

7. IN THE CAVE OF POLYPHEMUS

The Poesie

In the very first lines of the *Syntagma*, Campanella recalled his own precocious and natural aptitude for poetic expression. As an adult, this aptitude took on a certain poignancy and sharpness, and came to be directed towards the expression of difficult philosophical matters. The poetic production that has come down to us was transmitted primarily in two collections. The first included the poems of his youth, completed prior to 1601. The second consisted of compositions put together and published under the title *Scelta di alcune poesie filosofiche*. The poems of Campanella's youth survived in the so-called "Ponzio Codex," located by Amabile in the nineteenth century.¹ They include eighty-two poems, mostly sonnets, of which only fourteen would be included in the *Scelta*. The codex is named after Ponzio because it conserves the poems that Campanella's friend and fellow prisoner Pietro Ponzio collected, until the codex was confiscated in the prison of the Castel Nuovo in August of 1601, after a violent argument between the inmates. All that Campanella himself tells us is that many of those compositions were written in the earliest days of the imprisonment, for the purpose of instilling courage in his fellow detainees and friends and so as to help them resist the terrors of torture. Transposing episodes and characters from the events in Calabria into verse, Campanella expressed his certainty about being on the side of reason and justice. He refers to the conspirators as noble and chosen spirits, united in their determination to fight against the violence and ignorance of tyranny in the name of liberty and truth and united in disdain – with the aid of the 'ardor' of reason – the most atrocious tortures and persecutions.² The poems exalt friends and companions, such as the three brothers Ponzio (Dionisio in particular for the courage with which he confronted and derided 'so horrible a torment/that undid his entire body/ limb by limb'), the loyal Pietro Presterà, and Domenico Petrolo, for not having hesitated to simulate terrible things so

¹The collection of poetry was published for the first time in Amabile, *Congiura*, III, doc. 436–517, pp. 549–581.

²*Poesie*, p. 519.

as to help him and to save his life.³ At first, Maurizio de Rinaldis is exalted as a 'generous man' on account of the courage he showed in resisting torture: 'for six nights and six days he prevails/torments old and new he disdains'; he endured '... suffering for 300 hours/unusual torments with a magnanimous heart, alone and naked.' In a later palinodic madrigal, he came to be detested and labeled 'extremely vile' and 'devoid of virtue,' because of the confession that he rendered at the point of death so as to cleanse his own conscience.⁴

In contrast to the heroic figures of the conspirators, who fight and suffer for high ideals, negative figures are harshly condemned – figures such as Antonio Mesuraca. Having promised to help Campanella, Mesuraca instead betrayed and denounced him, delivering him tightly bound to his master's men ('why, in binding me, do your associates turn on me ferociously?').⁵ But above all others loomed the fiscal lawyer Luise Xarava, for whom the harshest epithets – 'impious monster,' 'without a human mind,' 'lying snake' – were not spared, because he had combined violence with the most subtle arts of intrigue and deceit.⁶ When writing about himself, Campanella speaks of a prophet and interpreter of signs, a champion of a just cause and not a rebel: 'He who reprimands degenerate representatives/Conspires neither against God nor against King.' He did not hesitate to protest against God, who 'appeared to be sleeping,' consenting that 'his white champion, be oppressed with false testimonies,/that represent his devotion as evil.'⁷ In other verses, inspired by the Psalm 129 *Saepe expugnaverunt me* ('Much have they oppressed me'), Campanella felt himself to be under God's protection against the persecutions that had afflicted him since childhood, and he pronounced himself sure of the approaching defeat and punishment of the tyrants:

The day is coming, on which haughty heads
Together with subservient necks and lying tongues
Will make a meal for tigers, bears, and panthers.⁸

The Ponzio Codex also includes early poems that predate the conspiracy.⁹ One sequence addresses political themes, such as the role of Christian Rome and the universal monarchy of Spain. Other verses are addressed to noble female figures. Other poems – not inelegant if somewhat conventional – are of an amorous nature. The most original and realistic sonnet alludes to an erotic relationship imagined despite the painful physical separation of the lovers ('Me standing behind bars, she outside').¹⁰ The strongest and most evocative poem (titled

³ *Ibid.*, p. 519.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 490, 492, 494.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 504.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 498ff.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 528, 500.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 488: 'Vicino è 'l dì, che le cervici altiere/e i colli torti e le lingue bugiarde/ farà pasto di tigri, orsi e pantere.'

⁹ See ch. 3, notes 5, 34, 41.

Sdegno amoroso) is presented as a definitive break from the amorous condition and from its deceptions. Betrayed in the sincerity and depth of his own feelings, the amorous heat of his heart hardens into the chill of hate and into a cold marble. The break from ‘amorous intricacy’ is translated into a proud commitment to self-sufficiency – ‘I draw sustenance from myself’ (*‘me di me nutrico’*).¹¹

The most important nucleus of Campanella’s poetic activity, however, is constituted by the eighty-nine pieces that were published in 1622 in a work titled *Scelta di alcune poesie filosofiche di Settimontano Squilla, cavate da’ suo’ libri detti La Cantica, con l’Esposizione*. The text was prefaced by a dedication from Tobias Adami that is signed ‘Paris, in the year 1621.’ It was sent to three German friends – Wilhelm von Wense, Christoph Besold, Valentin Andreae – with the certainty that they would enjoy this ‘gift small in appearance, but truly great in its reality,’ on account of the ‘sublime conceits’ conveyed in the poems. Only six exemplars are known still to exist and of those two are in Italy, both at Naples. Not only rare, the edition is obscure in several respects.¹² The author hides behind a pseudonym that alludes to his own surname and to the seven “mountains” of his head. The edition is also devoid of typographic information and only recently was it confirmed that it was published in Germany at Köhthen, in Saxony, under the auspices of Prince Ludwig von Anhalt-Köhthen.¹³

¹⁰ *Poesie*, p. 564.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 568–571.

¹² Regarding the known copies, see Francesco Giancotti, ‘Note e Tavole sul Testo,’ in *Poesie*, pp. C–CIV; *Id.*, ‘Postille a una nuova edizione delle *Poesie* di Campanella. 1–3,’ *B&C*, 4, 1998, pp. 423–426. The Neapolitan exemplars are held in the Biblioteca Croce and the Biblioteca Oratoriana dei Padri Girolamini. This second copy – on which, see L. Amabile, *Il codice delle lettere del Campanella ... e il libro delle Poesie dello Squilla della Biblioteca dei PP. Girolamini in Napoli* (Naples, 1881) – is of the highest importance, because it contains autograph corrections by Campanella, which have been for the most part lost following the havoc wrought by an inept restoration justly deplored by Firpo; see ‘Storia della poesia campanelliana,’ p. XI, in the anastatic edition of the *Scelta* published by him (Naples, 1980).

¹³ See Arnaldo Di Benedetto, ‘Da Campanella a Manzoni: Due Note. I. Sul luogo di stampa della *Scelta d’alcune poesie filosofiche* di Settimontano Squilla,’ *Giornale Storico della Letteratura Italiana*, 112 (1995), pp. 421–425; ‘Notizie campanelliane: Sul luogo di stampa della *Scelta d’alcune poesie filosofiche*,’ *B&C*, 3 (1997), pp. 154–158. Even before the *Scelta* was sent to press, Johann Valentin Andreae had translated and published six sonnets in German in 1619 (see Italo M. Battafarano, ‘Attorno ai sonetti di Campanella tradotti da J. V. Andreae,’ *Annali dell’Istituto Universitario Orientale di Napoli*, Sezione Germanica, XX, 1977, pp. 7–45). In 1802, Johann Gottlieb Herder would translate and publish twenty-seven of the poems (then in *Sämmtliche Werke*, ed. B. Suphan, vol. III, Berlin, 1881, pp. 332–354). But only in 1834 would Gaspare Orelli, professor of philology at Zurich, succeed, after years of fruitless research, in tracking down a copy of the extremely rare old edition in Wolfenbüttel and in editing a modern (if imprecise) version of the *Scelta*, which A. D’Ancona inserted into the edition of the *Opere* that he put together.

The collection of eighty-nine poems, selected and arranged with careful and sophisticated attention, presents itself as a complete cycle of great originality, an example, extremely rare in the Italian poetic tradition, of philosophical and metaphysical poetry. The author achieves results of an exceptional value and vigor that has increasingly been acknowledged by an attentive scholarly tradition that has gradually liberated itself from limited judgments about the presumed incompatibility between philosophy and the supposed ‘brusqueness’ of Campanella’s poetic expression.¹⁴ The assertion in the *Syntagma* that Adami chose the contents from a larger corpus of poems *iuxta ingenium suum* (‘according to his liking’) is rather perplexing and should not be taken literally.¹⁵ There is reason to believe that the choice of poems was the product of collaboration between Campanella and Adami to select and organise the most philosophically important poems. The poems are, in many cases, extremely difficult on account of their profundity and speculative sublimity. In view of the publication, Campanella added a helpful exposition in prose, so as to render the comprehension of his own poems easier.

One of the things that is at first sight rather surprising (but that can in fact provide a key to the reading of the complex spiritual experience of the author) is the fact that the most intense compositions stem from the period of the hardest isolation – namely, the years of the tragic seclusion in the dungeon of Castel Sant’Elmo (1604–1607). This was a period in which the prisoner was forced to live in conditions of absolute privation, in a damp, unhealthy, gloomy cell, feeding on food that was ‘measly and dirty.’ This was a situation that made writing extremely difficult and at times impossible. Over and above presenting the most philosophically important themes of his thought in a remarkable way, the *Scelta* is shot through with intense autobiographical motifs, which trace the dramatic stages of the intellectual and spiritual journey of the author, who is represented as an exemplar. It depicts radical inner upheaval, from the proud declaration of his own ideas and the fracturing of certainties, to the moments of crisis and doubt, followed by the humble acceptance of the inscrutable (but always wise) plans of divine providence.¹⁶

¹⁴For the vast bibliography on the poems, see the fine list in the *Poesie*, pp. CLI–CLV.

¹⁵*Syntagma*, p. 42.

¹⁶See ch. 8, pp. 154–155.

In a dense, corporeal but also refined idiom, the *Scelta* attempts to translate the most important themes of Campanella's thought into a poetic language. Cultivated terms are mixed together with more popular expressions and images. The aim is to arrive at an effective correspondence between words and things. A programmatic sonnet, functioning as an introduction, announces the intentions of the author. In the name of a true philosophy, he intends to call 'the raving world, in revolt against itself' back to divine and natural values. The *Scelta* opens out into a planned sequence of sonnets and canzones. Cast in madrigals, the canzones are charged with addressing the most complex metaphysical themes. In conformity with the principles of the *Poetica*, the 'prophetic' role of the poet, bearer of a message of truth is underlined. The work addresses the investigation of the world of nature, which – as the 'book in which the Eternal Intelligence/wrote its ideas' (n. 6) – is represented as the original model to which the opinions of men refer in order to be judged. For this reason, we have the exaltation of Telesio, who emancipates a philosophy understood as a direct reading of the infinite book of nature from the yoke of Aristotle's philosophy, which is said to be based on nothing more than words and opinions that have lost all connection with nature (n. 68). The reference to nature serves also to denounce the injustice and irrationality of an upside-down social world, the contortions and sorrows of which have their origin in the fact that the roles of the social comedy are assigned according to chance and fortune, rather than by reason and in conformity with natural attitudes. A harmful and painful break is set up between being and appearing when human skill imitates badly the divine art that is intrinsic in nature. Thus, false kings come to be prized, such as Nero, who 'was a king in appearance on account of chance,' while wise men such as Socrates – a king 'in truth and by nature' – are put to death. In a society where the inversion of values rules, the prophet cannot but be persecuted by those in power, because he is an inconvenient witness and a messenger of virtues and truths that have been suppressed and replaced by hypocrisy, sophistry, and tyranny. Moreover, the prophet is rejected by the plebs, which possesses a strength of which it is unaware (the plebs 'is a diverse and massive beast/that ignores its own strength'). The masses are held in a condition of unconsciousness and ignorance by the 'spell' cast by sophists, a bad magic that induces torpor and corrupts their ability to perceive reality clearly: 'They cast a spell, that swells their senses' and in this way they hold subjects chained in a kind of perverse complicity with those who are in power and exploit them. From here derives the painful astonishment of the wise man who is persecuted and killed (n. 33), precisely because he attempts to awaken the masses from this abasement and to render them conscious of their own power ('everything between heaven and earth belongs

to them').¹⁷ Reduced to silence and forced into dissimulation, in order to save his own life and to preserve his message against tyrannical violence (n. 13), the prophet appears to be condemned to an inevitable defeat. But this defeat is only apparent, in that the prophet's message outlives him. Campanella is moreover persuaded of the necessary arrival of a 'golden and happy age,' anticipated by a dense prophetic tradition. This is an age that – with the abolition of private property and of the evils that begin in blind 'love of self' – heralds the instauration of a form of living together that is based on the values of a common love.

From a more general point of view, this human 'comedy' is placed in the context of a 'universal comedy.' This is one of the most complex themes in Campanella's work. It joins difficult metaphysical nodes together, such as the necessity of tension and discord (in order to achieve a 'felicitous harmony' at the level of the whole), the relation between the first divine Idea and the infinite modes of its manifestations, and above all the problem of evil, which turns out to be connected to the necessary limitation and distinction of single parts, the suffering of which is to be considered in the context of the universal life of the whole – 'but the part that groans smiles at the whole' (n. 3, v. 102). If every evil and destruction is the expression and the condition of the unfolding of the infinite forms of being, then the suffering of the individual parts is connected to and derives its meaning from the universal comedy: 'In the end, this is a universal comedy, and he who philosophizing unites himself with God/ and sees with him that every ugliness and evil/is a beautiful mask, that man smiles and rejoices.'¹⁸

The moment of the crisis, which constitutes a watershed between the earlier period of his youth and the later more mature period, is conveyed with particular intensity by the four canzones titled *Disprezio della morte*, which recall Hermetic and Platonic motifs. The author turns to his own soul, so as to comfort it and exhort it not to be affected by desperation and fear of death. The tyrant can be cruel only to the body, which is the soul's 'prison by birth.'

¹⁷Regarding this famous sonnet entitled 'Della plebe,' see G. Ernst, 'Sapiente e popolo in Campanella. Rileggendo il sonetto "Della plebe",' in *Bene navigavi. Studi in onore di Franco Bianco*, ed. M. Failla (Macerata, 2006), pp. 283–294. For a fuller version, see G. Ernst, "'Il popolo è una bestia varia e grossa.'" Passioni, retorica, e politica in Tommaso Campanella,' in *Renaissance Learning and Letters*, ed. D. Knox and N. Ordine (forthcoming). For an English version of some of the compositions in the *Scelta*, see *The Sonnets of Michael Angelo Buonarroti and Tommaso Campanella*, translated by John Addington Symonds (London, 1878); a recent reprinting of that translation (complete with the Italian text and Campanella's own prose exposition) can be found in T. Campanella, *Sonnets*, ed. S. Draghici (Washington DC, 1999).

¹⁸*Scelta*, n. 29, madr. 10 in *Poesie*, p. 144: 'Alfin questa è comedia universale;/e chi filosofando a Dio s'unisce/vede con lui ch'ogni bruttezza e male/maschere belle son, ride e gioisce.'

The evils and the trials that the soul suffers cannot but liberate it and resurrect it from its corporeal 'tomb.' Invited to consider the human condition in relation to the entire cosmos, the mind is presented with the image of an immense space, 'completely saturated in serene light,' in which are gathered the luminous celestial bodies, where the blessed spirits live 'in happy liberty.' Only the earth is obscure – the earth, which is an 'exile and sentence' for fallen spirits. At the center, 'the most rebellious' are punished 'in eternal night/under the greatest weight.' Souls that are sent to the surface, a place of both sorrow and joy, shadow and light, for the purpose of struggling for their release are closed up within their bodies as if those bodies – which are derived from the earth (which itself is a common prison) – constitute individual prisons.¹⁹ Nature and terrestrial entities – constituted by the encounter between cold and heat, which forgets the heavens so as to wear a 'terrestrial veil' and produce all entities – set the scene for a comedy that is represented 'for the amusement of higher spirits' and in which man plays the central role. Souls are sent into bodies 'so as to set the scene with greater prettiness.' This serves to satisfy the doubt regarding the sufferings of the good and the triumphs of the evil 'that contorts every mind.' To the good, God has assigned 'the difficult part of the play,/so as to draw them to greater good from filthy tombs' (n. 77, *madr.* 6).

In this respect, the body – even as it is praised on account of the wondrous anatomy of its parts – becomes the 'tenebrous weight' that tends to hold back and impede the flight of the soul. Aware of not depending on the elemental world and claiming its own liberty and autonomy, the soul addresses the body with epithets that resonate those of a Hermetic dialogue:

You, living death, nest of ignorance,
Moving tomb and vestment
Of sin and torment,
Weight of concern and labyrinth of errors,
You pull me down with charms and fears,
Such that I do not aim at the heavens, my true home,
And the good that rises above all others:
Whence, in love with its beauty and overcome,
I disdain and desert you, an extinguished ember.²⁰

In its dialogue with the body, in its view of the cosmos, in its own aspiration towards and capacity for the infinite, the soul clarifies for itself its own

¹⁹ *Poesie*, p. 338.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 363–364: 'Tu, morte viva, nido d'ignoranza,/ portatile sepolcro e vestimento/di colpa e di tormento,/peso d'affanni e di error laberinto,/mi tiri in giù con vezzi e con spavento,/perch'io non miri in Ciel mia propria stanza,/e 'l ben ch'ogn'altro avanza:/onde, di sua beltà invaghito e vinto,/non sprezzì e lasci te, carbone estinto.'

role and its own divine nature. In the fourth canzone, the author upholds the immortality of the soul – a point on which he evidently had nourished some doubts – on the basis of an anomalous proof. In fact, the author makes reference to his own direct experiences of demonic evocation, thanks to which he had reached a ‘higher philosophy,’ by overcoming error and doubt. If the devils had deceived him, inducing him into false beliefs, they had also rendered certain the existence of abstract spirits, on account of which the existence of good angels and of a future life are also rendered certain. This was a future life in which men would be reassembled in ranks of good spirits and bad, in accordance with their actions in life. The commentary to the fourth madrigal emphasizes that the author ‘knew from experience that there was indeed another age after death; the many visions and demons manifested to the exterior senses tormented him and sought to deceive him, feigning to be angels. And then he wrote this canzone and it is dedicated entirely to the true religion.’²¹ The anxieties of the soul frightened by the thought of death seem to be soothed by the certainty of its celestial life and by understanding that wisdom and happiness consist in adhering to the will of the eternal Intelligence. ‘But he who in his own mind cultivates the great Wisdom/wanting and not wanting in accordance with that great Wisdom/dulls every pain and rejoices in Him.’

The four canzones are followed by that famous poem addressed to Berillo – namely, Basilio Berillari of Pavia, unofficial dungeon confessor and consoler of Campanella. The poem, as is announced even in the title, presents itself as a confession or disowning of the author’s own errors and a declaration of penitence. The author is no longer astonished by the ‘atrocious martyrdom’ to which he is subjected. The consciousness of errors and sins no longer allows him to presumptuously identify himself with Christ and his suffering, which had led him to believe that his reverses were the result of the message of truth and justice – of which he felt himself the spokesman. In the most important madrigal he disowns his own personal prophetic investiture, founded on an arrogant hope that his own actions were righteous, given that it seemed so to his human reason, without bothering to verify it or to wait for divine assent:

I believed that I held God in my hand,
 Not following God,
 But following instead the acute reason of my own intellect,
 Which led to my own downfall and the death of so many.
 Although wise and pious, the human mind
 Becomes blind and profane,

²¹ See madrigals four and five of the *Canzone quarta* in *Poesie*, n. 79, pp. 369–370. For the lines cited below, see madrigal 1, p. 367: ‘Ma smorza ogni doglia/chi nella mente sua il gran Senno cole,/seco vuole e disvòle,/ di lui se stesso in se stesso beando.’

If it thinks to improve the lot of men
Unless you manifest yourself to its senses, you the true God,
And you deign to dispatch it and arm it,
As your messenger
Of miracles and proofs and testimonies.²²

Important too is that 'wondrous sonnet' titled *Della provvidenza* that follows shortly after, in which it is affirmed that the order and the beauty of every part (even the smallest) in the 'artifice of the world' proves that everything is the work of 'an infinite and excellent Intelligence.' The evil deeds and deviations of men and animals generate the suspicion that on account of negligence or tiredness God does not care about the world, or that he delegates his governance to a lesser god. But the final triplet reaffirms the unity of God, who will put an end to all evil, rending manifest his own reason, which remains for the moment hidden:

But there is only one God, by whom will be ended
So much confusion, and the hidden reason
Why so many sinned will be made manifest.²³

After the declaration and the overcoming of the crisis, the *Scelta* concludes with an explosion of four poems in which all creatures (which all are 'beautiful, good, and happy') are invited to celebrate he who has endowed being ('you, all things, I invite to celebrate/ he who has made us – what we are /since we were – nothing'). Every aspect of life and love for life is exalted and the poems sketch the image of a cosmos shot through and coursing – in a manner that is very close to that of the *Senso delle cose* – with animated and positive energies. The first hymn exalts the power and the role of man. Though born crying, naked, and defenseless, man is later able – as the 'image of God' – to imitate divine art and creativity, becoming 'a second god, miraculous creation of the first' and the author of wondrous inventions such as writing, the watch, and fire. As the poem relates, 'in his den he makes it day when it is night; /Oh broken laws – /Oh broken laws! That is a mere worm/ King, epilogue, harmony, – end of everything' and he is capable of establishing laws – 'he proposes laws, as a god.'²⁴

²² Ibid., p. 382: 'Io mi credevo Dio tener in mano,/ non seguitando Dio,/ ma l'argute ragion del senno mio,/ che a me ed a tanti ministrâr la morte./ Benché sagace e pio, l'ingegno umano/ divien cieco e profano, se pensa migliorar la comun sorte,/ pria che mostrarti a' sensi suoi, Dio vero, e mandarlo ed armarlo non ti degni,/ come tuo messaggiero,/ di miracolo e pruove e contrassegni.'

²³ Ibid., p. 404: 'Ma un solo è Dio, da cui sarà finito/ tanto scompiglio, e la ragion nascosa/aperta, onde peccò cotanta gente.'

²⁴ Ibid., p. 409: 'Fa alla sua tana – giorno quando è notte:/ oh, leggi rotte!/ Oh, leggi rotte! ch'un sol verme sia/ re, epilogo, armonia, – fin d'ogni cosa'; p. 408: 'Ei legge pone, come un dio.'

Three ‘elegies composed in a Latin manner’ were added in an appendix to the *Scelta*. These are the only three examples that have come down to us of this innovative attempt to reproduce the schemes of hexameter and pentameter in the vulgar tongue.²⁵ The first is titled *Al senno latino* and it possesses a novelty of language and of meter that aims at exhorting a general renewal; ‘For the new age a new instrument, a new language was reborn:/a new generation can fashion a new singing’. After that, there is a paraphrase of Psalm 111 – *Beatus vir qui timet* (‘Blessed is the man who fears [God]’). Finally, as a worthy conclusion to the entire *Scelta*, there is the splendid elegy *Al Sole*. The poem celebrates the springtime reawakening of life ‘in everything, secret, languid, dead, and lazy’ thanks to the vigor of the sun; thus, ‘the frozen rivers melt into water/pure, that, being released, is happy and irrigates the earth./ The badgers and dormice awake from a long sleep;/ you give spirit and motion to the lowest worm’. All of this induces in the prisoner a reflection on the painful contrast between this renewal and his own situation of exclusion and suffering: ‘why is it that I, more than everyone, tremble in darkness and in cold?’ for ‘I live, am not dead, green and not dry I find myself/ although for you I am buried like a cadaver.’ This is a situation so much more painful in that, forced to envy all manner of ‘pallid serpents,’ he has celebrated the sun in the higher world, as a ‘living temple’ and ‘statue and venerable visage’ of God – a star that confers ‘life, soul, and sense’ to everything and that has been chosen by Campanella as a symbol and sign of his new philosophy precisely on account of such characteristics. But in these final poems the contemplation of and the love for life that returns to show itself and to flow forth seem to prevail, with a certain melancholic composure, in the shout and protest that in the end are mitigated and returned to the ‘serene light’ of the sun.²⁶

Sense, Spiritus and Natural Magic

One of the most beautiful and original of Campanella’s writings is the *Del senso delle cose e della magia*. After the confiscation at Bologna and the dispatching of the early Latin version to Rome, an Italian text was composed in four books towards 1604 in the prison of Sant’Elmo.²⁷ Translated into Latin,

²⁵ An attempt that would be appreciated by Giosuè Carducci, who would reproduce the three elegies in his collection *La poesia barbara nei secoli XV e XVI* (Bologna, 1881), pp. 401–407.

²⁶ *Poesie*, p. 452ff.; see ch. 6, p. 104.

²⁷ The work was handed over to G. Schoppe in 1607, so that he might organize its publication. But at the end of the following year the German scholar, having encountered difficulties with the editor Giovan Battista Ciotti regarding a Venetian edition, advised the author to translate it into Latin and to attempt to publish it in Germany – something that Campanella did in the course of 1609.

the *De sensu rerum et magia* was published in 1620 in a series of works edited by Tobias Adami.²⁸ The work received a good deal of attention across Europe and generated discussion after it received some contrasting judgments.²⁹ The Italian text was edited for the first time only in 1925 by Antonio Bruers. The anatomically explicit prose of the unpublished work had elicited the severe judgment of Amabile ('the Italian style there turns out to be rather rough; some of the words denoting the sexual organs and reproductive acts could not be repeated; and one would have to say that the author was feeling the influence of imprisonment in the tower and in Sant'Elmo'³⁰). In truth, in that work we find ourselves in the presence of an absolute expressive masterpiece. In a language of extraordinary power, Campanella extols his vision of a universal animation, the 'great chain of the highest universal concord.'³¹

The text discusses in great detail the notions of *sensus* and *spiritus*, and all their implications at an epistemological and philosophical level. The text exhibits a wise orchestration of themes, which, once announced, are then taken up and developed at different levels of elaboration, as if in a succession of waves. The polemic against Aristotle is precise and constant; he is accused of incoherence and abstraction, while philosophers such as Anaxagoras, Pythagoras, and Hermes Trismegistus are considered favorably. Even if atomist doctrines are criticized (because they cannot explain the purposeful and vitalistic organization of all natural entities), one can nevertheless comprehend the late reference of 1635 that we find in a letter to Peiresc to 'the Epicurean Lucretius, by me much studied and esteemed.'³²

Right from the exordium, the author announced the explicative principle of the entire work: 'no entity can give to others that which it does not possess itself.' Since it is confirmed in a completely clear manner that animals are endowed with sensibility, it follows that one ought to affirm that 'the elements, which are their causes, sense.' All natural beings, without exception, are produced by the encounter between cold and heat and by the action on terrestrial matter of solar heat, which modifies it according to various modalities and in accordance with the divine design that has preestablished the way in which agent causes are instruments that 'imprint in matter the various models of

²⁸The work would be reprinted at Paris, in 1636 and 1637, preceded by a dedication to Cardinal Richelieu and accompanied by a *Defensio*, in which the author demonstrated how his doctrine was fully in line with the doctrines of the Church Fathers and the Scholastics.

²⁹See for example Michel-Pierre Lerner, "'Campanellae deliramenta in Tartarum releganda": une condamnation méconnue du *De sensu rerum et magia* en 1629,' *B&C*, 2 (1996), pp. 215–236.

³⁰Amabile, *Congiura*, II, p. 370.

³¹*Senso delle cose*, p. 23.

³²*Lettere*, p. 324.

the first idea.³³ The positions of Lucretius and the atomists are criticized. For them, sense is born in things that are insensate and men, who laugh and cry, are descended from elements that do not laugh and do not cry. Campanella claimed instead that ‘laughter and crying do exist in the elements, although they are not there in the same mode as they are in men.’³⁴ Still polemicizing against the atomists, Campanella denied that from the chance clash of inert particles (which are passive and devoid of quality) virtues could derive that are active and incorporeal – such as heat, light, and cold. Taking up again the example of Lucretius, Campanella affirmed that the letters of the alphabet, even if they were rearranged innumerable times, would never arrange themselves in such a way that they composed, by chance, the book that he was writing in a deliberate fashion.³⁵ If one admits that a sword or a book is brought into being deliberately and for a particular end, how much more absurd is it to attribute to chance, rather than to divine skill, much more marvelous compositions like the eye, the heart, a plant, or the entire world.

When Campanella then went on to specify what one ought to understand by ‘sense,’ he defined it as ‘passion’ in the first place. We sense when we undergo an alteration, and immediately that being acted upon divides into two kinds – being either pleasing or displeasing, according to what would be described as utility or harm from the point of view of preservation: ‘those things delight that conserve the symmetry of our sensing and in those organs so adapted, whence it is that a mild warmth (which is a warmth similar to our own) delights; those things that destroy displease, such as hot iron; so it is with all objects – if they conserve us, then they please, but if they destroy us, then they displease.’³⁶ Sense thus turns out to be connected to preservation and destruction. Campanella specified, against Aristotle, that undergoing can also be corruptive, and not only perfective. Moreover, as he had already asserted in the *Epilogo magno*, that which is sentient does not take into itself the form of the thing felt, for that would imply a destruction of its own form. Instead, in the sensing the spirit undergoes a partial change, in virtue of which it is capable of evaluating the entire nature of the sensed object. Sense, thus, is not only passion (things can be undergone that are not sensed, as when during sleep one is bitten by an insect), but rather the *perception* of passion – always insofar as it is connected with a capacity to distinguish the useful from the

³³ *Senso delle cose*, pp. 3–4.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 11. On the concept of sense, see Massimo L. Bianchi, ‘senso (sensus),’ in *Enciclopedia*, vol. 1, coll. 351–364.

destructive. If these first elements and the entities to which they give rise do not sense, then all the world would be an indistinct chaos. The connection between self-preservation and a sensing that is sufficient to realize it is the chain that links the diverse levels of reality – and the explicative principle of those diverse levels. It turns out that every entity participates in life and sense, albeit to different extents and in distinct ways.

A confirmation of the pervasiveness of sense is to be found in the fact that every entity abhors a vacuum, which is perceived as a threat to the integrity both of individual beings and of the whole: things ‘enjoy reciprocal contact’ and for the common good lay down particular repugnances. As in the human body, the individual parts love their own union; just so, the great animal of the world abhors division and vacuum:

It is necessary, therefore, to assert that the world is a complete sensate animal, and that all the parts enjoy the common life. In us the arm does not want to be separated from the humerus, nor the humerus from the shoulder-blade, nor the head from the neck, nor the legs from the thighs – instead, all hate division. Just so, the whole world abhors being divided, as happens to it when a vacuum intercedes between particular bodies.³⁷

To the repugnance for the void is connected the conception of a space that is ‘born to be located,’ and attracts bodies with ‘appetizing sense’ to itself. Campanella recalled that some Arab philosophers (the allusion is to Avicbron, the Jewish philosopher believed by the Western world to be Arab) had identified space with God, on account of the characteristics that seemed to make it resemble divinity: ‘it sustains everything and is contrary to nothing and receives everything benignly; nothing ever dies in it or on account of it and only particular bodies die with respect to other particular bodies. Space is extremely large, not as a material quantity, but as an incorporeal quantity; and it is held to be infinite beyond the universe, a lover, and benefactor of everything.’³⁸ Campanella said that space was ‘the basis of every created thing and that it precedes all beings; if it does not precede time itself, then it precedes at least the origin of nature,’ while God – infinite, without corporeal dimension and antecedent to the entities created by him – has greater ‘sovereign magnitude.’ Campanella then specified that things fill space and obstruct the void, not only because those things enjoy mutual contact and act in the name of preservation, but also because, being similar to God, they are endowed with intrinsic expansive and dilative energy:

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 26.

Since we experience in them the love of dilating themselves, multiplying themselves, and living a spacious existence, it is to be found that – for the purpose of ruling and dilating themselves in space – all things multiply, grow, and diffuse themselves in the territory of the enemy, chasing out all others and longing to be the only one so that they might conserve themselves, render themselves eternal and deify themselves – since all things imitate God who is eternal and they yearn to render themselves similar to him, given that he is their cause.³⁹

One of the complex themes discussed in the second book of the *Senso delle cose* is the centrality and primacy of the hot and subtle animal *spiritus*, analyzed in the entire rich gamut of its vital, passionate, and cognitive functions and in terms of the relationship it establishes between men and immaterial and divine *mens*. Made up of extremely attenuated matter that is purified by solar heat, imprisoned in matter, and incapable of emanating as it would wish, spirit is the hot and vital breath that moulds and organizes the organism in the manner most adapted to its own needs: ‘the soul thus will be hot spirit, subtle, generated in the humor, inside a gross matter, whence, not being able to emanate, it shapes and forms that matter to the point that they are able to live together.’ The body is presented as a wondrous animated machine and all the organs turn out to be constituted for and coordinated towards the end of providing for the reconstitution of spirit, which strives to escape and consumes itself continually, through the search for and the assimilation of foods rendered similar.

Spirit thus made the mouth so as to imbibe [such foods], the teeth to mash them and ready them for passage to those parts where there is a lack, and the stomach for cooking, veins to transport it [the spirit], the liver to improve and distribute it, the arteries to vivify it, the lungs to ventilate it, the heart to attenuate it, the head to house it as the sovereign, bone to structure the machine, ligaments to raise that machine up as well as lower it, nerves to diffuse the spirits and move the machine as necessary (in the manner of a system of cables), feet to carry itself to food and towards friendly beings (as well as flee the unfriendly), and flesh to clothe its mass.⁴⁰

The sentient soul or *anima* – from which the word ‘animal’ derives – is thus identified with the ‘hot spirit ready to take on every passion easily and to sense and to move the body.’ It is thanks to heat that ‘the eggs of the hen, placed under a hot dung or in hot sand (as they used to do in Egypt) come to life just as when the mother covers it with her heat; similarly, when placed

³⁹ Ibid., p. 27.

⁴⁰ Ibid., pp. 38–39.

close to a fire, the egg of the silkworm in Calabria awakens and develops.⁴¹ The hot soul of animals is born therefore from the heat that attenuates matter and that can give rise in a direct manner to small animals and insects: ‘and we see frogs produced in water that is thick, viscous, lying in the hot dust of summer, suddenly made crust and [sensitive] subtlety; and often I have seen horsehair in hot rain water come to life and become extremely small serpents ...; moreover, in tepid waters you even see the thread and lining of flax turn into animal insects’; from this, it can be concluded that ‘it is therefore true that everything is full of soul, since it contains heat.’⁴²

Beyond describing it as a principle of generation and movement, Campanella insisted on underscoring the unity of corporeal spirit, which – hot, made up of an extremely subtle matter, mobile, pliable – becomes capable of discharging multiple functions in diverse organs variously disposed and conformed. As he had already explained in the *Apologia pro Telesio*, he rejected the distinctions of Galen regarding diverse temperament and abstract faculties: spirit is one and has its seat in the brain, whence, running through extremely subtle nerve ducts, it performs its duties.⁴³ Through the sense organs it comes into contact with external reality, and from the modifications that it undergoes all its passions and understandings take their origin. Every sensation is a form of ‘touching’ of the spirit that enters into relation – in the various sense organs – with the exhalations, motions, and light that derive from external objects. Beyond taste (which is the ‘most intrinsic touch’ and derives from direct contact with the substance), smell too is made from touch, ‘because the smell is a subtle substance that emanates from everything, given that all those things are hot and full of pores, made by heat emanating victorious into the heavens’ and is perceived by the spirit of the nose. Hearing also is a kind of touching, because the ear is organized in such a way that spirit can notice motions coming from the outside, and some sounds are particularly enjoyable to the spirit, because ‘the spirit has a mobile nature and enjoys being invited to motion, an operation that ventilates it, purges it, diffuses and augments it, according to its own symmetry.’ If some sounds appear to be dissonant to individuals, ‘all the voices of the world are a music for the entire world.’ Sight ‘is the contact of light tinted by the things that are illuminated.’⁴⁴ If every sensation is touch and if diversity depends on the different size and subtlety of the matter, it follows that everything senses, even if in different degrees and modes, and that one ought to suppose that

⁴¹ Ibid., pp. 39–40.

⁴² Ibid., p. 41.

⁴³ For a summary of the lost work, see *ibid.*, p. 47ff.

⁴⁴ Ibid. p. 60.

The hardest things, such as stones, feel little, because they are not liable to be acted upon much, and have a sense that is similar to the bones of an animal; and that plants have a greater degree of sense, similar to that possessed by flesh; and that some liquids (such as the sanguinary kind), and the stomach and the air sense extremely easily, as does the spirit of the animal. Moreover, they sense not only when struck from close at hand and with a great deal of force, but also from far away on account of the passibility [the ability to feel or undergo] that is communicated to them and that moves them and on account of the affection for light that is placed within them and for the tinting of every figure. It is, thus, necessary to think of heat and light as the most sentient things in the world, and that the entire world senses in greater or lesser degrees.⁴⁵

Perception varies according to the proportions and conformations of individual things: 'but in the world there is neither smell nor stench, neither sweetness nor bitterness, neither music nor cacophony, unless it be relative to various, particular things; yet considered from the perspective of the entire world everything is music, sweetness, sweet smell.'

The sentient soul, because it is corporeal, fine, and 'passes from sense to sense' is not 'affixed to a particular organ, but remains like the many soldiers in a ship or people in a house or men in a city who perform their different duties in various forges, workshops, squares, and rooms.'⁴⁶ It is not necessary to postulate differentiated and specific faculties for different operations, which are all functions of the same sentient soul. In fact, the soul is able to conserve the modifications and impressions that it receives, and to reawaken them and reuse them whenever similar situations present themselves. From this derives memory, in virtue of which when 'we remember something painful and nauseating or happy that we have sensed, that happiness or nausea or sorrow renews itself in us,' even if with diminished intensity, 'because the object is not present and remains only as a scar' and 'there are as many memories as there are similarities.' Imagination too is connected with memory and sensation: 'imagining something, all the things similar to it are awakened and all the passions similar to it are renewed in extremely subtle spirit.' In turn, speech is related to imagination: one discusses 'things unknown by means of those known to sense.' Discourse is a sensing of the similar, a passing and a moving (*discurrere*) from similar to similar. As many kinds of similitude as there are (of essence, quality,

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 73–74.

quantity, and so forth), there are an equal number of modes of speech and argumentation. Understanding and the universal too are connected to the sensate spirit: understanding collects similitudes stripped of particulars and, on account of being ‘the sense of something absent,’ such understanding is a distant and confused sense whereas sense proper is ‘understanding from close at hand.’⁴⁷

The dimension of sense also permits comparison between the level of animals and that of human beings, such that affinities and differences between them may be noted. Campanella takes delight in underscoring the extraordinary capacities of animals: equipped with sense organs that are superior to human ones, they know how to perform wondrous and ingenious deeds; they adopt forms of collective organization; they know how to use arts such as medicine or the arts of war; and, beyond that, they are endowed with forms of reasoning, language, natural prophecy and even, as in the case of elephants, with religiosity. But such analogies ought not to obfuscate or put in doubt the distinctiveness and specificity of human beings. Man is not only furnished with a *spiritus* that is considerably more refined and pure than that possessed by animals; it is also able to move with agility between more capacious brain cells, which allows him to elaborate extremely complex argumentative chains.

The genuine (and radical) distinctiveness of man consists in the fact that he is endowed not simply with that *spiritus* which connects him to all other natural beings but also with a *mens* that has a divine origin and that constitutes and gives shape to his specific dimension. The proofs in favor of this *mens* (and as a consequence in favor of the excellence and the divinity of man) are many. Fundamentally, they stem from the principle articulated at the beginning of the book, according to which ‘no effect can elevate itself beyond its cause.’ Man does not exhaust all his capacities within the natural world: ‘man does not stop at the nature of elements and of the sun and the earth, but understands, desires, and works far above them – such that he does not depend on them, but depends on a much higher cause that is called God.’ Man’s capacity to extend himself with thought and desire towards the infinite demonstrates that he is not only a child of the sun and of the earth, but is also the child of an infinite cause. Thus, ‘when man cogitates, he thinks beyond the sun and then higher still, and then beyond the heavens, and then beyond an infinite number of worlds.’ If Aristotle held that ‘it is a vain imagination to think so high,’ Campanella agrees ‘with Trismegistus for whom it is a non-

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

sense to think so low.⁴⁸ The connection of man with the supernatural world is confirmed by his capacity to go beyond the immediate limits of natural self-preservation. The philosopher and the religious man are able to disdain corporeal goods, honors, and pleasures for the purpose of attending to higher goods and ends. Moreover, man can take hold of superior forms of prophecy and ecstasy that are not explainable with reference to physiological or medical theories. Above all, man is free in his willing, able to resist external pressures, and able both to value and to evaluate the objects of his choosing. Such objects are usually mixtures of the good and the bad and he is able to choose the greater good, even if it is not linked to an immediate advantage or utility.

The third book surveys the different degrees of sense with which each entity is endowed, beginning with the heavens and the stars, which are composed of an extremely pure spirit and have ‘an exquisite power of sensing.’ Against the Aristotelian doctrine that heat derive from friction, Campanella did not tire of reaffirming the celestial nature of all heat, which is reawakened by blows to the stones in which it was imprisoned. It is the same heat that burns and destroys when it is potent, and that generates beings when it is mild. Precisely because it is hot, the entirety of the heavens senses and celestial motions are not the product of separate drives, but are rather the operations of heat. The heavens are one, the spheres do not exist, and faster or slower stellar motions derive from diverse quantities of heat conferred by the sun in accordance with distance or proximity.

A beautiful page is dedicated to light, which is endowed with ‘the most acute sense’ and is diffused everywhere ‘in order to multiply itself, generate, and amplify itself with great delight,’ with a pleasure that is similar to the pleasure that plants experience ‘in thriving, growing, flowering, bearing fruit, and spreading’ and similar to the pleasure experienced by human beings during sex, a pleasure that accompanies the sensation of the spreading of its own being. Shining ‘through other bodies and each atom of air with infinite angles and pyramids,’ light attempts to enter even in the darkest caves and grottos: ‘but in transparent bodies, such as water and crystals, it starts longing for, enhancing itself and penetrating things that are similar and then savors and unites and sets ablaze the things that are not white, because they are dissimilar to it.’

The air senses, because it is ‘the shared soul that helps all things and through which all things communicate.’ In the air the movements and passions of the spirit are conserved as ‘scars.’ ‘Coarse vapors’ in the bowels of the earth also sense. These are vapors that ‘break out and escape’ with great force and ‘seem like distressed animals struggling to free themselves.’ Fire too

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 90.

senses, for, when it is enclosed in the earth, it ‘expands powerfully, breaks free, and destroys everything that could cause its own death.’⁴⁹ Water senses, for within it grow fish and plants; and the earth senses, the earth which Pythagoras compared to a ‘large animal’ – ‘its skin and pelts are the grass and trees, its stones the bones, its animals are like lice for us.’⁵⁰ Plants sense and they are those ‘immobile animals’ that Campanella looked upon with a particular affection. They have ‘mouths, nerves, veins, hides, bones, tissue, cloths, horns,’ and in summer on account of the excessive heat ‘they are drab, dull, with foliage lowered like sickly animals; yet with the arrival of some rain or when they are able to drink they raise themselves up straight; lifting themselves up, they come to life, become beautiful, and show a manifest sentiment of happiness and restoration. They produce flowers and fruit, and ‘so as to preserve their seeds they close them up in bone and then in pulp; with their leaves, they protect those seeds from heat and from cold; and with their thorns, they protect them from animals whenever they can.’⁵¹ Even minerals sense (if dimly). Minerals feed and convert in themselves the liquids of the earth; in time, they come to construct mountain ranges, ‘like living bone.’ Darkness—the symbol of matter and of cold—also senses; even the shadow of our body, when ‘drawing close to another shadow, extends itself in the manner of a pyramid so as to unite itself with that other shadow as quickly as possible.’⁵²

The fourth book, which would also circulate independently, was dedicated to natural magic.⁵³ While taking note of the most curious hidden properties of minerals, plants, and animals, Giambattista della Porta (limiting himself to dealing with the spectacle of the natural world) had asserted that it was impossible to offer a rational explanation for the relationships of sympathy and antipathy that exist among natural entities. Campanella attempted to re-read and to re-interpret this exuberant tradition in the light of his doctrine of the sense of things. Having recalled that the ancients defined as magicians ‘those who investigate the occult ways of God and nature (God’s artifact) and who then, applying those occult ways to human use, are capable of wondrous acts,’ Campanella could only deplore the condition of abasement and decadence into which this noble doctrine had fallen. In modern times, the name of “magician” was given to ‘superstitious friends of demons’; ‘tired of investigating things, such people had looked to demons for shortcuts to do that which they could not do or could not pretend to do.’ The very learned attempt by

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 97, 136, 135, 132.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 133.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 159, 98.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 97, 133.

⁵³ See Guido Giglioli, ‘*magia naturale*,’ in *Enciclopedia*, vol. 1, coll. 265–277.

Porta to restore this doctrine was praiseworthy, but insufficient – in that it was limited to speaking of the magician only ‘historically,’ in a descriptive and empirical way, ‘without entering into the business of causes.’ Magic, as Pliny remembered, is constituted by religion, which ‘serves to purge the spirit and to make it ready to understand and to make it a friend of the first cause to instill faith, honor and reverence in the spirits of those to whom it was applied.’ Magic was also constituted by medicine, ‘by way of understanding the powers of plants, stones, and metals and the sympathy and antipathy among them and towards us,’ and by astrology, ‘so that one might know the time that was appropriate for action.’ This is a wisdom that is ‘speculative and practical at the same time, because it applies understanding to works that are useful to human kind.’ It is divided into several kinds: supernatural or divine, natural, deceitful and diabolical. Divine magic consists in friendship and faith in God, considered as ‘good, holy, and just, as something that can and wants to do us good.’ If the soul ‘cannot extend itself to know the infinite,’ it can nevertheless believe in God as the cause of all things and render itself unanimous with him and achieve in that way a new faith that ‘is, one might say, not only historical,’ but is a faith that ‘has so much power that it changes created things into that which we desire.’ There is a crucial distinction between a ‘historical’ faith (which is external and cold) and a ‘living’ faith, which calls for purity of heart and intrinsic adherence to divinity, in such a way as to ‘will and nill in accordance with him, and in a manner greater than vulgar lovers do with the things that they love.’ This living faith is one that transforms ‘man into God and makes him divine.’ It can offer us a key to interpreting the transition from Campanella’s earlier positions to those that came after the crisis of the years in Sant’Elmo. This transition consisted precisely in a movement from a cold and completely exterior faith to an intrinsic faith that is fed by divine love and that transforms ‘the lover into the object that he loves.’⁵⁴

A very lively page describes the most delightful deceits of tricksters and charlatans and the abilities of tightrope walkers, revealing them to be ‘useless fictions.’ His interest was entirely concentrated on natural magic. On the one hand, such magic was connected with the arts and the sciences. At first and above all to ordinary people (‘as long as the art was not understood’), all discoveries or wondrous inventions seemed to be the result of magic. But ‘later such “magic” would be common science.’ On the other hand, natural magic retained its particular sphere of rarer and more esoteric knowledge and Campanella attempted to re-read it in the light of his doctrines of sense, spirit, and the passions. The magician is he who, knowing the specific quality of sense that belongs to every being, is able to use it in a useful way and is able to induce particular

⁵⁴ *Senso delle cose*, pp. 168–169.

alterations in mobile and fine spirits that are ready to undergo and receive any impression. The basic passions are those of sorrow and joy, love and hate, and hope and fear. And 'he who knows how to engender all these effects in man, with herbs, actions, and other opportune things one may call a magician.'⁵⁵ That man will know how to increase vital powers, by suggesting those foods, drinks, climates, sounds, and herbal and animal remedies that are useful and that fortify vital energies and by discouraging all those that have anything to do with putrefaction and death. He will know the secrets of bringing death and life, in that he knows everything that is either useful to the spirit or damaging (or lethal) to it. He will know the secrets of reproduction and the secrets of diseases. He will know how to raise up passions for the purpose of achieving particular ends, both in people and in particular organs. Campanella presents examples of these things that are very curious. One such curious example is the remedy suggested for avoiding an excessive hardening of the liver, which involves generating the kind of 'dry blood' and 'paucity of spirits and powdery material' that bring ageing and death. So as to keep a liver 'as soft as the livers of babies,' it is good to feed on 'milk and soft things without excrement.' It is also advisable 'to fasten a vase of water up high and to let some drops of water come down through canals now and again onto the liver, which is an excellent magical remedy, because the liver fears and retracts, thereby softening; and the emanating heat no longer dries it out.' If one suffers from a swelling of the spleen, then one should place another spleen that has been dried with smoke on it; this will induce a cure – and not by some work of the devil, but rather because 'the emotion of the patient generates fear in his own spleen, which then retracts itself, squeezes, and vomits the humor, because it is sympathizing with the other spleen, which is similar to itself.'⁵⁶

The lingering of sense in latent and dormant forms in beings and in the air, which are then awakened on particular occasions, renders explicable events that appear to be prodigious, such as the bleeding of a cadaver (in which there remains an 'obtuse sense') in the presence of the killer. As Campanella explained, 'men who have been murdered, spew forth blood in the presence of the murderer and they boil almost out of anger or out of fear, sensing, on account of the intervening air, the presence of the odious enemy; and this is the sign used for discovering the killer.'⁵⁷ The continued existence of affects and of sensation is connected to the efficacy of the weapon salve, thanks to which one can cure a wound even at a distance if one treats the weapon that inflicted the wound, as if the spirit closed up in the wound might acquire faith

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 183, 188.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 184.

when it senses the cure through the air, and might experience ‘something like a rejoicing in vengeance.’⁵⁸ Campanella also dealt with the explanation of a famous example that is mentioned in every book on magic. In the example, a drum made out of sheepskin fell to pieces upon hearing the striking of a drum made out of wolfskin, on account of the reawakening in it of an ancient fear. In a kind of analogy, a fierce Bohemian captain ordered the construction after his death of a drum made out of his own skin so as to terrorize his enemies.⁵⁹

It is also in the light of the doctrine of sense that it is possible to explain the true metamorphoses that take place in persons bitten by rabid dogs or in peasants of Puglia attacked by tarantulas.⁶⁰ The former, after forty days, ‘faint and shout’ and bite; they cannot look upon water, for fear of seeing their own image reflected; in the end, they bark and ‘die rabid and miserable, thinking themselves to be dogs.’ Regarding the tarantula example, Campanella gave a precise description, which suggests that he had seen the phenomenon for himself.⁶¹ Those who have been bitten become weak and ‘stupid.’ They dance and jump to the sound of various instruments, before collapsing, exhausted. In both cases, the acrid spirits and humors that are introduced by the bite induce an alteration in the temperament and the imagination of these poor souls, in whose organism the spirit of the animal that has attacked them gains the upper hand. In this way, they forget who they were. In the case of tarantulas, the infected vapors are forcibly expelled by the dancing and the sweating it induces. But usually the symptoms last as long as the cause that has produced them and only the death of the spider that has bitten them will lead to a complete remission of the illness. The connection between universal and particular causes is confirmed also in the peculiar case of a nose graft, completed at the medical school of Tropea, in a man who, having lost his nose as the result of an injury, reconstructed it from the meat of the arm of a slave, to whom he promised liberty in exchange. The new nose took root and grew, but, when the slave died, it began to putrefy – proof of the fact that the life it received from the new organism in which it was inserted had not annulled its original and root connection with the life of the slave. Thus, they are ‘stupid who deny the duration of a mortal life and the sense and consensus of the entire world.’⁶²

The general rules of magic are concerned with empowering vital and preservative qualities by all relevant natural means. Music and sounds, which act upon the spirit, also have a great effect. The intonations and words that – as

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 186–187.

⁶⁰ See *ibid.*, l. IV, ch. 10, p. 189ff.

⁶¹ See ch. 4.1.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 197.

in the case of the poet and the orator – generate passions also have a great effect, but they can also be changed into superstitious ceremonies and practices, into which the devil himself can intrude. The final chapters linger on the relationship between magic and astrology, the understanding of which is indispensable for acting in accordance with the unfolding of events and in choosing the right moment and the most favorable astral situations. The work ends with an *Epilogo del senso dell'universo*, a lyrical celebration of the world as a divine moving image, in which life ends and begins in an uninterrupted vicissitude:

the world, thus, is all sense and life and soul and body, statue of the Highest, made with power, wisdom, and love for his glory. Nothing is to be lamented. In him so many die and so many live in order to serve his great life. Bread dies in us and is transformed into mass, and then this mass dies and is transformed into blood, and then the blood dies and is made into flesh, nerve, bone, spirit, seed – such that various deaths and births, various pleasures and pains are suffered; but they serve a purpose for our lives, and we do not lament them on that account, but rather celebrate the process. Thus, all things are a source of rejoicing for the world; all things serve and everything is made for the whole; and the whole is made for the glory of God.⁶³

Religion and Nature

The *Ateismo trionfato* was written in 1606–1607. It constituted a watershed in Campanella's thought and testifies to overcoming his deep spiritual and intellectual crisis. Among the promises that the prisoner dedicated himself to realizing, we find a commitment to writing 'a volume against politicians and Machiavellians, who are the scourge of this century and the scourge of that monarchy [the universal monarchy]; this would be a volume that would show reason of state to be founded on the basis of love of self and that would demonstrate to them with new and effective arguments how deceived they are in the matter of the doctrine of the soul and in thinking that religion is an art of government.'⁶⁴

The polemic against reason of state and the Machiavellian conception of religion as a human and political invention and as a useful *figmentum* (a clever expedient), developed by a cunning clerisy and by political leaders in order to gain and maintain power, was connected to the important task of undertaking a full rational inquiry that would survey and evaluate all religious beliefs and philosophical doctrines in order to show how religion is, on the contrary, a *virtus*

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

⁶⁴ Letter to Cardinal Odoardo Farnese, 30 August 1606, in *Lettere*, p. 26.

naturalis (natural virtue) inherent in man. The subsequent period of research would be dedicated to verifying the relationship between natural religion and Christianity, for the purpose of concluding that there was no contrast but rather a deep and original concord between Christian law and natural law. After all, Christ had not nullified or abolished natural law; he had simply added moral precepts and ceremonies to it that completed and perfected it.

Writing to Paul V, Campanella asserted that – having examined faith ‘through the philosophies of the Pythagoreans, Stoics, Epicureans, Peripatetics, Platonists, Telesians, and through the philosophy of all other sects both ancient and modern, as well as through the laws of ancient peoples and those of the Jews, Turks, Persians, Moors, Chinese, the inhabitants of Cathay, the Japanese, Brahmins, Peruvians, Mexicans, Abyssinians, and Tartars’ – he had come to the conclusion that ‘the pure law of nature is the law of Christ, to which only the sacraments have been added in order to help nature to work better by the grace of he who had given those sacraments (which are also natural and credible symbols).’⁶⁵

Campanella did not conceal his suspicion of having perhaps been pushed too far by his rational effort, or of having perhaps committed errors, as might happen to anyone when taking up an art: ‘I concede that I have been too eager to examine the Christian law, and I may have erred as happens with every craftsman in his art, like the tailor who ruins a great deal of fabric before he knows well how to make clothes, or the doctor who kills many patients before he becomes skillful.’⁶⁶ But pointing to the honesty of his research and the sincerity of the attempt to demonstrate the coincidence of first reason and Christianity, he declared to the Pontiff his own ability and intention to persuade others of such truths: ‘the world over, I will never encounter a sectarian I could not convince of the falsity of his faith; at once, I reduce it to the natural law of first Reason, and ... arguing on the basis of the moral and ceremonial precepts of Christ, I show with vivid divine magic that those precepts are in accord with the law of nature.’ Campanella concluded by revealing that, ‘as I have convinced myself, so I convince others.’⁶⁷

At the beginning of the summer of 1607, the *Ateismo trionfato* had been finished and on 1 June 1607 it was dedicated to Kaspar Schoppe, who had arrived at Naples in the spring in order to establish contact with the prisoner. Campanella made a gift of it to him with a gesture of profound gratitude towards the visitor, whom he saw as an angel sent by the Lord in a deeply desperate situation. In the following weeks, the author made reference to the volume in a famous letter to Monsignor Querenghi dated 8 July 1607. In that

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 15.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 55.

letter, he emphasized the particularity of his own philosophy, which did not rely on 'human schools' and on books but instead 'learned in the school of nature and in the school of art' and informed the prelate that he would find an overview of his thought in the recent book dedicated to Schoppe.⁶⁸

Written in Italian, the work was later translated by the author into Latin. It was then published in that translation in Rome (1631) and in Paris (1636) and, until recently, it constituted the only known version of the text. But, thanks to an amazing rediscovery, I had the great satisfaction of locating the original version of the text, written in Campanella's hand, and was able to publish a critical edition of it in 2004.⁶⁹ In the original version, the text was called *Recognoscimento della vera religione*, but it was Schoppe himself who suggested to the author that he change the title (which emphasized more the direction in which the research was heading than a truth already possessed) to the more peremptory one by which the work is usually known. In the original version, the work was preceded by a dedicatory letter to the author's German friend (which later in the Latin edition would be replaced with a more sober *Praefatio*), in which he gave an emotional evocation of the dramatic events of his life. References to trials of his youth, culminating in the Neapolitan trial following the conspiracy, and the terrible torture, are combined with a strong contrast between light and dark, between an age of darkness dominated by reason of state and, on the other hand, the prospect of ascending to the light so as to permit the distinguishing of truth from error and thereby restoring man to a new dignity: 'the age is dark, and it does not know where the heavens are; the stars are obscured by fog, the lights extinguished, the sun is in shadow, the moon covered in blood,' he lamented. Again, 'every sect boasts of miracles, prophecies, testimonies, martyrs, and arguments so as to prove that it is authorized by God: we are in the dark and we all appear to be the same color, philosophers and sophists, saints and hypocrites, princes and tyrants, religion and superstition.' The work was given to Schoppe as a torch with the following instruction: 'tighten it into the hearts of men; perhaps from brushwood they will turn into animals, and from animals into humans.'⁷⁰

The first chapter serves an introductory function and proposes to map the diversity of possible attitudes concerning religion. At first, Campanella focuses on those who are the most numerous, for whom the acceptance of native

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

⁶⁹ *L'ateismo trionfato*, 2 vols. (Pisa, 2004); the first volume contains the critical edition of the work and annotations; the second contains an anastatic reproduction of the ms Barb. lat. 4458 of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, repository of the autograph version.

⁷⁰ *Ateismo trionfato*, I, pp. 3–5.

religion coincides with an uncritical adherence and a passive acquiescence that is undisturbed by doubt. He then speaks of those in whom such adherence is conditioned by the passions, among which are to be numbered the enjoyment of personal advantages or fear of persecution. There follows the group of those frail types who do not deny religion and are not bad people and who behave badly only because they are misled by the bad example set by the majority. In any case, prostitutes and publicans are certainly preferable to sophists and hypocrites, who are all intent on simulating ‘a knowledge and kindness that they do not possess.’ But there are two figures that dominate the scene and they are represented both as authentic protagonists and also as antagonists – namely, politicians and philosophers. The first, deniers of God and of his providence, uphold the political origin of every religion: ‘they do not believe in any law, and they hold that law is an art of living discovered by astute people.’ For them sin does not exist, and ‘can only be established by the law for the preservation of the community, and so that ordinary people obey.’ Miracles, when they are not to be attributed to chance, are produced by ‘illusions of the ignorant’ or by the ‘cunning of the intelligent.’ Such doctrines, founded in love of self, are extremely difficult to uproot and constitute the bane of every age, in that their supporters reject every counter-argument, holed up in the arrogant certainty of possessing the truth. They are too sure that ‘seeking another truth is for impoverished people, who do not know how to live, or of astute people so as to create a new religion as a foundation for the state.’ On the other side, there are the philosophers, who believe that there is only one law – a law that is true and certain, natural and common to all. Skeptical with regard to supernatural dogmas, they live in a virtuous way that conforms to nature. Without doing harm to anyone, ‘they serve the first cause with good will and perform works that are at once honest and beneficial to the human race’; they do not desire honors or riches, but ‘they are happy with little, and derive their joy from contemplation, and feel better than a king, pope or monarch.’⁷¹

The second chapter, which is one of the most controversial parts in the entire work, takes us into the heart of the problem. This chapter presents a long list of arguments against religion in general, and Christianity in particular. As has been indicated, it takes the form of an ‘extremely full list of libertine propositions’ and ‘an organic expression of the anti-Christian doctrines of the period.’⁷² Those objections are then presented in so crude a light and in a sequence so littered with interrogatives that it elicited perplexity and unease both before and after the book was published – not just in the Catholic

⁷¹ Ibid., pp. 17–18.

⁷² Giorgio Spini, *Ricerca dei libertini. La teoria dell'impostura delle religioni nel Seicento italiano* (1950¹), new edition (Florence, 1983), pp. 85–86.

camp, but among Protestants too. With the interlocutors described and the objections listed (to which responses are given in the central and concluding chapters of the work), the other chapters of the first part – the most limpid – are dedicated to proving the naturalness of religion, which is intrinsic to every aspect of nature, which is in turn the expression of divine art. From the central point that God exists as Reason and Wisdom diffused throughout all the aspects of reality derive the following corollaries: the radiating of the ‘trace’ of the Trinity in every natural being; the reasonableness of the Incarnation; the acting of Providence in the world (which is a theater and statue of divinity rather than a dark labyrinth of suffering); the non-existence of death and the relativity of evil, which is connected with non-being and which is therefore something that is necessary for the distinction of things; the profound solidarity of man with nature, even if at the same time his intrinsic divinity and eminence renders man capable of elevating himself to a higher world. From here the text moves on to the difficult problem of the immortality of the soul, a certainty that is attained following paths that are different from those taken by the Aristotelian tradition. Campanella insisted instead on the particularity of man as the only being capable of going beyond his own natural limits and acquiring a consciousness of his own relationship to the infinite.

In the ninth chapter, it is reaffirmed, against all skeptical attitudes, that the existence of multiple false religions is not a sufficient reason to conclude that every religion is radically false. Just as the inexpertness of many physicians does not prove the falsity of medicine in general, so the fact that many wines are adulterated does not prove that there are none that are pure. If it is true that there are differences among the various positive religions (in their rituals and in their supernatural beliefs), it is also true that ‘it is natural for man to incline towards justice and to live in religion’ and that therefore one can grasp with ‘discourse’ and experience with ‘sense’ that religion is *de iure naturae* (in accordance with natural law). A strong confirmation of religion’s naturalness appears in the fact that it is the indispensable foundation and connective tissue of every political community, which without religion could not subsist and would dissolve.⁷³

The tenth chapter is, then, concerned with proving that between natural religion and Christianity there cannot be anything other than a profound and basic agreement, given that nature is the expression of the divine Word, which is the principle of every rational value and of every virtue, since Christ – who is that same Reason made flesh – did not nullify and abolish natural law but rather added moral precepts and ceremonies to it that completed and perfected it. With an audacity that would not fail to raise the ire of censors (the same audacity that would appear to raise the specter of Pelagius because

⁷³ *Ateismo trionfato*, I, pp. 92–93.

it exalted natural and rational values extended to all humanity), Campanella affirmed the unity and universality of a single law, in which all men were participants insofar as they were rational, from the moment that Christ is eternal wisdom and first reason:

We say that Christ is eternal wisdom and first reason, and that everything that is against reason is against Christ, and that all those living in accordance with reason are Christians. Therefore, all nations, recognizing Christ as first reason, cannot take other laws, ... because every law is reason or a rule for reason; thus, every law constitutes the splendor of the light of Jesus (that is to say, the Redeemer), because reason or wisdom is that which governs and saves all things.⁷⁴

The criterion by which to evaluate the goodness of a law is thus its conformity with rational values. Such conformity implies, on the one hand, that those who live according to reason are in fact Christians implicitly, and therefore participants in the economy of salvation, even if they are ignorant of the revelation. On the other hand, such conformity implies that the condition of explicit Christians does not in itself offer guarantees and does not obviate the duty of living in accordance with rational principles: 'Thus, all nations are implicitly Christian, because they all profess to live rationally, and insofar as nations depart from that rationality they are not Christian, and thus we explicit Christians are not Christian in those acts in which we distance ourselves from reason.'⁷⁵

The incarnation of Christ took place in order to confirm and restore (after the original sin) the law of nature, which applies to all humanity, not so as to exclude, separate, or make enemies of the different faiths: 'And Christ was made flesh in order to make us see the universal natural law more clearly through deeds and doctrine. It is a great wonder that, willingly or not, men are subject to Christ regardless of whether he is known or not. Thus, the diversity of laws is no argument, given that positive laws are specifications and applications of that same first natural law, and their variety does not make them for us either unreasonable or unchristian.'⁷⁶ Christianity is not a particular sect among other sects. Instead it sets itself up as an expression of the 'same law of nature, pure and innocent' that is integrated and perfected by supernatural beliefs, dogmas, and ceremonial elements – elements that, in turn, are not alien to rationality and naturalness.⁷⁷ Therefore, the Christian religion, both for the simplicity and universality of its

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 100.

⁷⁵Ibid., pp. 100–101.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Ibid.

moral message and because its ceremonial apparatus is not contrary to nature, is more closely conformed to nature, and it is therefore the most universalizable. The concluding chapters, finally, confront particular aspects of Christianity, regarding rather delicate points such as the Eucharist, miracles, prophecy, specifying the 'signs' and marks that distinguish true Christian belief and confirm its excellence in comparison with other beliefs. In those final chapters, the polemic is deepened against the doctrines of Machiavelli and the supporters of reason of state, who deny the 'naturalness' of religion in order to emphasize its political character.

For Campanella, however, being persuaded of the excellence of Christianity did not entail excluding other beliefs or erecting walls around the citadel of truth. On the contrary, Christian rationality opens up the possibility of a universal confluence of every creed in an ecumenical consensus. While holding fast to the principle of Christian superiority, it remains true that every faith that is conformed to reason contains some share of the truth; irrational faiths, on the other hand, are abuses and 'contorted rules.' From here, Campanella's attention turned to every form of religiosity, wherever and however it is manifested. He revealed himself to be more intrigued than scandalized when he underlined the analogy between the Christian sacraments and the rough ceremonies of the American Indians, who possessed primitive forms of confession and the Eucharist, even if exterior pressures then forced him into contrite condemnation of the deceits of the devil, *simia Dei* (imitator of God.)⁷⁸ In another passage, recalling an episode in which unarmed Anabaptists succeeded in resisting the soldiers of an imperial army, he was not able to hide the most vivid emotion, revealing how the force of faith was irresistible wherever it manifested itself:

When the Emperor ordered the killing of the Anabaptists, they all knelt down in the countryside waiting for death. When the soldiers arrived they became stricken with shame, and did not want to lay a hand on them, and they let them live; and the Emperor concurred. See how powerful is the law of Christ in anyone who observes it.⁷⁹

⁷⁸ *Ateismo trionfato*, I, p. 169; see *Ath. triumph.*, p. 175: 'De Americanis cum admiratione audivi, quod confessione peccatorum utebantur: plebs principibus, principes regi, rex Soli confitebantur: Sol autem deo, ut putabant; et panem quasi eucharistiae manducabant, formantes idolum ex pasta, et distribuentes et communicantes in illo, quem vocabant nomine Dei sui, sicuti nos Iesuchristi. Profecto isti ritus si fuissent cum cognitione veri Dei, et eius instinctu vel lege a Deo instituta, nequaquam irrationabiles essent, sed palam est esse commenta diaboli, simiae Dei.'

⁷⁹ *Ateismo trionfato*, I, p. 105 (*Ath. triumph.*, p. 113); Campanella would refer to the persecutions brought down on the community by Jakob Hutter based in Moravia and chased out of there by Emperor Ferdinand II in 1622: see Roland Crahay, 'Une référence de Campanella: l'utopie pratiquée des Anabaptistes,' in *Le discours utopique* (Paris, 1978), pp. 179–192: 182ff.

Campanella spoke also of the suggested analogy between Christian and pagan miracles – such as that of the Vestal Virgin who, in order to demonstrate her own purity, transported the water of the Tiber to the temple in a sieve. Instead of simply disregarding or naturalizing the prodigy, he took it as a demonstration of how divine presence works in every place in every time. Highlighting similarities between prodigious events did not have a skeptical or naturalizing aim (as in libertine interpretations); instead, it was directed at emphasizing the spatial-temporal continuity of divine presence. The real targets of this polemic were those who believed that the personal possession of truth is a motive for separating themselves from others who are held to be living in error. For Campanella, these are people who are more worried about indicating boundaries and raising up obstacles than imagining a common project or a shared adherence to a single school of the First Wisdom. In a fine passage of the *Syntagma*, Campanella offered us a persuasive key for interpreting his positions. In a sober *laudatio* of Justin (one of the ‘authors’ of the *Atheismus*), he said that he ‘demonstrated that religion, which others hold to be planted only in their own garden, is in fact sown in the entire human species.’⁸⁰

In the course of the almost thirty years that passed between the composition of the *Ateismo* (1607) and the definitive edition that came out in Paris (1636), the work encountered endless problems and obstacles, due to the diffidence and the suspicions of the ecclesiastical authorities.⁸¹ The *Ateismo* was not published by Schoppe (as Campanella had originally hoped); nor was it among the texts published in Frankfurt between 1617 and 1623 under the auspices of Tobias Adami. After the failure of these attempts, the author would consider publishing it in Italy. In the spring of 1621, he sent it to the Holy Office in order to obtain the necessary approval. At first, the opinion of Cardinal Bellarmine, who was charged with overseeing all such approvals, appeared to be favorable. But subsequently the judgment – arrived at by three different commissioners – was negative. The censors maintained that ‘it is not appropriate that the said Father Campanella write and publish his works.’⁸² Campanella hurriedly composed a passionate defense of religion as *virtus naturalis* and sent it to Rome – but to no avail.⁸³ When he reached Rome, the *Ateismo* was subjected to a full trial, begun in the middle of November 1627 and concluded in March 1628. The propositions submitted to the judgment of

⁸⁰ *Syntagma*, p. 110.

⁸¹ See Luigi Firpo, ‘Appunti campanelliani. XXI. Le censure all’*Atheismus triumphatus*,’ *GCFI*, 30 (1951), pp. 509–524. See also Ernst, *Religione*, p. 73ff and the texts cited in the following notes.

⁸² Enrico Carusi, *Nuovi documenti sui processi di Tommaso Campanella*, *GCFI*, 8 (1927), doc. 72, p. 351.

⁸³ See Germana Ernst, ‘Il ritrovato *Apologeticum* di Campanella al Bellarmino in difesa della religione naturale,’ *Rivista di storia della filosofia*, 157 (1992), pp. 565–586.

the inquisitorial commission elicited in the censors a profound, indefinable unease. They concluded that it was hard to say whether it was by ingenuousness or malice ('either he is very ignorant or he is very malicious') that the author appeared ambiguous and evasive – 'he is as slippery as an eel.' The philosophical assertions were said to be absurd, foolish, fatuous, fantastical, and scandalous, while, at a theological level, the accusation that circulated ever more insistently was the accusation of Pelagianism. The discussion began with propositions drawn from the tenth chapter and the censors were unanimous in specifying the radical error of the book: the author was said to have confounded nature and grace, raising the first up too much and binding the second within parameters that were too restrictive: 'it exalts nature and abases grace, and reduces everything to nature.'⁸⁴

On 23 March 1628, the Pontiff decided to release the book, which in the summer was returned to the author, so that he might make the necessary corrections – or so that, if necessary, he might rewrite it from scratch.⁸⁵ Campanella did not welcome this last discomfiting invitation. Without becoming despondent, he undertook the punctilious work of revision tenaciously and the volume was published at Rome at the end of 1630. The author was scarcely able to rejoice in that success before the work was pulled from circulation, blocked by fifteen late-arriving queries of an unknown censor – objections that Campanella would refer to bitterly as 'post-censoring.'⁸⁶ Under fire in particular was the crude list of objections against religion and Christianity in the second chapter. The fifth query argued that while the 'arguments' against the Christian religion were 'extremely strong and rather pressing,' the replies from the appendix added to the chapter were 'too short and inadequate.' Despite defending himself strenuously, Campanella was forced to flank the objections with 'brief responses' that anticipated the contents of those parts of the text where such objections were answered more fully, 'so that the reader would not waver under the blows and would have close at hand an immediate antidote.'⁸⁷ In spring 1631, the work was put back in circulation. But once again the success was short-lived. A few months later, the new anti-astrological sensitivity of Pope Urban VIII was triggered by a passage in the text asserting that the positions of the stars were favorable to the reform of the Church.

⁸⁴The texts of the debate are contained in Germana Ernst, 'Cristianesimo e religione naturale. Le censure all'*Atheismus triumphatus* di Tommaso Campanella,' *Nouvelles de la République des Lettres*, 1989, 1–2, pp. 137–200. On the issue of Campanella's suspected Pelagianism, see the last chapter of the recent monograph by Jean Delumeau, *Le mystère Campanella* (Paris, 2008), p. 499ff.

⁸⁵Carusi, *Nuovi documenti*, doc. 94, p. 358.

⁸⁶'Risposte alle censure dell'*Ateismo triunfato*,' in *Opuscoli inediti*, pp. 9–54.

⁸⁷*Ath. triumph.*, p. 8b.

So as not to appear stubborn, the author declared himself ready to suppress the criticized passage, but when Niccolò Riccardi, Master of the Sacred Palace, advanced new requests for modifications and suppressions, Campanella, exasperated and conscious of the fact that these were mere pretexts, refused to yield to further interventions and the book was confiscated. After his flight to France, Campanella would not fail to express his own bitterness that a text so fundamental for the fight against atheists would remain 'boarded up.' His requests for a revocation of the sequestration fell on deaf ears and he eventually took the decision to reprint it. The *Atheismus* was published, along with other writings, at the beginning of 1636 in a volume dedicated to Louis XIII. For the Papal Nuncio in Paris there was nothing to do but communicate to Rome his disappointment 'at not having been able to prevent the publication of the book ... titled *Atheismus triumphatus*.'⁸⁸

⁸⁸ Carusi, *Nuovi documenti*, doc. 100, p. 359. On the censorship of Campanella works, see Saverio Ricci, *Davanti al Santo Uffizio. Filosofi sotto processo* (Viterbo, 2009).