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A Critical Reading of the Cypriot Renaissance Canzoniere of the Venice Marcian Library (Marc. Gr, IX 32). Could this be the Oldest Neo-Hellenic Anthology known?

Elsie Mathiopoulou - Tornaritou*

RÉSUMÉ

Beaucoup de questions concernant les poèmes qui sont inclus dans le manuscrit chypriote de la bibliothèque Marcienne (datation, identité des poètes, rapport entre les poèmes et les textes originaux en italien, etc.) demeurent ouvertes. Cependant, il paraît que nous sommes en présence d'une première anthologie de poésie en dialecte chypriote où sont transférés dans l'espace littéraire hellénique des modes et des schémas métriques de la poésie de la renaissance de Pétrarque.

ABSTRACT

Many questions concerning the poems included in the Cypriot manuscript of the Venice Marcian Library (dating, poets' identity, relation between the poems and the original texts in italian, etc.) remain open. However, it seems that we are in the presence of the first anthology of poems in the Cypriot dialect, which, in the world of Greek literature, convey thematic and stylistic modes and metrical schemes of the Petrarchism's renaissance poetry.

The poems of this Cypriot manuscript – a sum total of 156-164, if we follow Antonis Indianos or Themis Pitsillides – comprise a poetic Anthology which is well organized for its time, possibly from a philological perspective too, that runs in the spirit of 16th century Italian Petrarchanism. Obviously, they do not belong to the folksong genre or the oral tradition. Very few among them may be characterized as semi-folk (see Table II). However, in their entirety they present the most noteworthy early endeavor of Neo-Hellenic lyric verse to find its own path – if only a dialectal one – amidst the disordered scene of the then first appearing artistic lyric poetry beyond Italian ground. It is the time when the so called "Petrarchism", though not

* University of Bonn

everywhere and always successful in its strict sense, appears in many poetry collections from the Iberian Peninsula to faraway Cyprus as rhymes and verses of erotic content mostly, in which the new meters and new poetic form experiments that will soon prevail in the literary endeavors of the main European countries are also here tried out. After all, it is not by chance that the explosion of personal sentiments of Petrarchan orientation in specific national literatures in Europe coincides along general lines with the quests and ideological conquests of the dawn of modern years, which do not eventuate everywhere at the same time. Affluent literatures such as the French, the English, the Spanish and the Portuguese are telling examples. They may vary from both a chronological and a grammatological perspective of genres and form, but one thing is certain: effusion of lyricism, seen either as a pan-European movement or not. Similarities across new themes, the ideology and radical renewal of expressive means that prevail in these foreign language lyric pieces are easily discerned, regardless of whether they are delivered as translations or paraphrases of Italian originals or if they are only partly and indirectly influenced by them. Their language very often emits self-sufficiency and inventiveness of expressive possibilities. That is why over recent years, interest in these early pieces from the origins of national literary production has increased together with the phenomena that govern them. Hence new editions on the literary production of "the Venetian rule" from all over the Greek area along with evaluations of neoteric methodology have multiplied. During the sixth meeting of Neograeca Medii Aevi in Yiannina (29 September - 2 October 2005), Yiorgos Kehayioglou was right to ask for a "Reevaluation of facts and testimonies on the poly-system of early Cypriot Literature (from the times of the Komninoi to 1570)", where he also referred to the Marciana Code texts by their old title as "Kypriotica Erotica" [Cyprian Erotic Texts], adding that for the works of most categories he considers "the contextual horizon as a thematology of cardinal significance". In the following pages, greater special emphasis should be placed on this component of European and mainly Italian "contextual horizon" where for one reason or another verses and poems facilitating the course of reading are only presented as samples.

Neither in the texts themselves nor in an apex or any dated annotations are there any clear indications that would allow for an accurate dating of the Marcian manuscript and the verification of the identity of its scribe. However, if we carefully examine certain data of the Code then we conclude with certainty that the manuscript dates back from somewhere within the

third quarter of the 16th century. Of course, terminus post quem for the original and inevitably for the Marcian copy is the introductory poem *Pedante* (Nr 27 Pedagogue) from the collection *Cantici di Fidenzio Glottochrysio Ludimagistro* (approx. 1550) by Camillo Scroffa (1526-1565), according to a clever comparison and match of the two poems by Vincenzo Pecoraro at the Convegno Nazionale di Studi Neogreci (Palermo, 1975). The ultimate date with terminus ante quem is 1582, the year of death of the first possessor of the Code, Natale Conti. However, whether the manuscript had been scribed in Cyprus or Venice, a more likely date is the year 1570, when Nicosia fell to the hands of the Turks. Yet new questions arise instantly: Could the scribe of the Venetian Code be a Greek-speaking foreigner, regardless of the place where the scribing took place? This cannot be ruled out with absolute paleographic criteria which are extensively discussed elsewhere (see "Origins of Neo-Hellenic Literature", 1993, pp. 364-369). However there is no other example in the Greek or even the Latin alphabet of a foreign and not a bilingual scribe scribing a clearly neo-hellenic text like ours with difficult and intricate vocabulary as well as folk and dialectal particularities. It appears that the name of the Code's scribe remains an issue as well as the identity and the name or names of its versifiers. Basically, if we exclude from the start the possibility that the hasty scribe is the same as the compiler of the collection's poems – which in my opinion is the most likely, since the Code's whole style presents an offhandedness lacking any decorating element – the identity of the anthologist remains even more vague. However, attempting to identify him through the texts themselves, we reach certain conclusions which at the same time help us investigate the problematic of one or more rhymers within the collection.

In order to tread with certainty we set off from a few poems (Nrs 132-135, 137, 141, 150, 153) largely found toward the end of the Code. These poems can hardly be considered lyrical and whilst presenting numerous Renaissance elements, they do not lie within the spirit of Petrarchanism. One may easily deduce that these are not translations. They are linguistically distinguished by a mixture of scholarly or even archaic elements with idiomatic and dialectal expressions so that they become reminiscent of the graceless style of the Cypriot "poiitarides" [folk poets reciting their poems in public] from the beginnings of the 20th century. But the most important fact is that either directly or indirectly these versifiers refer to persons and events of their milieu and times, which ascribes to them an air of seasonality, another element that supports their originality. As for the aforementioned

indications, indisputably important in the form of historic testaments and the dating of the Code's original, they coincide with the first twenty years after 1550 which we have established as terminus post quem. Therefore, since we are obliged to accept that this Cypriot anthology, composed as we've come to know it, received its final form between 1550-1570 – a time when it is known that the trend of poetry collections was at its peak in Italy and especially Venice – it would not be arbitrary to suggest that anthologizing coincided chronologically with the last production phase of the above seasonal poems' originals.

Pierre de Ronsard, one of the most important European Petrarchists, had in his library the first two volumes of the earliest Venetian anthology (published by Camillo Giollito de Ferrari) in 1545 and 1547, *Rime diverse di molti eccellentissimi autori.* Also in Venice the renowned anthology of Girolamo Ruscelli, *I fiori delle rime de' poeti illustri novamente raccolti* was published in 1558 (at the Giovanbattista and Melchior Sessa press office). The anthologizing and systemic presentation by genre and according to the metric scheme of the poems of a *Canzoniere* [collection of poems] is a necessary component of the movement known all over Europe as Petrarchism in compliance with the latest research on the ideological, sociological and philological procedures that led to it.

This parameter, closely interlinked on the one hand with the beginnings of historiography of Italian literary production and on the other with the increase of the reading public's interest in poetry collections alongside strides in typography, contributed decisively to the gradual transformation of an easy to use linguistic and lyrical instrument that had an effect on the whole of Italian society. Carlo Dionisotti (p. 188) refers to this phenomenology of the 16th century as follows: *Il linguaggio lirico era diventato lingua e disciplina comune di tutta la società italiana, tesa nello sforzo di far argine e riparo a tanta rovina: una lingua e disciplina non meno esatta del latino umanistico, ma aperta a un uso di gran lunga più spedito, più frequente e più vario.* Of course, the uniqueness of the Cypriot Petrarcan collection as well as the as yet precocious research stage in the Greek area particularly on the non folk poetry of the time do not allow but an initial general comparison and parallelism with analogous Italian phenomena.

It is true that this brief project does not leave much room for setting forth several critical observations on the construction of a historic-social context to outline the ambience of production of both the evidently Petrarchan poems of the Code and of the semi-folk and clearly seasonal verses in the

form of epistles, included therein. If someone could thicken, albeit only theoretically, the network of information and the presentation of elements in order to fill in the mainly cultural voids that correspond to approximately four centuries of French-Italian rule (Frangokratia) in Cyprus, and more specifically sometime between the relics of Saint Neophytos the Enclosed and the two historically significant editions of the *Description de toute l'île de Chypre* by Etienne de Lusignan, they would have a cultural synopsis, probably less complete but somehow parallel to N.M.Panayiotakis' and David Holton's similar attempts with regards to Crete. The pursuit of Theodoros Papadopoulos, the coordinator of the new supplemented Greek edition of the history of George Hill, and his cooperators, in which a large part of the third volume is dedicated to the history of Cypriot literature and art during the French rule, appears to be analogous.

However we are limited to an isolated cluster of informative material concerning the two main places under Frankish rule in the Greek area: Crete and Cyprus, where next to the plethora of parallel and often even similar historic-social phenomena and intellectual workings there lies a number of dissimilar conditions and coincidences mainly across ecclesiastical and administrative issues but also in the economic, population and educational infrastructure of the two islands.

In the well known *Descriptio Insule Crete* of 1415 (published by Marie-Ann Van Spitael, 1981; Greek translation by Martha Aposkite, *Enas gyros tis Kritis sta 1415* [A tour of Crete in 1415], 1983) Christophoro Buondelmonti admits to have been impressed by the Cretan songs (*cantilenas creticas*) sung by sailors and oarsmen which of course were then very popular in the Greek world. Both for Crete and other islands there is information from other travelers too about fairs, entertainments and festivities involving eating and drinking, dancing and mainly singing; but also on mourning events and funeral songs. The enumeration and utilization of similar information by Chrysa Maltezou (in the collective volume *Literature and Society in Renaissance Crete* edited by D. Holton, 1991) in conjunction with the official prohibitions of the Venetian administration – as early as the 14th century – comprise valuable indications which contribute to the discussion predominantly on folksongs and the cultural conditions in Crete and proportionately other islands. Another discovery should be added here, indirectly mentioned in *Turcograecia* (1584) by the German Humanist Martin Crusius which apparently refers along general lines to the Aegean islands or most likely to the two big islands only, Crete and Cyprus after

having discussed their dialect on the same page (209) and earlier. After comparing the "islands" to a Paradise (*quasi Paradisus esse propter fertilitatem et amoenitatem*) he returns further below to add that a kind of poetic games takes place there. It is not clear from Crusius' brief description whether the recited verses were improvised by the poets or if they were simply recited in a musical manner (*recitativo*). The former seems more likely, based on the phrase with which Crusius closes his paragraph, which he cites in the margin as *Poesis insulanorum.* His telling last phrase is this: *Fieri haec animi causa: accedere convivia, choreas, cantus.*

Analogous informative material, pertaining especially to the mores, songs and character of the people of Cyprus from someone who lived precisely during the time of the compilation of the Marcian collection poems, is found in the descriptive work of the already mentioned clergyman, chronicler and scholar Etienne Lusignan (1537-1590), *Description de toute l'île de Chypre.* In chapter 29 (p. 219 and so forth), also referring to the contents under the general title *"Du naturel des hommes et femmes de Chypre",* we read a number of interesting facts on the whole of Cypriot society of his time, mainly with regards to music and poetry. Consciously or unwillingly the French nobleman of Cypriot origin, a chronicler (or historiographer as he calls himself in page 119), touches with an almost systematic clarity on specific sociological and cultural resultants that demarcate a temporary network of substructure for the anthology of the Venetian code, even if the processing of the informative volume of all of Lusignan's works is yet to be completed.

Limiting our observations to the minimum and only with respect to the above excerpt from page 220 verso – 221 recto of the *Description,* we arrive at certain useful conclusions:

a) The social stratum that the writer calls noblemen (*la noblesse*) creates a clement and humane climate around itself which is open to foreigners; in fact, noblemen are more interested in foreigners than in their compatriots. Taking into consideration other economic and historic preconditions, we may determine Cypriot society in the urban centers during the primary and late French rule as almost pluralistic in terms of its population and culture. This world of mainly French and Italian noblemen entertained themselves, according to Lusignan's information, practicing in weaponry and fencing. At the time, all lords were adept in the art of singing and playing the *laouto* [stringed musical instrument], whereas the ladies played the *spinetto.* They all loved music very much (*aimaient fort la Musique*).

b) But if the foreigners and Hellenized lords engaged more systematically in

artistic singing and music, other social groups (which the chronicler carefully distinguishes: *Le peuple & bourgeois & autres de mediocre condition*) did not fall short in their entertainment, even though theirs leaned more on the amateur side (*amateurs des jeux et dances*). In this world, which in its large majority was comprised by the local Cypriot population, Lusignan dedicates more lines to describe with relevant precision and knowledge when and in what circumstances they composed their verses without ever having been taught the art (*sans en avoir toutefois aucun art ou précepte*), as they had a natural inclination to poetry (*ont un naturel si enclin à la poésie, qu'ils composent gentilment*). They sang in a generally pleasant and sweet voice (*ils chantent aussi fort doucement & avec une voix plaisante*) that was adjusted according to the occasion and the theme of the song (*accommodant la voix semblable au sujet*).

c) Next to his reference on funeral songs for the death of a lord or an important person, the chronicler goes on to address his reader with personal engagement and emotion (*amy Lecteur que tu eusses entendu celle, qui fut faite sur l'entreprise du Turc contre la bie defendue Isle de Malte, je m'asseure que tu fondrois en larmes)*, in order to touch on the lamentations about the war of Malta and the destruction of Nicosia (*ou si tu pouuois ouyr celle de la ruine de Nicossie)*.

The aforementioned specific information designates the two principal systems of entertainment and overall communication that coexisted in Cyprus in the mid 16th century, precisely when Lusignan wrote his *Description* (concluded in 1568). Whether it be folk poetry with space for amateur improvisation on the one hand or foreign artistic lyrical poetry distinct from the local traditional culture, accompanied by lords playing the *laouto* on the other, one may discover within the rich and heteromorphous collection of poems of the Cypriot Code whole sets of relations and interdependencies between these two systems of communication.

The product of translation or paraphrase – not always of the same quality – that comes to us through the verses of the Marcian manuscript depends on the phrasing forms, the linguistic levels and the semiotic conventions prevailing in the two contrasting but communicating social groups. And precisely because the transfer of poetic discourse, as already noted, does not follow homogenous processes and rules, independent of any Italian models, linguistic and stylistic closeness across the Code's texts, advocated by earlier research, was rightly questioned.

We have attempted here, based on specific figures of lyrical eloquence, to point out certain poetic units which are schematically presented in Table 2 at

the end of this project. It would be useful to repeat that the Cypriot poems of the Venetian Code are not the product of selection from the work of one and only rhymer (in other words, one *canzoniere*) but the anthologizing of verses of more than one writer which in accordance to the Italian practice, must have taken place within the 1560s. Therefore, the brief enumeration of easily recognizable but divergent elements has allowed us to point out the two main poetic units included in the manuscript, each of an utterly contrasting style.

A) Let us first point out a rich cluster of mainly octaves (*strambotti*) of courtly inspiration and origin – without necessarily implying that these verses are the oldest layers in the original of the Cypriot Code. The anthology opens with these octaves (numbers 2-4), whilst around the middle of the collection there is a large bulk of poems again in the form of the Italian *strambotto* (numbers 28-68). Together they compile the most compact cluster in the Code in terms of metrical technique, effortless language and expressiveness of meanings, so that they may be described as a whole in relation to their Italian originals (some of which are known to us) but also autonomously, as noteworthy lyrical verses of their time. Most of the above poems, at least those of which the originals have been discovered mainly through the works of Th. Pitsillides and V. Pecoraro, are deeply immersed in the early Petrarchan ambience of the end of the Quattrocento and the beginnings of the Cinquecento (Table 1) for the most part in the wider Venice area; without however excluding other influences stemming from Northern Italy i.e. the rhymes of Serafino dell' Aquila. From the latter we have four octaves in this specific cluster, translated quite faithfully, as well as a sonnet elsewhere– simplified and in many points misunderstood. Dell' Aquila's rhymes (he died in 1500 at the age of 34) gained considerable fame all over Italy with 20 subsequent editions in Venice only, between 1502-1513. In any case, it is worth noting that both in this section of the Cypriot collection and in others one does not meet only the most well known Petrarchan poets of Venice usually included in anthologies, such as the scholar and poet Pietro Bembo and others from his circle i.e. Bernardo Cappello and Baltassare Castiglione, but also less known poets that are completely absent from the statistical tables of Petrarchan collections, such as Niccolò Delfino or Niccolò da Correggio. As we shall see further below, this is not the only particularity of the Cypriot anthology in relation to the selection of the texts destined for translation (see Table 1).

But coming back to the translations and the more or less liberal paraphrases of the aforementioned strambotti, it appears that despite the trend to generally

follow the Italian versification and the mannered style of courtly eroticism, only rarely does one note servile rigidity in the rhythm of these poems' verses. Strambotto number 40 of the Cypriot Code is an example of a worthy effort on behalf of the Cypriot rhymer to faithfully render the technique of Serafino dell' Aquila's lyrical style. Also, in the four introductory hendecasyllable octaves of poem number 2 the scheme of the book and colors from the known sonnet of Niccolò da Correggio are used masterfully for its time in a liberal paraphrasing attempt of the same Cypriot poet.

That is precisely why it would be impossible to ascribe to this specific translator-rhymer other poems from the Code which, whilst according to the *gusto*, content and style of their Italian originals belong to the early Petrarchan period or even the first decades of the Cinquecento (when Pietro Bembo's *De Imitatione* and *Asolani* were puplished – see Table 1) do not present analogous versification abilities even from the hand of an amateur. In particular, poems such as number 102, modeled after Ariosto's *Capitolo 22*, numbers 79 and 84, modeled after Baldassare Castiglione's and Bernardo Capello's poems – the latter indirectly or directly belonging to the Petrarchan movement of Venice – numbers 7, 23 and 110, modeled after two sonnets and a *terzina* based on respective verses by Niccolò Delfino (all of the aforementioned poets joining the close circle of Pietro Bembo), show no flexibility in verses and possess limited translational abilities. Two early sonnets of the great Venetian Humanist Pietro Bembo (numbers 8 and 14) are also included in the Cypriot anthology. Even if no other indisputable translations of his works will ever be discovered, Bembo's implicit influence within the Venetian Code as an authority of Petrarchism and as a forerunner of the *nuovo gusto poetico* well into the 16th century is undeniable, independent of the Italian poet's significant relation with the court of Katerina Kornaro in Asolo: Asolo was where the Queen of Cyprus lived almost in confinement during the last years of her life (1489-1510) in a milieu which promoted letters and arts and was frequented by Bembo and most of the poets of whom verses are found in translation within the Venetian manuscript.

From as early as the first careful but strictly critical reading of the aforementioned early Petrarchan verses it is obvious that they have not always achieved to transmit much of the technique or eloquence of their Italian originals (with a few exceptions: numbers 110, 1-4, 10-17, 31-37). Number 102 by Ariosto and sonnets numbers 7 and 23 by Delfino are especially awkward and boring compared to their originals. In fact they pale in comparison even to the worst translations of the octaves mentioned in the

beginning (such as the strambotti numbers 29, 39, 41, 49-50), which have not been marked as more faithful renditions or liberal paraphrases of Italian originals, yet they remain interesting as linguistic and expressive exercises. That is precisely why through these first attempts to transfer to the Greek language texts by early Italian Petrarchans (despite their dialectal and Cypriot nuances) there should probably be a differentiation between the most noteworthy in the mass and almost autonomous group of octaves (numbers 2-4 and 28-68) and the other awkward Petrarchan translations, even though it is not impossible for one group to be chronologically distant from the other (Table 1). Then again, if this period could be demarcated globally as a whole, it should not lie far from the first phase of the main Venetian rule in Cyprus that coincides, not accidentally in my opinion, with the twenty years of Katerina Kornaro's stay in Asolo (1489-1519).

B) In terms of chronology, there is another certain indication of a terminus ante quem for the writing of the Venetian Anthology's original which, as already noted, is designated by the poem "Pedagogue", number 27 (see Table 2). This poem may also be considered as the beginning of another partial collection comprising of lengthier poems – amongst them *Canzone* number 94, translated after the renowned funeral epitaph *Canzone Nr 268,* "In morte di Madonna Laura" by Petrarch. With this last canzone, the Cypriot rhymer – to our knowledge the only foreign Petrarchan that translated the whole of this work in the 16th century – renders wonderfully within his powers the mournful ambience of the Italian model. This gifted translator with the ornery and affected style, which clearly distinguishes him from the octaves' rhymer, is also traced in another group of poems. If the observations I have pointed earlier are correct, we may deduce that his writing style is met beyond the translations of Petrarch's poems – an issue worthy of special consideration – in the seven syllable canzoni numbers 92-93, the terzinas numbers 97-100 and 104 , the eight syllable barzellettas numbers 116-118 and the eight syllable octaves numbers 125-129. If the introductory poem "Pedagogue" (the only title in the Code, fol. 286 r), is added to these poems – dissimilar to the originals we know, but quite similar in terms of their somehow boring yet utmost expressive linguistic elaboration in Greek – then we have a small but quite complete collection of poems with the most mournful verses in the Cypriot Code. The verses of this strange *rimadore*-translator that at times reach a unique eloquence of mourning despite his frugal means (i.e. the recurrent verse – epode from barzelletta number 118: *alive with two deaths*) are dedicated to the girl of his thoughts, named

Chrystalleni. His artistic idiosyncrasy and "poigitiki" [poetics] (see also *Epistola number 149* where this expression is used), that touches on certain manneristic trends of the 16th century – despite its casual clumsiness and naivety of expressions – is easily discerned in the studied and almost programmed selection of the pieces rendered as translations or more liberal paraphrases (See tables 1-2). His preference, as we have already seen, pivots for the most part around sonnets and two canzoni by Petrarch whilst in a way keeping pace with the fashion of directly approaching and acquainting the Canzoniere of the great master through the Italian Petrarchans of the first decades of the Cinquecento, he is inspired by the spirit of the early printed anthologies of the mid 1500s. The representative selection of the well known first "epistle" by Antonio Tibaldeo, a text which alongside the other two "epistles" and "ekloges" of the poet is famous for its positively transitional role within the Italian poet's work, could also be added to the above. For, by escaping the thoroughly courtly early Petrarchan style of his previous verses, these epistles, with their mannerism and complex phrases (often with their idiomatic color too, as the Cypriot translation itself) set the ground for the style of the latter 16th century. From the *terzine* to the *epistola* of this Italian model, the Cypriot rhymer composes quatrains whilst daring to carry out quite a few other smaller changes. Also, in his effort to render the meaning not only more analytically but also through his own interpretation he does not always remain faithful to the Italian text. Sometimes he does not merely paraphrase; he makes his own interesting additions that proclaim (as in number 104. 33) his classical education and his abilities in the handling of rhetoric figures such as alliteration.

But based on today's facts, we cannot know for sure whether this rhymer to whom he have ascribed the mournful verses of Chrystalleni's canzoniere which in accordance to the dating of the "Pedagogue" (number 27) must have been written between 1560-1570, had also been the compiler and also to an extent a writer within the original of our anthology – even though it seems very likely that he had been. Upon a more careful reading of other original (?) poems of the Code the possibility that this bold experimentist of the verse was one of the two rhymers and opponents by whom poems of confrontation and personal dispute are characteristic of their epoch, appears in fact equally great. Therefore, by overlooking certain features that are perhaps not irrelevant to the particular conditions surrounding these poems' composition – for which reason they are included in this group according to their themes and versification– and bearing in mind that for these peculiarly

personal verses there cannot be any Italian model neither directly nor indirectly – then based on expressive and linguistic affinities, we add to Chrystalleni's canzoniere the following probably original poems: the double sonnet number 137, the fifteen syllable poems 132-135 and the thirteen syllable 153 that belong to the *"Manogeles"*, according to the strictly fifteen syllable poems number 141,1 (Table 2). We do not know who Emmanouel was, for whom a thorough lesson of literary theory is provided through poem number 141. The writer of the above advisory verses also remains unknown. Further, let us not forget the telling annotation *"kripsis"* (from fol. 272r), in other words the first saved folio of the Venetian manuscript. Only a few indicative verses from the hendecasyllable acatalectic sestets numbers 105-111 could be associated with X, the poet of Chrystalleni and the versifier of the two "epistles" numbers 141 and 150 with the streamlined minor tone and more lyrical expressions. Then again, if this group of seven sextines – in their largest part free paraphrases of Petrarchan models or verses by early Petrarchans – is compared to the musical quatrains of number 112 or the folkway fifteen syllable verses of number 115 and the hendecasyllable terzine of number 101, the most pronounced and dynamic efforts to conquer a personal lyrical style are easily and clearly distinguished. Further, and compared to the above examples – even with certain verses from poems numbers 2 and 28-68 which rank among the best in the collection – "epistles" numbers 141 and 150 are obviously inferior in terms of expressive modes and especially linguistic findings. But the clever critical disposition and graceful arrows of irony (numbers 150, 25-26) alongside the breadth of knowledge of classical antiquity convince us that both the "epistles" and the other original poems (numbers 132-135, 137 and 153) of "Manogeles" refer to important personalities of the time. Therefore, it is not impossible that the gleaning and noteworthy arrangement of the model of our anthology was effectuated upon the initiative of one of the two.

Reaching the end of our reading we have probably noted some of the main parameters for a new phase of research on the Venetian manuscript. By discussing only a few points on the content and quality of the lyrical style of its poems, the presence and bearing of the Greek speaking anthology amidst its equivalent Italian and foreign anthologies of the mid 16th century should be underlined once more. Of course, it is not yet possible to determine the requirements for an in depth acquaintance with and systematic analysis of the achievements of the Cypriot rhymers, by means of a verse by verse comparison to their Italian models, nor could the influences of the whole

spectrum of Petrarchanism on the two or more canzonieri included in the Code be recorded. One thing is certain: within the framework of approximately a century or perhaps less, the transfer of the phenomenon of Petrarchanism unto the Greek cultural area brings about a first lyrical attempt to render mainly in the Cypriot idiom and of course the commonly used *Demotic* language of the time new Renaissance ideologies, poetic images and complex metrical schemes. It is an interesting and laborious effort which will be resumed about three centuries later within Solomos' work in dissimilar conditions and with different results.

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Appendix

TABLE I

Proposed Chronological Layering of the Anthology Based Mainly on the Italian Models

End of Quattrocento,
beginnings and latter Cinquecento

a) More faithful or more liberal translations or isolated verses and schemes from texts of Petrarch himself: Numbers 5, 9, 13, 15, 24, 26, 90, 94, 106, 108, 122, 131, 136, 143, 145-146, 154-155.

b) the same phenomenon from early Petrarchan poems, mainly verses by Sannazzaro (perhaps even before the organized 1521 edition): numbers 12, 88, 107, 111, 112, 114, 127.

c) liberal translations and paraphrases mainly from early Petrarchan and courtly poems (mainly strambotti) of the wider Venice region: numbers 2-4, 28-68.

d) other poems in more faithful translations and texts by poets from the circle of Pietro Pembo: numbers 7-8, 10, 14, 17-23, 79, 84, 102, 104, 110.

Middle and 3rd quarter
of 16th century

a) quite faithful translation from the introductory sonnet *Pedante* of the collection *Cantici di Fidenzio Glottochrysio Ludimagistro* by Camillo Scroffa, reflecting manneristic trends and exaggerations of linguistic archaism: number 27 Pedagogue. Use of ideologies and schemes from the *Rime* (ed. 1544) by Gaspara Stampa in barzelletta number 118.

b) probably original verses of local and seasonal character, based on which they are most likely dated: numbers 132-141 and 150-153.

TABLE II

Proposed Schematic Sampled Classification of Poetic Units Based on Thematic, Linguistic and Stylistic Observations in the Greek Text.