3. THE PALACE OF ATLAS

Dogmas and Politics

In October 1594, the suspects entered the prison of the Holy Office, where the famous philosopher Giordano Bruno and the Florentine heretic Francesco Pucci were already being held. Colantonio Stigliola, whom Campanella had already encountered in Naples, would also later be brought there. Drawing on the popular belief, according to which the 'timid and smiling' weasel experiences an irresistible and fatal attraction for the toad, 'the monster that then devours it,' Campanella spoke in a beautiful sonnet, titled *Al carcere* ('To Prison'), of the inevitability of the encounter of free spirits in such a terrible place, which he compares to the cavern of Polyphemus, the labyrinth at Crete, the palace of Atlas. These were spirits who had abandoned the 'stagnant pond' of trite conventional knowledge, in order to launch themselves boldly upon 'the ocean of the truth.'[1] We know nothing of possible conversations with Bruno, even though it is not completely absurd to hypothesize that – beyond, obviously, the explicit references to the Nolan, chiefly regarding cosmological issues – some of the echoes (subterranean and hidden, to be sure) of Bruno that lurk in some parts of Campanella's work could be the result of direct communication.[2]

In the case of Pucci, such direct communication certainly did take place. In a passage of the *Responsiones* that came after the *Epistola antilutherana*, Campanella would make explicit reference to the three months of conversations regarding Lutheran dogma held in the prison of the Holy Office with the heretic Francesco Filidino.[3] Pucci exercised a long-lasting influence on Campanella, both with respect to specific doctrinal points (such as the role of the

[1] *Poesie*, p. 254; for the weasel and the toad, see *Senso delle cose*, I, 8, p. 20.

[2] Cf. Michel-Pierre Lerner, 'Campanella lecteur de Bruno?,' in *La filosofia di Giordano Bruno. Problemi ermeneutici e storiografici (Letture bruniane III)*, ed. E. Canone (Florence, 2003), pp. 387–415.

[3] *Responsiones ad obiectiones Tobiae Adami… super epistola antilutherana*, in *Quod reminiscentur*, I, p. 144: 'ego loquutus sum cum Francisco Filidino haeretico, qui 28 annis servivit Luthero et Calvino eorumque libros memoria tenebat'; a variant of the ms. Lat. 1079 of the Bibl. Mazarine in Paris adds: 'et per tres menses cum

G. Ernst, *Tommaso Campanella,* International Archives of the History of Ideas/Archives internationales d'histoire des idées 200,
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sacraments, instituted so as to extend and not restrict the path to salvation, the extension of salvation to children who died without being baptized, and the universally redemptive work of Christ) and also with regard to the expectations of an imminent and radical renewal – the 'awaited, new redemption.'[4] Later, after Pucci had been decapitated at the Tor di Nona on 5 July 1597 and his body burned on the pyre in Campo dei Fiori, Campanella would dedicate a moving sonnet to him that praised the loftiness and the nobility of his thought. In the splendid opening ('Soul, having now left your bleak prison'), he addressed Pucci as a soul that, releasing itself from the multiple prisons that had constrained it (the terrestrial prison, as well as those of the Holy Office and of the body itself), made its way back to its celestial home.[5]

Campanella was held in a cell with Giovan Battista Clario, in whose subsequently written *Dialoghi* we find traces of conversations with his cellmate. In the course of 1595, he wrote the *Compendium de rerum natura* that in 1617 – under the title of *Prodromus philosophiae instaurandae* – would inaugurate the series of Frankfurt publications edited by Tobias Adami. He also wrote shorter literary works and political discourses, including probably the one regarding the Low Countries that would later become the twenty-seventh chapter of the *Monarchia di Spagna*. New charges of upholding Democritean doctrines and of being the author of the *De tribus impostoribus* were added. This infamous, mysterious pamphlet had dared to argue that the founders of the three monotheistical religions were impostors – but, according to Campanella, he could not have been its author since it had been published thirty years before he was born.[6]

Tortured again at the end of April 1595, Campanella was condemned to recant a 'most serious charge of heresy' (*de vehementi haeresis suspicione*).

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eo in S. Offitio conversatus sum.' On the relationship between Pucci-Campanella, see Luigi Firpo, 'Processo e morte di Francesco Pucci,' *Rivista di Filosofia*, 40 (1949), pp. 371–405; Germana Ernst, '"Sicut amator insaniens." Su Pucci e Campanella,' in Lech Szczucki (ed.), *Faustus Socinus and his Heritage* (Cracow, 2005), pp. 91–112.

[4] *Poesie*, pp. 476–477: 'Anima, ch'or lasciasti il carcer tetro…'; cf. notes 5 and 17. In recent years, new studies and the rediscovery of important unpublished texts in the Archive of the former Holy Office have contributed to the shedding of greater light on Pucci; see, in particular, Paolo Carta, *Nunziature ed eresia nel Cinquecento. Nuovi documenti sul processo e la condanna di Francesco Pucci (1592–1597)* (Padua, 1999); A. Enzo Baldini, 'Tre inediti di Francesco Pucci al Cardinal Nepote e a Gregorio XIV alla vigilia del suo "rientro" a Roma,' *Rinascimento*, 39 (2000), pp. 157–223; Francesco Pucci, *De praedestinatione*, ed. M. Biagioni (Florence, 2000).

[5] Titled 'Sonetto fatto sopra un che morse nel Santo Offizio in Roma' ('Sonnet concerning a man who died in the Holy Office in Rome'; *Poesie*, pp. 476-477), it is not among those included in the *Scelta* (see ch. 7.1).

[6] Regarding Campanella's references to the mysterious blasphemous work, cf. Germana Ernst, 'Campanella e il *De tribus impostoribus*,' *Nouvelles de la République des lettres*, 1986/2, pp. 144–170 (and then in *Religione*, pp. 105–133); Ead. 'L'enigma del *De tribus impostoribus*. Note di lettura,' in M. Marangio, L. Rizzo, A. Spedicati, and L. Sturlese (eds.), *Filosofia e storiografia. Studi in onore di Giovanni Papuli*,

According to Firpo, the recantation took place on 16 May in the Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva in a public and solemn fashion. That date, however, has recently been moved to 30 October of the same year, on the basis of evidence taken from an official note attached to a letter that Campanella would send from Stilo on 11 November 1598 to Cardinal Santori.[7] In the second half of 1595, Campanella was assigned to the Dominican convent of Santa Sabina on the Aventine hill as his obligatory residence, *loco carceris*. It was there that he wrote the *Dialogo politico contro Luterani, Calvinisti e altri eretici*, which at the end of the year he would dedicate and send to Michele Bonelli,[8] the Cardinal Protector of the Dominican order who had asked him to write the work, to whom Campanella would express his repentance.[9]

The *Dialogo*, a harsh reply to reformed doctrines, is set in the Naples of the day and has three interlocutors. The protagonist, who acts as the author's mouthpiece, is the Telesian scholar Giacomo di Gaeta, who right from the opening declares that as a philosopher he wants to confront the problem of sects 'that run against mother nature and the good customs of the republic.'[10]

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3 vols. (Galatina, 2008), I, *Dall'Antichità al Rinascimento*, pp. 127–148. The critical edition of the Latin text, with a German translation by Johann Christian Edelmann (1761), is in Anonymous [Johann Joachim Müller], *De Imposturis Religionum (De Tribus Impostoribus). Von den Betrügereyen der Religionen*, ed. W. Schröder (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt, 1999); the Latin text, with an Italian translation by L. Alfinito, is in Anonimo, *I tre impostori,* ed. G. Ernst (Calabritto, Av., 2006).

[7] The note says, '30 octobris 1595 decretum quod abiuret de vehementi, [Conventu] sui ordinis Romae [pro] … loco carceris.' Cf. Leen Spruit, 'I processi campanelliani tra Padova e Calabria,' in *Congiura di Calabria*, p. 237; Ugo Baldini and Leen Spruit, p. 185 (see ch. 4, note 2); Leen Spruit, 'A proposito dell'abiura di Campanella nel 1595,' *B&C*, 12 (2006), pp. 191–194.

[8] A passage of the *Dialogo politico* appears to allude to the fact that Campanella was an eyewitness to a shocking act of blasphemy on the part of an Englishman; Giacomo, the author's mouthpiece, claims that 'vidi in Roma un inglese gittar a terra l'Eucaristia per morire per gloria stoltamente.' The event took place on 15 June 1595 and the condemned was burned at the stake on 20 June. A contemporary account of the episode and of the condemnation of the offender is found in Germana Ernst, '"Quasi totius orbis theatro." Il supplizio di un inglese, Roma 20 Giugno 1595,' *B&C*, 7 (2001), pp. 517–534; Ead. 'Postilla sull'abiura di Campanella e sul rogo dell'inglese,' *B&C*, 12 (2006), pp. 195–199.

[9] The only edition of the *Dialogo politico* is highly unreliable, based as it is on an inferior manuscript; here I have corrected the text with ms. Ital. 106, of the Paris BNF; the dedicatory letter to Cardinal Bonelli is in Luigi Firpo, 'Appunti campanelliani. XVII. Due lettere inedite,' *GCFI*, XXIX (1959), pp. 80–81, and then in *Lettere 2*, pp. 21–22.

[10] The Telesian Giacomo (or Iacopo) di Gaeta, member of the Academy of Cosenza, was the author of the *Ragionamento chiamato l'Academico overo della Bellezza* (Naples, 1591); modern edition by Anna Cerbo (Naples, 1996); see ch. 2, note 10.

The *Dialogo*'s protagonist responds to solicitations from the second interlocutor, Marquis Gerolamo del Tufo, who is invested with public and political responsibilities and does not hide his most acute worries concerning the diffusion of such sects as he moves on to ask for clarifications and counsel. The third character is the Neapolitan priest and scholar Giulio Cortese, who contributes to the debate with Biblical and poetic quotations. The work was written in vernacular, which was the language of political writers, as Giacomo indicates when Giulio deploys a refined citation of Latin verse from Terence. It was also consciously written using everyday language, together with very concrete and common images. As is emphasized several times, the interests and the practical advantages that motivate the supporters of the reformed doctrines derive from the 'heat of the cauldron' that had replaced the warmth of charity. The author did not hesitate to turn a vision recorded in Jeremiah back against Luther, who is identified as the pot that boils in the northern parts, and from which originates all evil.[11]

Beyond Pucci, Campanella could also have had information on reformed doctrines from conversations he had had with foreign students during his stay in Padua.[12] In the dialogue he recalled conversations with English students, who recounted to him how the old people of their country regretted the loss of the secret confession of sins, and deplored the serious consequences of its abolition.[13] In the text, the author confronted the most hotly disputed points of the polemic with the reformers, discussing the origin and the content of their doctrines. In the final part, the author put himself to the test on controversial points such as indulgences, purgatory, sacraments, and the celibacy of the clergy. But the heart of the work is the discussion regarding the compatibility of reformed doctrines with political association. Articulating one of the strong and persistent principles of his thought, Campanella asserted that in order to have an organized and stable political governance it is essential to have a unity of souls, on which depends the unity of bodies and of goods – a unity that is inseparable from the unity of a shared religion, which finds in the Pope its point of cohesion.

The reformers rejected this unity as they attempted to establish a 'partisan' religion that was useful to their own political interests ('with the excuse of maintaining their liberty of conscience, they maintained their political liberty').

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[11] See Jer 1, 13.

[12] See notes 3 and 17.

[13] *Dialogo politico,* p. 134: 'Intesi di più in Padova da Inglesi stessi che in Inghilterra molto si lamentano gli anziani di aver levato via la confessione secreta….' Regarding Englishmen in Padua, cf. Jonathan Woolfson, *Padua and the Tudors: English Students in Italy, 1485–1603* (Cambridge, 1998).

With the view of undermining the unity of the Catholic Church, the reformers had not hesitated to spread new religious beliefs by taking advantage of the credulity and the volatility of ordinary people. In order to achieve his own ends, Luther – in an unscrupulous and highly dangerous political calculation – had attacked religious unity, uprooting it from the conscience of princes and subjects, thus turning princes into tyrants and ordinary people into rebels. On this account, his position came to be 'absolutely antithetical to civil order and destructive of it.' Drawing the 'foolish multitude' into disobedience of political leaders, the reformed doctrine unleashed conflicts and factions to deleterious effect, both politically and at a personal level. With regard to this diminishing of assurance and sound points of reference at the personal level, Campanella vividly described the scene of a dying man, whose family members had each called a minister of their own faith to his deathbed. The poor sick man – 'unsteady in the medicine of the soul' – could not even make use of the medicines of the body and 'died angry and uncertain.'[14]

During this discussion on the unity of the faith, Campanella considered the doctrine of predestination. Inaugurating an ongoing reflection that would span the entirety of his thought, Campanella intended to denounce the politically harmful consequences of a doctrine, that – denying the free will of man, so as to accentuate the exclusivity of divine initiative and as a result devaluing the merits and demerits of works for the purpose of salvation – ended up being, in his opinion, incompatible with an orderly political community. If God decides the destinies of men before their birth, such that they are born already judged and are not to be judged on the basis of the actions that they later undertake, then such men – believing in the irrelevance of every good or bad action (which would not change their already established fate in the slightest) – cannot but behave in a licentious manner. They are prey to instability and are drawn towards every innovation that might procure some advantage for them.

In an even more serious way, the 'counterfeit' God represented by the reformers is a deceitful and unjust God, who asserts that he wants to save everyone but in fact has already chosen those who are predestined. This is a God who exhorts men to do good without giving them the freedom to be able to do it and does not extend his grace to anyone beyond those few he has already decided to save. This is a God who plays the 'malicious joke' of calling men to the good, without giving them the possibility of achieving it and who 'enjoys putting them in a trap in order to make them fall, saying to them that they might help themselves whereas in fact they cannot – that they might fly without having given them wings.' In short, this is a tyrannical God, who acts according to his own whim and not according to justice:

[14] *Dialogo politico*, p. 138.

> they created a tyrant God, who had determined that some would go to paradise, and many to hell, and that the former could not hurt themselves and that the latter could not save themselves, because God operates through them for his own enjoyment – good for some, bad for others – without attention to their own merits or demerits.[15]

When Gerolamo is not able to hold back a shout of dismay ('This kind of Christianity terrorizes me so much!'), Giacomo intervenes quickly to reassure him: 'the law of God, when it is well understood, is the law of consolation and joy.' To the unacceptable image of the Lutheran God is opposed the image, entirely different, of a God who is a father to all and loves all of his children equally, not creating anyone so as to damn them: 'God wants to save everyone … and … came to die for everyone, and … does not hate ab initio those whom he ab initio created.' This is a God who with 'a grace bountiful enough for all includes all without exception,' giving to all the possibility of salvation. After the original sin and the loss of primitive righteousness, Christ became flesh for the salvation of all and not, as the Lutherans believe, only in order to confirm the salvation of those few chosen before the sin of Adam. It is up to each man to accept and to make good use of the grace that he receives. Damnation does not depend on a kind of 'effective disgrace,' already established among the innocent multitude before original sin. Instead, damnation depends on the obstinate rejection of divine assistance that is extended to all:

> Christ came to save everyone without distinction and to confer upon us the greatest goods, without which grace would not be more common than crime, without which a craftsman would not be more powerful than his ruined creation, and without which he would not be greater in power and goodness. Given that God is the God of all men, there is thus sufficient grace for all, extended without exception.[16]

In proclaiming the universal redemptive value of the death of Christ, Campanella closely echoed themes from Pucci's *De Christi efficacitate*.[17] Acquaintance with the text appears to be confirmed when Campanella takes up a precise comparison to the book of merchants, where a creditor becomes a debtor: he 'is said not to be a creditor, not because he was not a creditor in the beginning, but because later he incurred such debts that he ended up not being thus described,' an image that serves to explain the sense of a verse from the Book of Revelation that asserts that reprobates are not written in the book of life.

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[15] Ibid., p. 100.

[16] Ibid., p. 104.

[17] *De Christi efficacitate* (Goudae: typ. Ioannis Zafei Hoenii, 1592); Italian translation *L'efficacia salvifica del Cristo*, ed. G. Isozio (Pisa, 1991).

The passage is important, because it can prove that the conversations with the Florentine heretic in the prison of the Holy Office took place in all probability right at the beginning of the incarceration.[18]

Even though Giacomo (that is, Campanella) defends himself by saying that he is not a theologian, in truth, he engages in close interpretations of scriptural passages (particularly from St. Paul's *Letter to the Romans*) in order to reconsider and reinterpret the relationship between faith and deeds. The passages invoked by the reformers in support of their doctrine did not condemn the deeds themselves but only the Jews' external and ceremonial deeds, which Campanella held to be ineffective with regard to salvation. This is done with a powerful call back to the 'living faith' that redeems non-Jews too. Thus, the true children of Abraham, worthy of acquiring their inheritance, are his true imitators – his spiritual, if not carnal, children. If what the reformers upheld were true (that is, if God, having induced men into sin, continued to induce them to do evil, so as to have a means of demonstrating his own justice), then this planned slaughter of his own begotten children would make him similar to Medea, who, 'consuming herself with rage and disdain, not knowing how to show it, became angry with her own children and killed them.' Except that the God of the Calvinists would be even worse, because 'Medea was almost out of her mind with anger and tore them to shreds, but God had considered this butchering of his own children for a long time, even *ab eterno*.'[19]

This image of a cruel and tyrannical God could not help but render political leaders tyrants in turn, because they would feel themselves licensed to imitate a God who acts according to his own taste and whim, and not according to mercy and justice. As ordinary language also testifies, even the memory of the authentic meaning of the concept of justice had been lost, from the moment that it was identified exclusively with a punitive conception of justice and not with a distributive one, which consists in good laws. In response to the exclamation of Geronimo ('what is the "justification" of Abraham Was he perhaps decapitated in public, because you had no other term?'), Giacomo replies by deploring such distortion of the meaning of justice:

> If that divine justice is neglected in which God rejuvenates and animates us divinely and renders us similar to him, good and sanctified, and operating in accordance with his wisdom, then one mistakes justice for hanging, quartering – namely, the kind of justice that I called punitive, which is arrived at in uncertain and accidental ways; and this century is certainly so corrupt that it knows no other kind of justice. But it was very convenient for Calvin

[18] Firpo dated the conversations to the early months of 1597. Enrico De Mas drew my attention to the passage in the *Dialogo politico*, for which I am grateful.

[19] *Dialogo politico*, p. 123.

> and Luther to persuade people that God compels men to do evil so as to show his justice. Nowadays, every tyrant thinks that he is being just when he condemns many people to death, so much so that the people, especially in Naples, now accept that the meaning of the term 'to justify' (*giustificare*) is to kill or put someone to death, rather than to sanctify or divinely hearten.[20]

A number of crucial and lasting themes are already spelt out in this early work: the undeniable political importance of religion, insofar as it is the basic unifying bond ('whether true or false, religion has always mastered hearts'); the fact that 'everyone makes God in his own image, such that, being partisan and disloyal, Luther preaches a God of that kind' and attacks unity for political reasons. Unity turns out to be politically fundamental ('unity is more important than anything else, because without that one cannot govern'), and the guarantor of that unity cannot be anyone other than the Roman Pontiff, who 'unites the earth with Heaven, as a bridge joins the two banks of a river.' In these pages, Campanella wrote a very long and eloquent encomium of the Pontiff, emphasizing how his prerogatives and functions are completely independent of the possible weaknesses of particular individuals. If some Pontiffs erred, many were good and holy. Thus, when one sees 'the sun of the holy church eclipsed,' one ought to think that 'these are momentary clouds in front of the sun that do not destroy it, but for a time obscure it before departing quickly, for the seat of the holy church remains pure and eternal.'[21]

Philosophy and Poetry

In 1596, still in the convent of Santa Sabina, Campanella composed the Italian *Poetica*, which he dedicated and sent to Cinzio Aldobrandini, a powerful cardinal and nephew of Clement VIII, who had a reputation as a generous patron of scholars and was the protector of Tasso. Soon thereafter, Campanella would be dispossessed of his own work, which he would have the chance of seeing again only years later (in 1618, in the prison of the Castel Nuovo at Naples) and in a surprising form: a Spanish author, who remains to this day unknown, had translated the work into his own language, putting it about in his own name. Campanella tells us that he laughed at this awkward and easily revealed plagiarism: in a footnote the Spanish author, in fact, was forced to justify the continual citation of Italian authors. He laughed also because he judged that distant draft to be an 'unripe fruit' (*immaturum partum*), having already planned to rewrite a Latin *Poëtica*.[22] In truth, on other occasions he found himself bitter

[20] Ibid., pp. 126–127.

[21] Ibid., pp. 158–159.

[22] Cf. *Syntagma*, I, 2, p. 40; *Poëtica*, in *Scritti letterari*, p. 1216; perhaps the Spanish translation remained in manuscript.

and disdainful on account of disloyal attempts to appropriate his own writings, taking advantage of his position in jail. In the prefatory letter of the *Atheismus triumphatus* addressed to Schoppe, he warned him in sorrowful tones against appropriating works that he had entrusted to him. Such an appropriation would constitute the theft of 'children not of the body, but of the soul,' a crime therefore all the more heinous. And such thievery is precisely what Schoppe would later practice. Worse, he would use Campanella's texts extensively in the context of an aggressive polemic against the reformers.[23] Other authors too would not be ashamed to plagiarize with impunity from unpublished texts.[24] And in a beautiful letter addressed, at the end of 1614, to Ottavio Sammarco, who was intent on publishing as his own the *Aforismi politici*, Campanella warned him not to do something so base, and gave him a highly moralizing lecture.[25]

Beginning in the early Italian *Poetica*, Campanella articulated a number of principles that would remain central even in subsequent discussions. In the form of a strong polemic against a hedonistic and gratifying conception of poetry, these principles address the relationship of poetry to truth and philosophy, together with the ethical and social role of the poet.[26] The poet, charged with an educational mission, ought to be 'the instrument of the legislator and ought to help him to spur the world to living well.[27] The marvellous linguistic instruments that he uses – which are capable of inducing extraordinary effects even on uncultivated souls, with a kind of powerful magic – and the tales which he can make use of in particular circumstances have to be deployed in all cases as vehicles of the truth and should aim to highlight virtue and castigate vice. The true poet is a prophet, for the prophet is not so much – or only – he who foresees future events, but also he who 'chides political leaders for their malignity and vileness, and the people for their ignorance, seditiousness, and bad habits.'[28] It is up to the prophet, thanks to poetry, 'to make the sciences flourish,' and to light 'the ardent love of virtue and reason.' He who, like the 'perfidious and

[23] *Lettere*, p. 111; there is some information of Schoppe's use of passages from Campanella in Mario D'Addio, *Il pensiero politico di Gaspare Scioppio e il machiavellismo del Seicento* (Milan, 1959), pp. 288–319.

[24] Rodolfo De Mattei, 'Materiali del Campanella nell'opera del Canonieri,' *Accademie e Biblioteche d'Italia*, 35 (1967), pp. 291-316; see ch. 6, note 6; on the use of material from Campanella by Mersenne, cf. Gianni Paganini, 'Mersenne plagiaire? Les doutes de Campanella dans la *Vérité des sciences*,' *XVII^e Siècle*, 57 (2005), pp. 747–767.

[25] *Lettere 2*, pp. 65–68; see ch. 9, note 40.

[26] Long held to be among the lost writings, the Italian *Poetica* was rediscovered and edited by Luigi Firpo (Rome: Accademia d'Italia, 1944); there is a second edition in *Scritti letterari,* pp. 317–430, which I have used.

[27] *Poetica*, p. 325.

[28] Ibid., p. 359, 357.

lying' Greeks, turns to false tales so as to mock religion, corrupt good customs and ridicule virtue, does not deserve to be called a poet and is only welcomed in a state that is 'tyrannical, where lies are bought and sold in order to make the people ignorant.'[29] False poets are the favorite instruments of tyrants, because it is thanks to them that people can be held in ignorance and slavery. Meanwhile the poet-prophet who teaches and educates on behalf of liberty is abhorred and persecuted by them. In this regard, Homer is depicted as the negative model representing the perfidious tales of the Greeks. He persuades and entices an uneducated and child-like populace like a charlatan and huckster, touting vices rather than educating the people as the poet-philosophers do:

> Homer … beneath the beautiful words and delicate figures and graceful manner of story-telling, which is well-adapted to the debased populace, confounds impiety with piety, good with evil, virtue and vice, and ruins everything without a second thought, because he was a huckster. In order to take in the oafish plebs, in the manner of our own charlatans or "the blind man of Forlì," he would spin yarns in the piazzas that so tickled Greek vanity that they made a poem out of it. Thus, it is a childish and plebeian thing to think that a charlatan is a poet, placing him under the protection of the gods, as if he were inspired by God to tell his stories and to say that there is no one who really tells the truth, thereby denying the title of poet to Pythagoras and Empedocles.[30]

Along with Homer, Aristotle is severely criticized as a codifier of and herald for the Greek 'tales.' Conversely, the Bible – particularly the Psalms of David, wondrous on account of the nobility and variety of their contents (which Campanella had been attempting to paraphrase or translate since his youth)[31] – is taken as a positive model of excellence. Another model is Dante, in comparison to whom 'all others are poetasters and are like a gondola compared to a galleon with respect to grandeur of subject and for their great usefulness and the good taste that purified philosophical (and not pedantic) ears derive from him.' Campanella had always understood Dante to be educating the public – 'Dante had something of the Pythagorean about him, given that he always told tales for the benefit of the people'[32] – and thought he had not received the appreciation he was due precisely because he was an advocate for truth and virtue:

> In a good republic, one ought to love Dante, given that he is the great praiser of goodness and the great critic of evil, a great analyst of things political and

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[29] Ibid., p. 320.

[30] Ibid., p. 352. Cristoforo Scanello, known as 'il Cieco da Forlì,' was a sixteenth-century chronicler and poet; see Adamo Pasini, *Vita e scritti di Cristoforo Scanello detto 'il Cieco di Forlì'* (Forlì, 1937).

[31] *Poesie*, pp. 449–450, 488, 676.

[32] *Poetica*, pp. 347, 428.

> a great conjuror for his readers of time and place and the historical personage who is speaking. As a portraitist of all manner of conditions, he is industrious to the point of wonder and yet he is little understood and little appreciated by the common people who are enemies of virtue.[33]

As far as the moderns were concerned, Campanella showed himself to be very critical of Tasso. In a sonnet, while praising the correspondence between 'the beautiful vestment' and the 'exquisite, rarefied concepts' of Dante and Petrarch and especially the 'fire in their chests' that generated such virtue, he rebuked Tasso for the fact that his formally impeccable verses., failed to raise up hearts towards the 'worthy objects of the human mind.'[34] In the *Poetica* too, Campanella emphasized the contrast between the beauty of his words and the 'commonplace and stolen concepts,' between the elevatedness of the style and the coldness and artifice of the content, which he found to be derived more from Homer and the Greek tales than from the nobility and novelty of his subject matter.[35] In contrast, Ariosto is very good precisely on account of his felicitous capacity to stay close to what is natural and reproduce it. He turns out to be 'admirable in all the parts of his poems for the sublimity of the tales, for the personifying of the heroes, … for the descriptions of beautiful countries, rivers, mountains, seas, storms and every other kind of thing, such that one seems to have everything in front of one, as he paints it singing sweetly.'[36] His poem runs the risk of something else, however; it risks losing itself in multiple tributaries, losing sight of the central singularity that is indispensable for conferring harmony and unity to the composition, a center that in fact is certainly present in the works of Virgil and Dante as they represent the theater of human life, even as they are complex and varied as far as characters and places are concerned.

In the *Poetica*, Campanella goes beyond the polemic against rules and pedantry and his attack on Aristotle and false Greek fables. One finds a number of interesting points, such as the precise references to the *Monarchia dei Cristiani* and the reflection (Stoic in origin) on the correspondences between social roles and virtue. These correspondences prefigure, or echo, the themes of some sonnets in the *Scelta.*[37] Above all, Campanella insists on the educational

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[33] Ibid. p. 328. Numerous studies have been dedicated to the relationship between Dante and Campanella, beginning with Vincenzo Spampanato, *Il culto di Dante nel Campanella*, in *Sulla soglia del Seicento* (Città di Castello, 1926), pp. 128–160; see Anna Cerbo, *'Theologiza et laetare.' Saggi sulla poesia di Tommaso Campanella* (Naples, 1997), ch. 5 as well as the bibliography cited there; Ead., 'Dante Alighieri,' in *Enciclopedia*, vol. 1, coll. 230-240.

[34] *Poesie*, p. 464.

[35] *Poetica*, pp. 342, 337–338.

[36] Ibid. p. 378.

[37] Ibid. p. 331; *Poesie*, pp. 69–73.

role of the poet, as he recalls the Lucretian image of the bitter medicine offered in a chalice with sweet edges. The poet is also compared to the physician, who, without ever losing sight of his own duty, should never become like an obliging cook who, pandering to the taste and whim of his young patient rather than curing him, ends up making the illness worse.

Memories of Calabria emerge from the lines, as when the author evokes the figure of Giacomo di Gaeta once again and the contacts with the Academy of Cosenza, emphasizing how in the 'prize' of this Academy the figure of the old woman was more beautiful than that of the young Danae, because more effectively represented.[38] Fragments of the stay at Padua emerge too, with allusions to Sperone Speroni and to 'dances in Paduan villas.'[39]

After multiple supplications and requests, Campanella was permitted to move to the convent at Santa Maria sopra Minerva at the end of 1596. In Naples, however, a common criminal called Scipione Prestinace of Stilo feigned religious revelations so as to obtain a stay of execution and accused Campanella of being a heretic. As a result, Campanella was then once again imprisoned in the jails of the Holy Office. This is what Firpo identifies as the 'fourth' trial, the last one prior to the one that followed the Calabrian conspiracy of 1599.

At the end of October 1597, with the death of the last Duke, Alfonso II, who had no direct heirs, the question of the succession at Ferrara began. As the Pope was preparing a military expedition (which would end with the annexation of the city), Campanella was discussing the event with Cardinal Del Monte and others.[40] He interpreted it as a harbinger of the progressive constitution of an ecclesiastical unity. Campanella addressed a sonnet (thought by Amabile to be one of the 'worst to appear, with a utterly banal ending') to Cesare d'Este, cousin of the dead Duke, who was pressing his claims to the city. The Pope, who was not recognizing d'Este as the legitimate successor, was ready to excommunicate him and Campanella addressed Cesare with the exhortation not to oppose himself to the claims of the Pontiff and to abandon 'so foolish an arrogance.'[41] Restored to liberty at the end of the year, Campanella was consigned once again to his Dominican superiors, who ordered him to return immediately to Calabria.[42]

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[38] *Poetica*, p. 401 (cf. ch. 2, note 1).

[39] Ibid. p. 409.

[40] Cf. *Dichiarazione,* p. 112.

[41] *Poesie*, p. 478; Amabile, *Congiura*, I, p. 88.

[42] An annotation added to the letter written from Stilo to Cardinal Santori reads as follows: '17 decembris 1597 cum cautione de se repraesentando si libri et scripta prohibeantur. Consignetur suis Superioribus qui illum retineant in aliquo loco sine scandalo. Prima sententia maneat in suo robore' (Baldini and Spruit, p. 185).