* and the other prefatory texts promoted a particular ideological, institutional, and political agenda that sought to reunite Dante with not only Florence, but with a Laurentian Florence. Simon Gilson suggests that Landino deliberately uses past *Florentine* sources in the *Apologia* and in the section on Poetry, such as Giovanni Villani, in order to synthesize them and to create a 'perfect' lineage of Florentine authors.[83] Here, Sansovino takes the opportunity to highlight his *fiorentinità*, by dedicating a large space to Florentine artists and his father in particular, who he calls the "secondo Michelangelo." He also refers to Vasari's *Vite* specifically at the end of the section, stating that if the readers should need more exhaustive information on Florentine artists they can consult his text. However, while many Florentines underline the "Sansovino Fiorentino" he also includes Venetians, such as his teacher Trifone Gabriele.[84] Through this strategic move, in addition to the use of Pietro Bembo's text of the poem, Sansovino mediates between a 'Florentine' and 'Venetian' Dante. Therefore, Sansovino's *aggiunte* allowed him to take on multiple positions in the *questione della lingua* and to appeal to the expectations of several print markets and audiences.

The identification of the speakers in the volume also establishes the authors' relationship to each other, their authority, and where they fit in the genealogy of Dante commentators. One can plainly 'see' that the relationship between

the two commentators is not equal. To return to the metaphor of a play it is clear there are protagonists and those with minor speaking roles. Sansovino's appropriation of the dialogue genre not only demonstrates the way that he perceived the relationship between the two commentators; it also reflects how he wished the reader to interpret this relationship. Whether the readers actually interpreted the hierarchy between the two commentators in this way cannot be fully ascertained, especially because the dialogue, as a genre, required a particularly active form of reader engagement.[85] Furthermore, this dialogic encounter is signaled visually and typographically. The interpretation and evaluation of this encounter is signaled prior to actually reading the text itself; that is, the relationship, the value judgment, is already established visually. The dialogue, and the act of naming specifically, thus expresses both organizational and authoritative distinctions among the authors of the volume.

However, several unnamed characters make important appearances on the stage. As mentioned, Sansovino did not use Vellutello's edition of the text or his cursive type. He did, however, use the Aldine text for poem. He also used his italic type, which would have been easily recognizable to anyone familiar with Aldo's printed editions. The italic type would have also conjured images of the previous editions of the poem. This visual recall is something that occurred specifically in this type of book which strategically combined previous moments of the book's *fortuna.* M.B Parkes has shown how certain scripts were not only markers of status, but also how the choice of script was highly contentious.[86] Editors of the *Commedia* used different font types as a way to contend with Bembo on an aesthetic and editorial level.

For example, Bernardino Stagnino's 1512 edition of the *Commedia* boasted "novamente in littera cursiva impresse" on the title page.[87] Publishers and editors clearly made strategic decisions to use italic, or roman, or other cursive alternatives (like that of Vellutello). In promoting his own "reduction" of the poem, Vellutello polemically declared that all modern editions set in print were "incorrettissimi e sopra tutto quello impresso stampato da Aldo."[88] Sansovino's decision shows that – despite Vellutello's reproach – the Aldine text maintained its standing and continued to be considered the authoritative version of the poem. The use of his type and Bembo's text, and its associations with accuracy, fidelity, and prestige, again illuminates how Sansovino took advantage of all the best texts, illustrations, and commentaries at his disposal.

Any discussion of authorship needs to also consider the publishers and other 'authors' involved in the physical production of the book. As we saw in the Aldine edition, the printer's mark not only served as an organizing and decorative element, it also expressed the publisher's authorship and authority over the publication of the book. The Sessa family was responsible for publishing the three editions of *Commedia* in 1564, 1578, and 1596. They brought in Domenico Nicolini da Sabbio for the first and third editions and Francesco Rampazetto for the second edition to assist in the three publications. In all editions the Sessa are mentioned on both the title page and in the colophon variously preceded by "appresso," "ad instantia," and "per." A variation on their printer's device, a cat with a mouse hanging from its mouth, also appears in the colophon of all three publications. More significant to this discussion is the use of the printer's mark in the 1578 edition. The Sessa furnished yet another variation of their device to serve as a header for each *cantica*. This version contained the depiction of a cat alert on its hind legs in the center with a frame displaying the printer's motto "Dissimilium infida sotietas" [Fig. 16]. Around this central grouping is an elaborate array of figures including satyrs, putti, masks, urns, volutes, and cornucopia. More than just a header, this reiteration of the Sessa device stands in for the signature of the publisher and alerts readers to their presence as additional authors of the poem. These subsidiary authors

Figure 16. Variation of Sessa printer's mark as header of each *cantica*. Detail of 1578 Edition. Beinecke Library, Yale University (1976 +143).

emphasize the idea of multiple authorship so characteristic of Cinquecento literary editions. They also show how they delineated their interventions and claimed their status as authors through both visual and verbal strategies in the book.

Speaking to the Past and Present: The Glossary and Concluding Remarks

Christina Roaf has shown how the *Tavola* was editorially significant in Sansovino's edition of Boccaccio's *Decamerone* (1546).[89] She demonstrates how the editor's innovations, his use of the biography and glossary specifically, made Boccaccio's text more approachable for readers interested in studying and imitating vernacular prose. Similarly, the *tavola* in the *Commedia* furnished a critical space for Sansovino to dialogue with previous scholarship and contemporary audiences [Fig. 17]. Indeed, its importance to Sansovino's authorship is evidenced by the fact that it appears at the front of the book, immediately after the dedication letter. Brian Richardson argues that glossaries allowed the editor to intervene and mediate between a book and its audience, thus permitting scholars to posit a reader or readers, depending on the information they provided.[90] The glossary, according to Sansovino, seeks to explain the "voci difficili" or difficult terms that a reader might

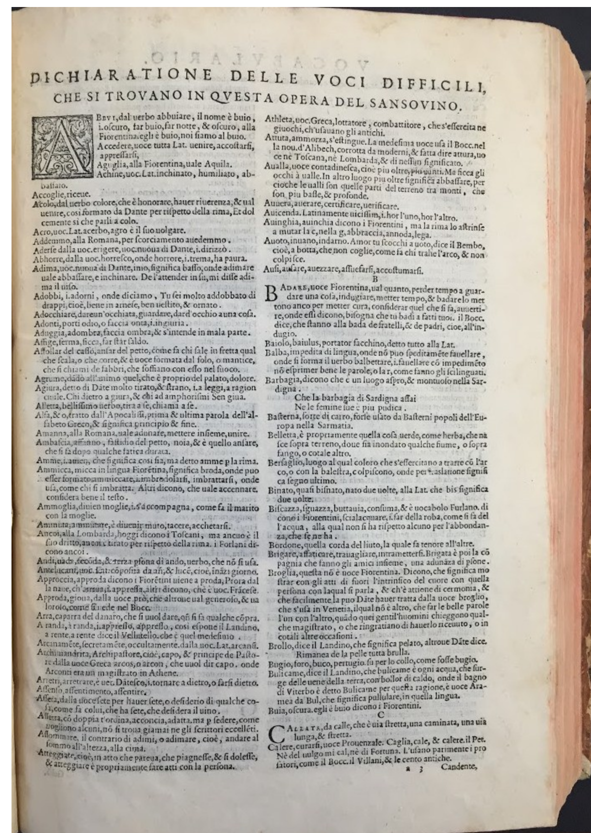

DICHIARATIONE DELLE VOCI DIFFICILI, CHE SI TROVANO IN QVESTA OPERA DEL SANSOVINO.

Figure 17. Glossary. Detail of 1578 edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

encounter in the text. The entries providea simple definition, current usage, and are often accompanied by its root such as "latino," "greco," and "fiorentino," in addition to other authors that have employed it in their works. For example, the entry for "talento" states: "voglia, appetito. Voce usata anco dal Boccaccio nelle novelle." The kind of information Sansovino provided was in keeping with the fashion of other dictionaries of the time, such as Alberto Accarisio's *Vocabolario* (1550). Dolce also provided a *Tavola* in his 1555 edition of the *Commedia*. However, Sansovino provides more words and more contextual information than these authors. He also identifies many of Dante's neologisms, stating "voce Dantesca," "verbo Dantesco," "alla Dantesca" or in an exceptional statement of authority "son voci di Dante e non d'altri."

Continuing the dialogue with Landino and Vellutello, he uses their commentaries to validate the definitions he provides. Sansovino also importantly notes where Landino and Vellutello do not define certain terms. He states for the word "sprazzo" that "il Landino e il Velutello non toccano pure una parola di questa voce." In this way, Sansovino specifies his intervention in distinction to and in addition to Landino and Vellutello, asserting his role as a literary authority equal or superior to the commentators themselves.

Given the content of the glossary, the entries anticipate problems that readers would have with the language of the text, both as a work of poetry but also as a work written in Trecento Italian. This suggests that there was enough distance between sixteenth-century readers and the fourteenth-century text to require a glossary, and that readers would have difficulty reading the poem both in terms of form and content. The inclusion of a glossary, as well as other prefatory material, suggests an audience that is interested in Dante, but cannot yet read his works without assistance or further clarification. The glossary, as the genre of dialogue, by illuminating the *voci oscure* reveals the very nature of the *Commedia,* considered to be the ultimate and highest expression of vernacular literature. The commentaries explain the meaning of the text and particularly the meaning of obscure points in the poem. The glossary, like the portrait, allegories, and additions in the *Apologia*, translates the language of the text for a Renaissance audience. The glossary furnishes an important place in the book where we see Sansovino occupying the role of a mediator, stage director, author, and character. Additions therefore allow Sansovino to bring the past to the present and to mediate between Dante and his new readers.

The hybrid and accumulative nature of this edition of the *Commedia* presents a compelling case study for the examination of authorship in the Renaissance. By virtue of its innovative and protean editor, Francesco Sansovino, this *Commedia* combined many 'authorial' moments that spanned more than two-hundred years, from Dante's creation of the poem in the early fourteenth century to Landino and Vellutello's commentaries published in 1481 and in 1544, and finally to Sansovino's publication of all three in 1564, 1578, and 1596. Rather than representing a synchronic moment in history, a point of origination, this edition represents a diachronic moment, a meeting point across time and space. This meeting, *appresso* Sansovino, allowed for two figures, Landino and Vellutello, to engage in a dialogue about Dante and for Dante to speak to a range of Renaissance readers.

Notes

1. *Dante con l'espositione di Christoforo Landino, Et di Alessandro Vellvtello, Sopra la Sua Comedia dell'Inferno, del Purgatorio, & del Paradiso. Con tavole, argomenti, & allegorie, & riformato, riueduto, & ridotto alla sua uera lettura, Per Francesco Sansovino Fiorentino. In Venetia, Appresso Giovambattista, Marchiò Sessa, & fratelli. 1564.* Venice, 1564. Folio. The three editions retain the images from the Marcolini 1544 edition and the organization of the materials, but differ in their dedication letters, xylographs, headers, and some of the titles. The 1578 and 1596 editions contain the dedication letter by Francesco Rampazetto, who was brought in to give financial assistance. He dedicates the work to Guglielmo Gonzaga, Duke of Mantova and Monferrato.
2. The classic study on paratexts is Gerard Genette, *Paratexts. Thresholds of Interpretation*, Cambridge 1997. Regarding Dante and paratexts specifically see Marco Santoro, *Dante, Petrarca, Boccaccio, e il paratesto. Le edizioni rinascimentali delle tre corone*, Rome 2006. For a more general account of paratexts in the Renaissance see Helen Smith and Louise Smithson, *Renaissance Paratexts*, Cambridge, U.K. 2011.

   For more information on Cristoforo Landino and his commentary see Michele Barbi, *Della fortuna di Dante nel secolo XVI,* Pisa 1890; Deborah Parker, *Commentary and Ideology. Dante in the Renaissance*, Raleigh, NC 1993; Paolo Procaccioli, *Comento sopra la Comedia*, Roma 2001; Simon A. Gilson, *Dante and Renaissance Florence*, Cambridge, U.K. 2005. For more information on Alessandro Vellutello and his commentary see

Ernest H. Wilkins, *Vellutello's Map of Vaucluse and the "Carte de Tendre"*, in: *Modern Philology*, vol. XXIX, no. 3, 1932, p. 275–280; Gino Belloni, *Un eretico nella Venezia del Bembo. Alessandro Vellutello*, in: *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, 157, 1980, p. 43–74; Alessandro Vellutello, *La 'Comedia' di Dante Alighieri con la nova* esposizione, ed. Donato Pirovano, Rome 2006; H. Wayne Storey, *The Economies of Authority. Bembo, Vellutello, and the Reconstruction of "Authentic Petrarch"*, in: '*Accessus ad auctores'. Studies in honor of Christopher Kleinhenz*, eds. Fabian Alfie and Andrea Dini, Tempe 2011. Also see Ernest H. Wilkins, *The Making of the "Canzoniere" and other Petrarchan Studies*, Rome 1951.

3. The format is also similar to a theatrical play, with the characters' names appearing in an abbreviated form in the left margin. Both genres emphasize the theatricality of the encounter between the two commentators through the layout.
4. A classic case is Petrarch's letters addressed to dead authors including Virgil, Horace, and Cicero in Book XXIV of the *Familiares.* Here, Sansovino is communicating with commentators through their texts on the *Commedia*. On the genre of dialogue in general see Virginia Cox, *The Renaissance Dialogue. Literary Dialogue in its Social and Political Contexts. Castiglione to Galileo*, Cambridge 2011; Evelyn Lincoln, *Brilliant Discourse. Pictures and Readers in Early Modern Rome*, New Haven 2014.
5. Studies that emphasize the importance of the book as a material object to the production and reception of texts, demonstrating how the object of the book shapes the relationship between author, text, and reader: Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine, *From Humanism to the Humanities. Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe*, London 1986; Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books. Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe Between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, Stanford, CA 1994; Armando Petrucci, *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy. Studies in the History of Written Culture*, New Haven 1995; Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book. Print and Knowledge in the Making*, Chicago 1998; Wendy Wall, *Authorship and the Material Conditions of Writing*, in: *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1500–1600*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney, Cambridge, U.K. 2000. For the way form contributes to the meaning of content see Michael Camille, *Visualising in the Vernacular. A New Cycle of Early Fourteenth-Century Bible Illustrations*, in: *The Burlington Magazine*, 130, 1988, p. 97–106; Paul F. Grendler, *Form and Function in Italian Renaissance Popular Books*, in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 46, no. 3, 1993, p. 451–85; M. B. Parkes, *Pause and Effect. An Introduction to the History of Punctuation in the West*, Berkeley, 1993; Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory. A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, Cambridge, U.K. 2008; Rhiannon Daniels, *Boccaccio and the Book. Production and Reading in Italy, 1340–1520*, London 2009.
6. The scholarship on the reception of Dante's *Commedia* is vast, I have listed the most relevant studies for this article. See Corrado Bologna, *Tradizione e fortuna dei classici*, Torino 1993; Michael Caesar, *Dante. The Critical Heritage*, London 1995; Paolo Procaccioli, *Commenti Danteschi dei secoli XIV, XV, XVI*, Rome 1999; Richard H. Lansing, *The Dante Encyclopedia,* New York 2000; Zygmunt Baranski, *Italy's Three Crowns. Reading Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio,* Oxford, U.K. 2007. For studies on Dante's early modern reception in particular see: Michele Barbi, *Della fortuna di Dante nel secolo XVI*, Pisa 1890; Giosuè Carducci, *Dante*, Bologna 1940; Umberto Cosmo, *Con Dante attraverso il Seicento*, Bari 1946; Aldo Vallone, *La critica dantesca nel Settecento e altri saggi danteschi*, Florence 1961 and *L'interpretazione di Dante nel Cinquecento*, Firenze 1969; Carlo Dionisotti, *Varia fortuna di Dante*, Napoli 1966 and *Geografia e storia della letteratura italiana*, Torino 1967; Parker 1993, *Commentary and Ideology*; Brian Richardson, *Editing Dante's Commedia 1472–1629*, in: *Dante Now. Current Trends in Dante Studies*, ed. T.J. Cachey, Notre Dame, USA 1995 and *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy. The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470–1600*, Cambridge, U.K. 1999; Saverio Bellomo, *Dizionario dei commentatori danteschi. L'esegesi della Commedia da Iacopo Alighieri a Nidobeato*, Firenze 2004; Gilson 2005, *Dante and Renaissance Florence*; Giuseppe Tavani, *Dante nel Seicento*, Firenze 1976; Francesco Mazzoni, *Con Dante per Dante II. I commentatori, la fortuna*, Rome 2015.
7. For Sansovino's personal and editorial biography see Emanuele Cicogna, *Delle iscrizioni veneziane,* vol. I–VII, Venice, 1824–53 and volume IV in particular published in 1834, which contains an index of Sansovino's editions; G. Sforza, *F. Sansovino e le sue opere storiche*, in: *Memorie della R. Accademia delle Scienze di Torino* II, XLVII, 1897, p. 27–66; Guido Pusinich, *Un poligrafo veneziano del '500. Francesco Sansovino,* in: *Pagine Istriane* VIII, 1911, p. 1–18.
8. Francesco Sansovino, *Venetia citta nobilissima et singolare*, *descritta in XIIII libri da m. Francesco Sansouino*. In Venetia, appresso Iacomo Sansouino, 1581. Venice 1581. Quarto.
9. Elena Bonora, *Ricerche su Francesco Sansovino. Imprenditore librario e letterato*, Venice 1994. Also

see M.C. Panzera, *Francesco Sansovino e l'Umanesimo veneziano. La fonte nascosta dei modelli di lettere del Del Secretario*, in: *Italianistica*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2012, p. 21–48 and in no. 3, 2012, p. 11–30.

10. Francesco Sansovino, *Del secretario di m. Francesco Sansouino libri quattro*. In Venetia: appresso Francesco Rampazetto, 1564. Ottavo.
11. Adriano Moz, *Francesco Sansovino. A Polygraph in Cinquecento Venice. His Life and Works*, PhD Dissertation, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill 1985.
12. Paul F. Grendler, *Francesco Sansovino and Italian Popular History 1560–1600*, in: *Studies in the Renaissance*, vol. 16, 1969, p. 139–180.
13. Paul F. Grendler, *Form and Function in Italian Renaissance Popular Books*, in: *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 46, no. 3, 1993, p. 451–85.
14. Christina Roaf, *Francesco Sansovino e le sue "Lettere sopra le diece giornate del Decamerone"*, in: *Quaderni di Retorica e Poetica,* vol. I, 1985, p. 91–98 and Roaf, *The Presentation of the 'Decameron'* 1988, p. 109–21.
15. See Parker 1993, *Commentary and Ideology*; Gilson 2005, *Dante and Renaissance Florence*.
16. Sansovino most explicitly identifies himself as Florentine in a letter to Bernardo Cavalcanti: "… non faranno però che i Fiorentini in qualunque luogo essi andranno non sieno onorati. E se non che io, essendo Fiorentino…" Quoted from Christina Roaf's edition of *Le lettere sopra le dieci giornate del Decamerone di m. Giovanni Boccaccio / Francesco Sansovino*, 2003.
17. See Roaf 1985, *Francesco Sansovino* and Parker 1993, *Commentary and Ideology*.
18. Sansovino edited the *Decamerone* and Petrarch's *Rime* in 1546. It is interesting to note that Sansovino's edition of the latter also strategically included Vellutello's commentary. See Bonora 1994, *Ricerche su Francesco Sansovino,* p. 48.
19. For background and bibliography on the publishers mentioned see Martin Lowry, *The World of Aldus Manutius. Business and Scholarship in Renaissance Venice*, Ithaca 1979; Carlo Dionisotti, *Aldo Manuzio Umanista e Editore*, Milano 1995; Angela Nuovo, *Alessandro Paganino (1509–1538)*, Padova 1995; Christopher Coppens and Angela Nuovo, *I Giolito e la stampa nell'Italia del XVI secolo*, Geneva 2005; William A. Pettas, *The Giunti of Florence. A Renaissance Printing and Publishing family. A History of the Florentine Firm and a Catalogue of the Editions*, New Castle, DE 2013.
20. On medieval authorship in general see Alastair Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship. Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages*, Philadelphia 1988 and *The Significance of the Medieval Theory of Authorship*, in: *Authorship from Plato to Postmodern. A Reader*, Edinburgh 1995; *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism, c. 1100–c. 1375. The Commentary Tradition*, eds. Alastair Minnis, A.B Scott, and David Wallace, Oxford 1988; Rita Copeland, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 1995. Also see M.D. Chenu, *Auctor, Actor, Autor*, in: *Bulletin du Cange: Archivium Latinitatis Medii Aevi* III, 1927, p. 81–86. On Dante as an *auctor* see Albert Russell Ascoli, *Dante and the Making of a Modern Author*, Cambridge, U.K. 2008.
21. Ascoli 2008, *Dante*, p. 7.
22. Rita Copeland has demonstrated how translators and commentators started to be considered autonomous authors in the medieval period. See Copeland 1995, *Rhetoric, Hermeneutics, and Translation*, p. 195.
23. I have used Maggini's edition of the *Rettorica*: *La rettorica. Testo critico di Francesco Maggini*, Firenze 1968.
24. The title of the 1481 edition is *Comento di Christophoro Landino Fiorentino sopra la Comedia di Dante Alighieri Poeta Fiorentino*.
25. That being said, Pietro Bembo's evaluations of the *Commedia* and exclusion of Dante as a poetic model, meant that Dante's position was not a given, but still needed to be defended and asserted.
26. *Il decamerone di M. Giouanni Boccaccio*. In Vinegia appresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, LDXVI. Venice 1546. Quarto. Also see *Della origine, et de' fatti delle famiglie illustri d'Italia, Di m. Francesco Sansovino libro primo. In Vinegia, Presso Altobello Salicato, MDLXXXII*, and his collaboration with Francesco Alunno in *Della fabrica del mondo,* Venice 1560, in Nuovo 2005, *I Giolito*, p. 187.
27. For a general history of commentary on the *Commedia* and relevant bibliography see Bellomo 2004, *Dizionario dei commentatori danteschi.*
28. See Chartier 1994, *The Order of Books* and Part Three of *The Author's Hand and the Printer's Mind. Transformations of the Written Word in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, U.K 2014; Adrian Johns, *The Physiology of Reading in Books and the Sciences in History*, eds. N. Jardine and M. Frasca-Spada, Cambridge, U.K. 2000, p. 291–314 and *How to Acknowledge a Revolution*, in: *American Historical Review*, 107, 2002, p. 106–25. Also see Inge Crosman and Susan Suleiman, *The Reader in the Text. Essays on Audience and Interpretation*, Princeton 1980; Sean Burke, *The Death and Return of the Author. Criticism and Subjectivity in Barthes, Foucault, and Derrida*, Edinburgh, 1998.
29. Storey 2011, *The Economies of Authority*.
30. Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite*, eds. Luciano Bellosi and Aldo Rossi, vol. I, Torino 1991, p. 477.

31. Richardson 1994, *Print Culture*, p. 144–6. Richardson states that Sansovino and the Sessa "combined editorial traditions of an earlier period with those of the mid-cinquecento."
32. *Portavoce* signifies here both a representative of the book, but also a communication of a specific point of view and critical interpretation of the text.
33. See Ann Blair, *The Theater of Nature. Jean Bodin and Renaissance Science,* Princeton 1997, who supplies a detailed history of the concept of the "Theatre of Nature" and other types of theatres, p. 153–179. See the section "The Book as a Theater" in particular, p. 159–167.
34. The four kinds of commentary in the medieval period were outlined by Bonaventure. The *compilator* is someone who literally compiles, who brings together authors as well as organizes the manuscript and its quires. For Bonaventure, a compiler is not on the level of an author or commentator. The editor in the Cinquecento is a unique combination of all these forms of authorship and commentary.
35. M.M. Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, trans. Michael Holquist, Austin 1981 and the chapter *Discourse in the Novel*, p. 259–422 in particular and *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, ed. and trans. Caryl Emerson, Minneapolis 1984. Also see Peter Burke *The Renaissance Dialogue*, in: *Renaissance Studies*, vol. 3, no. 1, 1989, p. 1–12 for a useful analysis on the relationship of Bakhtin's concept of "polyphony" and the genre of the dialogue in the Renaissance.
36. M.M. Bakhtin 1984, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*.
37. On the organization and tools for reading scholarly information see Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote. A Curious History*, Cambridge, U.S.A. 1997; Ann Blair, *Too Much to Know. Managing Scholarly Information before the Modern Age*, New Haven 2010. For the way dedication letters and reprints add new meanings to original works see Roger Chartier, *Princely Patronage and the Economy of Dedication*, in: *Forms and Meanings. Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer*, Philadelphia 1995; Evelyn Lincoln, *Invention, Origin, and Dedication. Republishing Women's Prints in Early Modern Italy,* in: *Making and Unmaking Intellectual Property. Creative Production in Legal and Cultural Perspective*, Chicago 2011, p. 339–357.
38. As has been pointed out to me by Ronald L. Martinez, this title referred to Dante's own description of his work in his Epistle to Cangrande della Scala, and served to emphasize the fact that Bembo had used manuscript copies for his edition.
39. See Parker 1993, *Commentary and Ideology* and Caesar 1995, *Dante* for the religious context of Dante's *fortuna* in the sixteenth century.
40. Vellutello dedicated his *Commedia* to Pope Paul III.
41. The quote is taken from Lina Bolzoni, *La stanza della memoria. Modelli letterari e iconografici nell'età della stampa*, Torino 1995, p. 193. The quote appears in the 1564 edition of *In materia dell'arte libri tre* on folio 4v.
42. On the importance of the frontispiece and its relation to both authorship and the illustrated dialogue see Lincoln 2014, p. 226–35.
43. Victoria Kirkham, *Fabulous Vernacular. Boccaccio's "Filocolo" and the Art of Medieval Fiction*, Ann Arbor 2001, p. 80–82.
44. Kirkham 2001, p. 81.
45. To my knowledge, no such title appears in fourteenth-century manuscripts. The most similar title page is the Jean de Tournes edition "Il Dante" of 1547, Lyon, which also contains a small medallion portrait. Guillaume Rouille also titles his edition "Dante" Lyon 1551 and so does Giovanni Antonio Morando, in his Venetian edition of 1554. Giovan Giorgio Trissino heads the title page with Dante's name in his edition of the *De vulgari eloquentia* in 1529, but it is in small font. However, these do not have quite the same visual impact considering the ornate portrait and folio size of Sansovino's edition. Petrarch is also titled in this way, "Il Petrarcha" titles the Giolito edition of 1538 for example.
46. On the significance of author portraits in printed books see Giuseppina Zappella, *Il ritratto nel libro italiano del Cinquecento*, Milan 1988; Ruth Mortimer, *The Author's Image. Italian Sixteenth-Century Printed Portraits,* Cambridge, U.S.A 1996; Peter Burke, *Reflections on the Frontispiece Portrait in the Renaissance*, in: *Bildnis und Image, Das Porträt zwischen Intention und Rezeption*, eds. Andreas Köstler and Ernst Seidl, Köln et al. 1998, p. 151-162. For a more general survey of frontispieces see Francesco Barberi, *Il frontespizio nel libro italiano del Quattrocento e del Cinquecento*, Milan 1969.
47. For more information about the Sessa publishing house see Silvia Curi Nicolardi, *Una società tipografico-editoriale a Venezia nel secolo XVI. Melchiorre Sessa e Pietro di Ravani, 1516–1525*, Florece, 1984.
48. Commentaries often used the preposition "di" and "da." Sansovino uses "da" for his edition of the *Filocolo* to describe his editing. "Per" was most commonly used for publishers, along with "ad instantia" and "appresso." For example, in Vellutello's edition of the *Commedia*, "per" precedes the publisher's name Francesco Marcolini.

49. For the partial definition of these terms, I consulted the Accademia la Crusca dictionary online in addition to comparing this edition to other editions of the *Commedia* that also employ similar terminology. The dictionary lists three different definitions of “ridurre” that roughly translate as “return, recover, and consist.” Also see Moz 1985, 135–6.
50. *La Diuina Commedia di Dante Alighieri nobile fiorentino ridotta a miglior lezione dagli Accademici della Crusca. In Firenze: per Domenico Manzani, 1595.* Florence 1595. Ottavo.
51. See Paolo Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza corretto. La stampa e le revisioni editoriali dei testi letterari italiani (1470–1570),* Bologna 1991.
52. See Bonora 1994, *Ricerche su Francesco Sansovino,* p. 48.
53. This is a tentative suggestion with appearances of “ridurre” in a wide variety of contexts including in Machiavelli in a political context and in Vasari in a visual one. What cannot be underestimated is the importance of “ridurre” to Renaissance terminologies, along the lines of “inventione.”
54. For a general summary and bibliography on portraiture in Renaissance books see Zappella 1988, *Il ritratto nel libro italiano del Cinquecento* and Peter Burke 1998, *Reflections on the Frontispiece Portrait in the Renaissance*.
55. See Tommaso Casini, *Ritratti parlanti. Collezionismo e biografie illustrate nei secoli 16. e 17,* Firenze 2004 and Cecil Clough, *Italian Renaissance Portraiture and Printed Portrait-Books*, in: *The Italian Book: 1465–1800. Studies Presented to Dennis E. Rhodes on his 70th Birthday*, ed. Denis V. Reidy, London 1993.
56. Aby Warburg, *The Renewal of Pagan Antiquity. Contributions to the Cultural History of the European Renaissance*, ed. K. Forster, Los Angeles 1999, p. 161. Also see Joost Keizer and Todd Richardson, *The Transformation of Vernacular Expression in the Early Modern Arts*, Leiden 2012.
57. For Sansovino’s collaboration with the Giolito see Nuovo 2005, *I Giolito*, p. 105.
58. See Marco Ruffini, *Art without an Author. Vasari’s Lives and Michelangelo’s Death*, New York 2011. There are similarities in the volutes and monumentality of the frame to Michelangelo’s tomb, although it cannot be said for certain whether the artist was aware of the tomb or if the frame refers to it specifically. It does seem to me to express a Florentine monumentality, especially if compared to the more Venetian motifs of the *Casa Orsina* portrait frames that contain Veronese type figures. Although I do not elaborate on this topic here, the relationship between the frame and its architectural and artistic context merits further investigation.
59. For Michelangelo’s various epithets see Patricia A. Emison, *Creating the “Divine” Artist. From Dante to Michelangelo*, Leiden 2011.
60. The portrait is held at the Minneapolis Institute of Art. See Deborah Parker, *Vasari’s Portrait of Six Tuscan Poets. A Visible Literary History*, in: *Lectura Dantis*, 22–23, 1998, p. 45–62.
61. See Leonard Barkan, *Unearthing the Past. Archaeology and Aesthetics in the Making of Renaissance Culture*, New Haven 1999.
62. Some examples are the L.A. Giunti edition of the 1529 *Commedia* based on Botticelli and the *Convivio* (Zuane Antonio da Sabio, Venice, 1521) based on Botticelli.
63. For a description of Bronzino’s portrait of Dante see *Venere e amore. Michelangelo e la nuova bellezza ideale*, eds. Franca Falletti and Jonathan Katz Nelson, Firenze 2002, p. 184–6. Also see Richard Thayer Holbrook, *Portraits of Dante from Giotto to Raffael. Critical Study, with a Concise Iconography*, London 1921; Jonathan Nelson, *Dante Portraits in Sixteenth Century Florence*, in: *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 1992, p. 59–77; Victoria Kirkham, *Dante’s Phantom, Petrarch’s Specter. Bronzino’s Portrait of the Poet Laura Battiferra*, in: *Lectura Dantis Special Issue*: *Visibile Parlare. Dante and the Art of the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Deborah Parker, 1998, p. 63–139.
64. Richardson 1994, *Print Culture*, p. 144.
65. Lincoln 2011, *Invention, Origin, and Dedication*.
66. Exceptions to this are Bernardino Daniello’s illustrated edition of 1568 and the Accademia della Crusca edition of 1595 which contained a map of the *Inferno*.
67. Deborah Parker 1993, C*ommentary and Ideology*, p. 148.
68. For a detailed summary of these debates in the late sixteenth century see Michael Brunner, *Die Illustrierung von Dantes Divina Commedia*, Munich 1999, p. 75–134 and Richardson, 1994, *Print Culture,* p. 157. Also see Ottavio Gigli, *Studi sulla Divina Commedia di Galileo Galilei, Vincenzo Borghini ed altri*, Firenze 1855; Benedetto Croce, *Un critico di poesia. V. Borghini*, in: *Poeti e scrittori del pieno e del tardo Rinascimento*, Bari 1945; A. Vallone, *Un momento della critica dantesca nel tardo Cinquecento*, in: *Aspetti dell’esegesi dantesca nei sec. XVI e XVII*, Lecce 1966, p. 94–127 (originally published in 1962–3).
69. Christina Roaf shows how these trends influenced the publication of Boccaccio’s *Decameron* toward the mid-sixteenth century. See Roaf 1988, *The Presentation of the Decameron*, p. 110.
70. Parker 1993, C*ommentary and Ideology*, p. 150.
71. See Hans-Robert Jauss, *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception,* Minneapolis 1982.
72. Ibid.

73. Michael Baxandall, *Words for Pictures. Seven Papers on Renaissance Art and Criticism*, New Haven 2003, p. 99–116**.** On the difference between the description and experience of art and language see Baxandall in general and in particular *The Language of Art History*, in: *New Literary History*, 10, 1979, p. 453–65. Also see Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Laocoön. An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*, trans. and ed. Edward Allen McCormick, Indianapolis 1962.
74. On the role of illustrations in relation to texts and in the book see Lina Bolzoni, *Web of Images. Vernacular Preaching from its Origins to Saint Bernardino of Siena*, Burlington 2004; Sachiko Kusukawa, *Picturing the Book of Nature. Image, Text, and Argument in Sixteenth-Century Human Anatomy and Medical Botany*, Chicago 2011; Lincoln 2014, *Brilliant Discourse*.
75. Barkan 1999, *Unearthing the Past*, p. 65–117 and p. 269. This idea that images can be read in the same way as a text derives largely from Clifford Geertz and his assertion that culture is a text. For contributions to this debate see Erwin Panofsky, *Studies in Iconology. Humanistic Themes in the Art of the Renaissance*, New York 1939; Rensselaer W. Lee, *Ut Pictura Poesis. The Humanistic Theory of Painting*, in: *The Art Bulletin*, 22, no. 4, 1940, p. 197–269; E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, London 1968; David Rosand, *Ut pictura poeta. Meaning in Titian's Poesie*, in: *New Literary History*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1972, p. 527–546; Meyer Schapiro, *Words and Pictures. On the Literal and the Symbolic in the Illustration of a Text*, The Hague 1973; Norman Bryson, *Word and Image. French Painting of the Ancien Regime*, Cambridge, U.K. 1981; Emile Male, *Religious Art in France*, Princeton 1986; Mieke Bal, *Reading Rembrandt. Beyond the Word-Image Opposition. The Northrop Frye Lectures in Literary Theory*, Cambridge, U.K. 1991. For the intrinsic power and properties of images see David Freedberg, *The Power of Images. Studies in the History and Theory of Response*, Chicago 1989.
76. The author of the illustrations is not named either in Vellutello's 1544 edition nor here. Some theories have been put forth about the artist being Giovanni Britto, who worked for the Marcolini press at the time Vellutello published his commentary in 1544.
77. Bakhtin is also useful for thinking about this distancing of a character from the "real author," or as he calls it the "posited author" and "teller." See Bakhtin 1981, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 312.
78. On the links between allegory and authorship see Robert Hollander, *Allegory in Dante's "Commedia"*, Princeton 1969; Giuseppe Mazzotta, *Dante, Poet of the Desert. History in the "Divine Comedy"*, Princeton 1979; David Quint, *Origin and Originality in Renaissance Literature. Versions of the Source,* New Haven 1983. Dante outlines these modes of reading in the *Epistle to Can Grande della Scala.* He also discusses allegory in Book II of the *Convivio*. Also see Ronald L. Martinez, *Allegory*, in: *Dante Encyclopedia*, ed. Richard Lansing, New York 2000, p. 24-34.
79. Giambattista Gelli and Pier Francesco Giambullari published their "Letture" primarily through the Torrentino press with full sponsorship of the Medici government (the Medici stemma often appears on the title page of these editions). David Quint argues that in fact Renaissance writers moved away from allegorical modes of writing in *Origin and Originality.* After the Council of Trent the allegorical interpretation of the *Commedia* might have been problematic. Yet allegory remained a predominant way of interpreting the *Commedia* in the Academies and in the editions of the poem from the mid-fifteenth century to the eighteenth century (the "allegoria" was still published until this late date). Deborah Parker points out that dedicating the book to a Pope might have been preemptive on Sansovino's part, which is further evidenced by his mentioning of Giacomo Naclante, who was at the Council of Trent and who Sansovino describes as a great defender of the faith against heretics: see Parker 1993, *Commentary and Ideology*, p. 148–149. For the Accademia della Crusca's lectures and meeting notes about Dante see Severina Parodi, *Sugli autori della Divina Commedia di Crusca del 1595*, in: *Studi danteschi*, 44, 1967, p. 211–22 and *Dante e L'Accademia della Crusca*, in: *Studi Danteschi*, 56, 1984, p. 169–88.
80. Chartier rightly states that the order established and imposed by the producers of the book does not prescribe the 'order' and behavior with which readers interpret and encounter texts. This is evidenced by the marginal notes in editions which reflect specific interests of readers. For example, in a 1564 edition at Boston College (Burns Library, PQ4302 .B64 RARE OVERSIZE) the reader was primarily interested in the measurements of the otherworldly realms, underlining measurements and writing them in the margins for repetition and memorization. He also wrote in VELL. where the printers did not label his commentary. In a 1578 example in the exhibition at Notre Dame, curated by Deborah Parker, the edition contains notes solely on the Landino commentary. In the 1578 edition at the Beinecke Library at Yale (1976 +143), the reader colored in the title page, illustrations, and decorative divisions, indicating that perhaps it was meant more for display or that the reader was most inspired by the visual elements of the edition.

81. Martin Kemp, *From "Mimesis" to "Fantasia". The Quattrocento Vocabulary of Creation, Inspiration and Genius in the Visual Arts*, in: *Viator*, vol. 8, 1977, p. 347–348.
82. The initials are different in the 1578 edition, but the use of them for the first letter of the canto and the first letter of Landino's commentary is seen across all three editions.
83. Gilson 2005, *Dante and Renaissance Florence,* p. 175–180 and Procaccioli 2001, *Comento sopra la Comedia*.
84. Parker 1993, *Commentary and Ideology*, p. 149.
85. On the active reading of the dialogue genre see Cox 1992, *Literary Dialogue*.
86. See Parkes 1993, *Pause and Effect*. For the way script marked status in Boccaccio see Rhiannon Daniels, *Boccaccio and the Book. Production and Reading in Italy, 1340–1520*, London 2009 and Martin Eisner, *Boccaccio and the Invention of Italian Literature. Dante, Petrarch, Cavalcanti, and the Authority of the Vernacular*, Cambridge, U.K. 2013. Also see Marco Cursi, *La scrittura e i libri di Giovanni Boccaccio*, Rome 2013.
87. *Opere del diuino poeta Danthe con suoi comenti: recorrecti et con ogne diligentia nouamente in littera cursiua impresse. Bernardino Stagnino.* Venice. 1512. Quarto.
88. Vellutello, Letter to the Readers, 1544.
89. See Roaf 1988, *The Presentation of the "Decameron"*, p. 109–21.
90. Richardson 1994, *Print Culture*, p. 111–114 and 144.

Figures

Figure 1. Title Page. *Dante con l'espositione di Christoforo Landino, Et di Alessandro Vellvtello, Sopra la Sua Comedia dell'Inferno, del Purgatorio, & del Paradiso. Con tavole, argomenti, & allegorie, & riformato, riueduto, & ridotto alla sua uera lettura, Per Francesco Sansovino Fiorentino. In Venetia, Appresso Giovambattista, Marchiò Sessa, & fratelli. 1564.* Venice, 1564. Folio. Houghton Library, Harvard University (Typ 525 64.316).

Figure 2. Dialogue format with Landino (LAND.) and Vellutello (VELL.) in the left margin and one VELL. in the right margin. Detail from *Purgatorio* XI in 1578 edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578), 203r.

Figure 3. First pages of *Inferno I* with woodcut illustration on the left and text and commentary on the right. Detail of 1564 Edition. John J. Burns Library Special Collections, Boston College.

Figure 4. *Le terze rime di Dante*, Aldo Manuzio, Venice, 1502. 8°. Houghton Library, Harvard University (*IC.D2358.472c.1502 (A)).

Figure 5. Dedication Letter to Pope Pio IV by Francesco Sansovino. 1564 Edition. Houghton Library, Harvard University (IC D2358 472c 1564).

Figure 6. Detail of title page with the title "Dante" in 1578 Edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

Figure 7. Detail of hand-colored frontispiece portrait. 1578 Edition. Beinecke Library, Yale University (1976 +143). Inscription below reads "Filippus Butii Romanus Architectus Anno 1772."

Figure 8. Comedia del Divino Poeta Danthe. MD XXXVI. In Vinegia ad instantia di M. Gioanni Giolitto da Trino. Venice. 1536. 4°. Beinecke Library, Yale University (1977 828).

Figure 9. La Divina Comedia di Dante. In Vinegia. Appresso Gabriel Giolito de Ferrari, et fratelli, MDLV. Venice. 1555. 12°. Houghton Library, Harvard University (Typ 525 55.316).

Figure 10. Detail of *Inferno XVI*. 1564 edition. PQ 4302 B64, UCLA Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Figure 11. Petrarcha con doi commenti sopra li Sonetti et Canzone. Impressum Venetiis per Gregorium de Gregoriis. MDVIII. Venice, 1508, 4°. Double commentary with repetition of "Voglia" in capitals and marked with a paragraph sign. Houghton Library, Harvard University (*IC P447C 1508b).

Figure 12. Commentary on Dante's *Commedia*. Probably late 14th-century. Parchment, 192 ff. Bibliothèque nationale de France, Manuscript Italien 77, 20v.

Figure 13. Detail of *Purgatorio X*. 1578 edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

Figure 14. First page of *Inferno I*. Detail of 1564 Edition. Houghton Library, Harvard University (Typ 525 64.316).

Figure 15. Detail of "allegoria" and "argomento" with SANS. in left margin from *Paradiso* I, 282v. Detail of 1578 Edition (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

Figure 16. Variation of Sessa printer's mark as header of each *cantica*. Detail of 1578 Edition. Beinecke Library, Yale University (1976 +143).

Figure 17. Glossary. Detail of 1578 edition. John Hay Library, Brown University (Hay Dante Collection, 1-Size B 1578).

Summary

This paper shows how Francesco Sansovino's visual strategies for presenting Dante's *Commedia* contribute to our knowledge about the publication and reception of Dante's works in the

mid-sixteenth century. Current scholarship has undervalued Sansovino's authorship of literary editions, and in particular of medieval poets.

An *unicum* of its time, Sansovino's edition was the first double commentary on the *Commedia* to appear in print. He combined two of the most illustrious Dante commentators of the day – Cristoforo Landino and Alessandro Vellutello – into one sumptuous folio edition. Striking in its adherence to the medieval commentary layout, with a block of text surrounded by commentary, the organization of each author's contribution was decidedly new. Sansovino presented each commentator as though they were in a dialogue, even though their interventions were more than sixty years apart. This is but one example of how Sansovino allowed Dante and his commentators to speak to each other as well as to contemporary audiences.

This paper demonstrates how Sansovino maintained manuscript traditions, while creating innovative ways to organize the *mise en page* to assert his authorial role. I examine how he combined the medieval commentary format with modern editorial additions, such as glossaries, portraits, biographies, and summaries. Sansovino's visual and verbal interventions further illuminate how editors defined their practice and status through the presentation of the book. An analysis of these additions in all three editions (1564, 1578, 1596) reveals how Sansovino used them to claim his own authorship as an editor, intellectual, and author.

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Title

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