

# Bembo's 'Antique Sandal': The Idea of Imitation in Speroni and Du Bellay

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## Abstract

This essay begins with the debate in the Italian Renaissance on the question of the primacy of Latin vis-à-vis Italian. Whereas Imitation theory in writing Latin was well established, the pioneers in vernacular Italian like Giovan Francesco Pico and Pietro Bembo debated the pros and cons of imitation of Latin writers in Italian. Sperone Speroni in a dialogue formulated the various opinions on the question. French Renaissance poet Joachim du Bellay, faced with a similar task of forging the vernacular in France, took a leaf from Speroni and Bembo. Both Bembo and Du Bellay conceived of their theory of imitation as the principal instrument of reformation of the contemporary culture of poetry. Both of them took upon themselves the task of steering the poetic practice and its theory out of confusion and chaos into a deliberate, premeditated and enthusiastic course of action. The paper by following the trajectories of the Imitation theory in Renaissance Italy and France, attempts to demonstrate the connected nature of European discourse on the influence of the classics in the formation of the vernaculars.

*Key words: Renaissance Imitation theory, Latin and vernacular debate, Renaissance prose styles, Ciceronianism, Giovan Francesco Pico, Pietro Bembo, Joachim du Bellay, Renaissance Italian prose, Sperone Speroni.*

In his famous 1512 letter on imitation to Pietro Bembo, Giovan Francesco Pico, the nephew of the Neo-Platonist philosopher writes:

You see there are as many shoes of the ancients as there are feet and you cannot argue, Bembo, that, even if you should find in some remote treasure house antique sandals and should put them on, you could ever persuade the critics that they were really antique.<sup>1</sup>

Here the younger Pico opposes Bembo's idea of imitating a single author – Cicero in prose or Virgil in poetry – and argues for plural

models in imitation. The debate on imitation theory in Italy, as McLaughlin has established, goes back to the Trecento, even though, here, we are concerned with the relatively modern, cinquecento controversy between Pico and Bembo over the issue.<sup>2</sup>

Pico, in his letter is using the standard metaphor of the shoe and the footprint – the difficulty of matching one's writing in all respects to recreate the 'classical tone' of an ancient author (as Bembo explains it to be his aim in his reply to Pico) is deftly pointed out. For Pico, *res/content/inventio* is more important than verbal form or *elocutio*. Bembo can theorize imitation of a single model by solely prioritizing style/form over content. In his reply to Pico, Bembo actually admits the difficulty of the Ciceronian project in Latin and cites his failure as a consequence of his preoccupation with writing in the vernacular.

But it ought not to hinder you from taking up this method of writing, even if I seem not to have been successful. I did not spend as much time on it as I might have, for I wrote some things in prose and verse in the vernacular to which I gave more study because so many depraved and perverse things have been introduced into the language, that, the correct and proper use of writing being almost obsolete, it seemed shortly the language would lapse to the point where it would be without honor, splendor, culture, or dignity unless someone sustained it.<sup>3</sup>

One may not be wrong in interpreting this admission as a modesty formula as Bembo would go on to say that since he has accomplished something, however little, others who are not distracted by vernacular imitation will accomplish much more. Nevertheless, one who speaks of his own failure can hardly assert himself as a persuasive advocate of the project. History has proved that Bembo's switch to vernacular imitation from Latin was a successful gamble. Those who favoured the continuation of Latin as a living language were wrong and their success in Latin imitation has become a

forgotten fact, or is remembered only by scholars; their works have followed suit to the graceful death of Latin that was artificially sustained by Renaissance humanists.<sup>4</sup>

In this paper, I argue that Bembo, by establishing the language of Petrarch and Boccaccio as models for imitation in the vernacular not only standardized the literary language of Italy but constructed a persuasive theory of vernacular imitation that was reiterated through later works like Sperone Speroni's *Dialogo delle lingue*, which in its turn strongly influenced Joachim du Bellay in writing his *Defence and Illustration of the French Language*. Bembo's interpretation of Petrarch's style and Boccaccio's prose in his *Prose delle vulgar lingua* introduced ideas of imitation that had reached out to poets and writers of other nations of Europe.<sup>5</sup> The Italian *questione delle lingua* was not only a site for battle between the pro-Latin and the pro-volgare groups but also for infightings between the several Romance languages (so-called dialects) of Italy for asserting their supremacy as a national language.<sup>6</sup> The France of Du Bellay could without hesitation borrow a few leaves from these pages for its own benefit.

By divorcing style from content, Bembo was able to focus an excessive concentration on form. He overlooked the stylistic defect of Cicero, for example his verbosity, by attributing it to his personal fault of pride. Bembo writes: "Even if this should be judged a fault of *oratio*, I do not extend my imitation to faults, moles on the face, ulcers and scars."<sup>7</sup>

His assertion of Boccaccio as a faultless model in the *Prose* was quite controversial at the time. Bembo excused Boccaccio's fault by arguing that it was not a stylistic one but a 'vice contracted in his soul....' It is possible for an excellent style to exist in a far from excellent life.<sup>8</sup> His comments on the *Decameron* are illuminating:

Those parts of the above mentioned book, which he takes up for writing a little less judiciously the same [parts] he also writes all in a good and pretty style; this is what we look for... Therefore, whether the subject is good is all that

makes the poem, or at the least may make it, either in high or low or middle style, but never [the question] whether to himself is good or not good.<sup>9</sup>

Bembo goes on in the letter to introduce his famous tripartite division of the imitative process into imitating (*imitari*), catching up with (*assequi*), and overtaking (*praeterire*) the model:

After we have imitated anyone a long time, then we may try to surpass him; but all our desire, all our labor, all our thought must be centred upon equaling him, for it is not so arduous to surpass the one whom you equal as to equal whom you imitate. Wherefore in all this theory, Pico, this can be the law: first to place the best before us for imitating; second, to imitate in such a way that we strive to attain; and finally to try to surpass.<sup>10</sup>

Bembo concludes by drawing a distinction between 'imitari' and 'sumere'. 'Imitari' stands for only stylistic imitation while 'sumere' refers to the borrowing of other elements such as subject, order, 'sententiae'. Bembo is in agreement with Pico as far as they talk of imitation in the sense of 'sumere': that one can borrow content from any author; but they differ on 'imitari' as Bembo thinks that one must imitate the style of only a single author.

The general assumptions behind Bembo's transfer of the idea of stylistic imitation from Latin to the vernacular are made clear in Speroni's *Dialogo delle lingue* in which the interlocutors are Bembo, Lazaro, a courtier, a scholar, Lascari and Perotto.<sup>11</sup> They have different positions on the question of languages.<sup>12</sup> Lazaro is a defender of the ancients who attacks the vernacular. He develops the idea that the vernacular owes its rise to the contamination of Latin by barbarian influence. Bembo turns this argument against Lazaro by stating that Latin itself is barbarous if one only considers the settlers of Rome who were a tribe of Phrygian hunters. Bembo offers the usual organic metaphor associated with language with a slight variation. He says that Italian is like a young tree, not yet producing the flowers and fruits of eloquence. One should blame

this lack not on the tree but on the failure to cultivate it properly. The Romans carefully tended their language; in the same manner grammarians, orators and poets must nurture the vernacular: 'Every language is accustomed to yield not so much by its own nature as aided by the artifice of another.'<sup>13</sup> When the languages are considered as individual organisms they are treated as equals: like Latin the vernacular can also be tended, pruned and cultivated. But Bembo immediately after presents an opposed point of view where this inequality is denied. When languages are considered as species they have their inherent 'natures' where human will is impotent to control it as it is a divinely ordained cycle: some trees mature and bear quickly, then die while others last many years but take a long time to produce, like Italian.<sup>14</sup> This contradiction is present in Bembo's actual position in the Prose where Bembo grants the superiority of Latin, yet encourages the imitative cultivation of the vernacular.

The Roman courtier in the dialogue supports the language of daily practice in court as the standard and opposes the views of the pro-Latin Lazaro and the pro-Tuscan but archaic Bembo.<sup>15</sup> He raises an objection to Bembo's assertion of the superiority of Greek and Latin by suggesting that the learned speak a dead Latin and we a living vernacular. To this Bembo's expected answer is that neither is really dead, since each can produce effects in live people, and the semi-archaic Tuscan of Petrarch and Boccaccio is the only form of vernacular that should be cultivated.<sup>16</sup>

The Scholar intervenes at this point and retells the debate of his masters, Perotto and Lascari on the translation of ancient wisdom into modern tongues. Perotto, who is usually regarded as representing Speroni's teacher Pomponazzi here, raises the question of the felt relationship of the Renaissance to antiquity: 'Why is it that men of this age are generally less learned in every science, and of less worth, than the ancients were?' Lascari responds by alluding to the traditional myth of decay from a state of Edenic perfection. He

uses the organic metaphor to assert that like different species each language has its own particular conditions of growth and kind of product. Before he can develop the argument further, Perotto strikes at the root of the comparison:

Languages are not born...in the manner of trees...some of which are feeble and infirm as a species, some healthy and robust and more fit to bear the weight of our human conceptions. Rather, all their power is born into the world from the will of mortals...the languages of every country...are of one and the same value, and are framed by mortals to one end with one judgement.<sup>17</sup>

The notion of radical linguistic equality is happily accepted by the courtier who rejoices by taking all this to be support for his position. Lascari vainly tries to argue that Greek is a healthier plant and Perotto will not tolerate vain words but must reach for knowledge. Bembo agrees with the view that an ordinary citizen can learn to philosophize – but he insists that he can do so only in the Tuscan of Petrarch and Boccaccio. The dialogue ends in general inconclusiveness, each party agreeing to the general fluidity of signifiers in the order of things.

Joachim du Bellay's debt to Speroni's dialogue was first pointed out by Pierre Villey in 1908 after which notably Henri Chamard in his *Histoire de la Pléiade* criticizes du Bellay for borrowing large sections from Speroni and also cites his debt to French sources.<sup>18</sup> The charge of plagiarism against Du Bellay is now universally considered anachronistic and Terence Cave had suggested that Du Bellay's own grafting of Speroni's arguments is clearly not random, and close examination of it would doubtless reveal further modulations.<sup>19</sup> Ignacio Navarrete came to the conclusion that "Du Bellay must be seen as the author of a key innovation in imitation theory, one that sees all national canons as part of a single polyglot literary system and that encourages intercanonic plundering."<sup>20</sup>

While disclaiming the poverty of the French language in Book I Chapter III of his treatise Du Bellay writes:

## TRIVIUM

I can say the same thing of our language, which begins now to flower without bearing fruit, or rather, like a plant stem, has not yet flowered, so far is it from having brought forth all the fruit that it might very well produce. This is certainly not the fault of its nature, which is as fertile as are others, but the fault of those who have had it in charge and have not cultivated it sufficiently: like a wild plant, in the very desert where it had come to life, without watering or pruning, (or in any way protecting it from the brambles and thorns which overshadowed it), they have left it to grow old and almost die.<sup>21</sup>

This is not only a close adaptation of Speroni but also a detailed and thorough application of the organic metaphor of language as a plant that has living qualities of growth and decay and that needs careful cultivation. Bembo uses the same metaphor in his *Prose* where he praises Petrarch over Dante in the matter of ‘elezione’ (choice of words). Dante is criticized for using the word ‘biscazza’, a harsh and unpleasant word in the line ‘biscazza, e fonde la sua facultate.’ Petrarch is praised for not using such harsh words. Dante

[...] has thus acted in such a way that his *Comedy* may justifiably be compared to a beautiful, spacious field of wheat which is interspersed all over with oats, tares, and sterile harmful grasses, or in turn to some inpruned vine, which can be seen, when the summer is over, to be so full of leaves, vine leaves and tendrils that the beautiful grapes are offended by them.<sup>22</sup>

In his letter to Pico, Bembo suggests the impossibility of imitating many models by saying that even Proteus did not show himself in more than one form at a time. Du Bellay uses the same mythological allusion in trying to convey the impossibility of rendering an exact translation because each language has its ‘je ne sçay quoy propre seulement à elle’:

This being so, if you read a Latin translation of Cicero or Virgil, in order to see if they will engender such sentiments, even as Proteus, they will transform you into diverse

shapes from what you feel reading the authors in their own languages.<sup>23</sup>

Du Bellay's high appreciation of Petrarch is very Bemboesque: Petrarch is praised because even Homer and Virgil would not have been able to translate him properly:

And what I say of the Greek and Latin tongues can reciprocally be said of all the vulgar tongues, of which I need cite only Petrarch, of whom I venture to say that, if Homer and Virgil came to life, and undertook to translate him, they could not do so with the same grace and naturalness that he has in his Tuscan dialect.<sup>24</sup>

Du Bellay has the same concern as Bembo of the *elezione* or choice of words in writing:

[...] elocution, by which principally an orator is judged most excellent, and one type of speaking better than another, as it is called eloquence itself; the virtue of which consists in using proper and ordinary words, and words not foreign to common usage, and in using metaphors, allegories, comparisons, similes, personification, and other figures and ornaments, without which all oratory and poems are bare, deficient and debilitated.<sup>25</sup>

Bembo in his letter to Pico had rejected Pico's notion of imitation of plural models by asserting that imitation was a process of complete assimilation:

It is necessary for an imitator to express all the features of the style which he wishes to imitate, as Cicero explained when he said that imitation was that by which we are driven on with careful reasoning so that we can be like another in speaking.<sup>26</sup>

Du Bellay in his treatise asserts the idea of assimilation as a kind of enrichment and innutrition – a kind of poetic transubstantiation of



## TRIVIUM

the flesh and blood of one author/language into that of another.

If the Romans (some one will say), did not conquer by the labor of translation, by what means then did they so enrich their language, even almost to equality with the Greek? By imitating the better Greek authors, transforming themselves through them, devouring them; and after having digested them well, converting them into blood and nurture...<sup>27</sup>

This is the logical extension of Bembo's argument expressed in a language of aggressive appropriation, albeit less refined.

In Book II Chapter IV Du Bellay advises the future French poet, the type of poems he should choose in emulating: 'Distill with a pen flowing and not scabrous, these plaintive elegies, after the example of an Ovid, a Tibullus, and a Propertius, mingling into it sometimes some of these ancient fables, no small ornaments of poetry.'<sup>28</sup> He is not very far from Bembo's track. Two of Bembo's more successful Latin poems, the short love elegies, *Ad Melenium* and *Faunus ad Nymphas* were imitations of Propertius and Ovid respectively.<sup>29</sup> According to John H. Grant these poems are illustrative of Bembo's theory of 'imitatio cum aemulatione'.

In Book I Chapter XI Du Bellay echoes Bembo's idea of the superiority of imitation in the vernacular over writing poorly in Latin:

But I am of the opinion that after having learnt them [the classical languages] one does not neglect his own, and that by a natural inclination (this is what one can judge from the Latin and Tuscan works of Petrarch and Boccaccio, see any number of learned men of our times) would feel it right to write in one's own language than in Greek or Latin, would make himself sooner immortal among his own, by writing well in the vernacular, than making himself an object of hatred both to ignorant and learned men by writing poorly in these two other languages.<sup>30</sup>

Here Du Bellay's zeal for imitation in the vernacular is much

stronger than the Italian humanists of the fifteenth century. Men like Alberti, Landino and Poliziano had enthusiastically taken up the case for the vernacular and tried to reconcile the two languages. They were Latin scholars but they did not despise the native tongue. Humanists like Bonamico, Amaseo and even Bembo held an ambivalent attitude.<sup>31</sup> But Du Bellay had no cause to feel pride in the Roman heritage like the Italians and therefore could voice in favour of the vernacular in a much more forceful manner.

Although the influence of Speroni and Bembo on Du Bellay is obvious and his avowed zeal for a new programme of the poetry of the Pléiade that would far surpass the *grands rhétoriciens* is loudly proclaimed, his perception of Bembo's interpretation of Petrarchist poetry is limited. The contrasting effects of *piacevolezza* and *gravità* in poetry through the elements of *suono*, *numero* and *variazione* in language that Bembo championed in the Prose find a muted expression in the *Deffence*.<sup>32</sup>

Above all, take care that the type of poetry be far away from the vulgar, enriched and made illustrious with proper words and vigorous epithets, adorned with grave sentences and varied with all manner of colourful and poetic ornaments.<sup>33</sup>

References to the Bembian idea of *elezione*, *proprietas*, *gravitas* and *variazione* are all there but the detailed explanation of how these qualities are to be arrived at are not so well worked out as in Bembo's Prose. Even though Du Bellay repeatedly mentions Petrarch, Boccaccio, Sannazaro and even Bembo as models to be praised, he is more comfortable in praising the Greek and Latin poets. Even when at the beginning of Chapter VI, Du Bellay talks about the 'grandeur of style, magnificence of words, gravity of sentences, audacity and variety of figures, he clearly has in mind the poetic qualities expounded by Bembo, even though the ultimate source may be Hermogenes.

It is quite evident that Bembo was Du Bellay's primary inspiration in writing the *Deffence*. In Book II Chapter XII, just before the conclusion of the treatise Bembo casts his huge shadow:

## TRIVIUM

Similarly Petrarch and Boccaccio, even though they have written much in Latin, it would not have been sufficient to have given them this great honour that they have acquired, if they did not write in their [own] language. This is well known by the great spirits of our time, however much they may have acquired a not so vulgar renown among the Latins, they have yet converted to their mother tongue; even the Italians, who have a great reason to adore the Latin language, that we do not have. I will be content only to mention the name of the learned cardinal Pietro Bembo, about whom I doubt if anybody ever imitated Cicero so carefully, unless it is perhaps a Christophe Longueil.<sup>34</sup>

On the whole however, one must say that both Bembo and Du Bellay conceive of their theory of imitation as the principal instrument of reformation of the contemporary culture of poetry. Both of them took upon themselves the task of steering the poetic practice and its theory out of confusion and chaos into a deliberate, premeditated and enthusiastic course of action. Bembo's apology at the end of his letter to Pico formulates the sentiment with clarity:

...[I]t is a characteristic of the human mind...to wish to inform as many as possible of his opinions upon important subjects under debate, so that either he can correct himself by their censure or strengthen his belief by their approbation.<sup>35</sup>

Du Bellay would certainly have agreed.

### Endnotes :

<sup>1</sup> *A Pamphlet on Imitation by Gianfrancesco Pico, Addressed to Pietro Bembo in Izora Scott, Controversies over The Imitation of Cicero as a Model for Style and Some Phases of their Influence on the Schools of the Renaissance* (New York: Teacher's College, Columbia University, 1910), Part II, p.4. Hereafter cited as Scott, *Controversies*.

<sup>2</sup> Martin L. McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance: The Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo*

(Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995); hereafter cited as McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*.

<sup>3</sup> *A Pamphlet on Imitation by Pietro Bembo Addressed to Pico* in Scott, *Controversies*, Part II, p.14. The Ciceronianism of Bembo and Longolius was criticized by Erasmus in his dialogue *Ciceronianus*. See P.O. Kristeller, 'Erasmus from an Italian Perspective,' *Renaissance Quarterly*, 23.1 (1970): 1-14.

<sup>4</sup> Remigio Sabbadini, *Storia del ciceronianismo e di altre questioni letterarie nell'età della rinascenza*. (Torino: Loescher, 1885). See M.L. McLaughlin, 'Histories of Literature in the Quattrocento' in *The Languages of Literature in Renaissance Italy*, eds. P. Hainsworth et al. (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1988).

<sup>5</sup> Pietro Bembo, *Prose della vulgar lingua*, L'editio princeps dell'1525, Ricontrata con l'autografo Vaticano latino 3210. Edizione critica a cura di Claudio Vela. (Bologna: CLUEB, 2001).

<sup>6</sup> Armand L. De Gaetano, 'G.B. Gelli and the Questione della lingua,' *Italica* 44.3 (1967): 263-281. On the question of the emergence of the Italian language see Mirko Tavoni, 'The Renaissance Emergence of National Languages in Western Europe' in Ann Katherine Isaacs ed. *Language and Identities in Historical Perspective* (Pisa: University of Pisa Press, 2005) pp.79-88.

<sup>7</sup> Scott, *Controversies*, Part II, p.16.

<sup>8</sup> P. Bembo, *Prose e rime*, ed. C. Dionisotti (Turin: Unione Tipografica, 1966), p.55. Cited by McLaughlin, op.cit. 'Id enim si peccatum est, non stili culpa, sed animi vitio contractum est...[stilus] esse optimus in vita non optima potest.'

<sup>9</sup> 'quelle parti del detto libro, le quali egli poco giudiciosamente prese a scrivere, quelle medesime egli pure con buono e leggiadro stile scrisse tutte; il che è quello che noi cerchiamo... perciò che il soggetto è ben quello che fa il poema, o puollo almeno fare, o alto o umile o mezzano di stile, ma buono in sé o non buono non giamai.' *Prose*, 175-6. Cited by McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, p.264. My translation.

<sup>10</sup> Scott, *Controversies*, Part II, p. 16.

<sup>11</sup> Sperone Speroni, *Dialogo delle lingue*, ed. and tr. Helene Harth (Munich: Fink, 1975).

<sup>12</sup> The literary debate here reproduces the atmosphere of the academies of Italy, particularly the *orti letterarie* of Florence which was frequented by Beroaldo, Vida, Inghirami, Bembo, Castiglione and Antonio. See D.S. Chambers and F. Quiviger, eds. *Italian Academies of the Sixteenth Century* (London: The

Warburg Institute, University of London, 1995), p.11.

<sup>13</sup> Fol.117: ‘non tanto per sua natura, quanto d’altrui artificio avitata, suol produrre ogni lingua.’ Quoted by Richard Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), p.58, n.34.

<sup>14</sup> Fol.118<sup>v</sup>: ‘Che qual arbor tosto nasce, florisce, & fa frutto; tale tosto invecchie, & si muoia: & in contrario, che quello duri per motti anni, ilquale lunga stagione harà penato à par fronde. Sara adunque la nostra lingua.’ Quoted by Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance*, p.58, n.35.

<sup>15</sup> Robert A. Hall Jr. in his *The Italian Questione della lingua* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1942), classifies the four categories of views towards formation of a standard Italian language: Tuscan and archaistic; Tuscan and anti-archaistic; anti-Tuscan and archaistic; anti-Tuscan and anti-archaistic. Cited by Armand L. De Gaetano, ‘G.B. Gelli and the Questione della lingua, *Italica* 44.3 (1967): 263-281.

<sup>16</sup> On Bembo’s glorification of Petrarch and the anti-Petrarchism of Secentismo, see Bruno Arcudi, ‘The Author of the Secchia Does Battle with Pietro Bembo’s School,’ *Italica* 44.3 (1967): 291-313.

<sup>17</sup> Fol 125: ‘non nascono le lingue... à guisa di alberi... quale debole, & inferma nella sua specie; quale sana & robusta, & atta meglio à portar la soma di nostri humani concetti: ma ogni loro vertu nasce al mondo dal voler de mortali... le lingue d’ogui paese... siano d’un medesimo valore, & da mortali ad un fine con un giudicio formate.’ Quoted by Waswo, *Language and Meaning in the Renaissance*, p. 162, n.39.

<sup>18</sup> Pierre Villey-Demerets, *Les sources italiennes de la “Deffence et illustration” de Joachim du Bellay* (Paris: Champion, 1908). Henri Chamard, *Histoire de la Pléiade*, 4 vols. (Paris: Didier, 1939-1949).

<sup>19</sup> Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 77.

<sup>20</sup> Ignacio Navarrete, ‘Strategies of Appropriation in Speroni and Du Bellay,’ *Comparative Literature* 41.2 (1989): pp.141-154, p.153.

<sup>21</sup> James H. Smith and Edd W. Parks, eds. *The Great Critics: An Anthology of Literary Criticism* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1951), p.167. Hereafter cited as Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*. ‘Ainsi puy-je dire de nostre langue, qui commence encores à fleurir sans fructifier, ou plus tost, comme une plante & vergette, n’a point encores fleury, tant se fault qu’elle ait apporté tout le fruit qu’elle pouroit bien produire. Cela, certainement, non pour le default de la nature d’elle, aussi apte à engendrer que les autres: mais pour la coulpe de

ceux qui l'ont euë en garde, & ne l'ont cultivée à suffisance, ains comme une plante sauvage, en celuy mesmes desert où elle avoit commencé à naitre, sans jamais l'arrouser, la tailler, ny defender des ronces & epines qui luy faisoient ombre, l'ont laissée envieillir & quasi mourir.' Joachim Du Bellay, *La Deffence et Illustration de la Langue Francoys* ed. Louis Terreaux (Paris: Bibliotheque Bordas, 1972), p. 28. Hereafter cited as Du Bellay, *La Deffence*.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted by Michael Caesar in *Dante The Critical Heritage* (London: Routledge, 1989; Rpt. 1999), p.237.

<sup>23</sup> Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*, p.170. 'Et qu'ainsi soit, qu'on me lyse un Demosthene & Homere Latins, un Ciceron & Vergile Francoys, pour voir s'ilz vous engendresont, telles affections, voyre ainsi qu'un Prothée vous transformeront en diverses sortes, comme vous sentez, lysant ces aucteurs en leur Langues'. Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, pp.33-34.

<sup>24</sup> Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*, p.170. 'Et ce que je dy des Langues Latines & Grecque se doit reciproquement dire de tous les vulgaires, dont j'allegueray seulement un Petrarque, du quell j'ose bein dire, que si Homere & Virgile renaissans avoint entrepris de le traduyre, ilz ne le pouroint rendre avecques la mesme grace & nayfveté qu'il est en son vulgaire Toscan'. Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, p.34.

<sup>25</sup> Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*, p.169. 'eloquution (dy je) par la quelle principalement un orateur est jugé plus excellent, & un genre de dire meilleur que l'autre: comme celle dont est appellée la mesme eloquence: & dont la vertu gist aux motz propres, usitez, & non aliènes du commun usaige de parler, aux methaphores, alegories, comparaisons, similitudes, energies, & tant d'autres figures & ornement, sans les quelz tout oraison & pöemes sont nudz, manques & debiles.' Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, pp.32-33.

<sup>26</sup> Scott, *Controversies*, p.11.

<sup>27</sup> Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*, p.171. 'Si les Romains (dira quelqu'un) n'ont vaquée à ce labour de traduction, par quelz moyens donques ont ilz peu ainsi enrichir leur Langue, voyre jusques à l'egaller quasi à la Greque? Immitant les meilleurs aucteurs Grecz, se transformant en eux, les devorant, & après les avoir bien digerez, les convertissant en sang & nourriture,....' Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, pp.36-37.

<sup>28</sup> Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*, p.175. 'Distile avecques un style coulant & non scabreux ces pitoyables elegies, à l'exemple d'un Ovide, d'un Tibule & d'un Properce, y entremeslant quelquefois de ces fables anciennes, non petit ornement de pöesie.' Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, p. 74.

<sup>29</sup> John N. Grant, 'Propertius, Ovid and Two Latin Poems of Pietro Bembo,' *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 1.4 (1995): 48-62.

<sup>30</sup> 'Mais je seroy bien d'avis qu'apres les avoir apprises, on ne deprisast la sienne & que celuy qui par une inclination naturelle (ce qu'on peut juger par les oeuvres Latines & Thoscanes de Petrarque & Baccace, voire d'aucuns scavans homes de nostre tens) se sentiroit plus propre à ecrire en sa Langue qu'en Grec ou en Latin, s'estudiast plus tost à se rendre immortel entre les siens, ecrivaint bien en son vulgaire, que mal ecrivaint en ces deux autres Langues, ester vil aux doctes pareillement & aux indoctes.' (My translation). Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, pp.54-55.

<sup>31</sup> Armand L. De Gaetano, 'G.B. Gelli and the Rebellion against Latin,' *Studies in the Renaissance* 14 (1967): 131-158, p.70.

<sup>32</sup> Dean T. Mace, 'Pietro Bembo and the Literary Origins of the Italian Madrigal,' *The Musical Quarterly* 55.1 (1969): 65-86, p.70.

<sup>33</sup> Smith and Parks, eds. *The Great Critics*, p.176. 'Sur toutes choses, prens garde que ce genre de poeme soit eloigné du vulgaire, enrichy & illustré de motz propres & epithets non oysify, orné de graves sentences, & varié de toutes manieres de couleurs & ornamentz pöetiques,...' Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, p.75.

<sup>34</sup> 'Petrarque semblablement & Boccace, combine qu'ilz alient beaucoup ecrit en Latin, si est-ce que cela n'eust été suffissant pour leur donner ce grand honneur qu'ily ont acquis, s'ily n'eussent ecrit en leur Langue. Ce que bien congnoissans maintz bons esprits de notre tens, combine qu'ilz eussent ja acquis un bruyt non vulgaire entre les Latins, se sont neanmoins convertiz à leur Langue maternelle, mesmes Italiens, qui ont beaucoup plus grande raison d'adorn la Langue Latine que nous n'avons. Je me contenteray de nommer ce docte cardinal Pierre Bembe, duquel je doute si onques homme inimita plus curieusement Cicero, si ce n'est paraventure un Christofle Longueil.' (My translation). Du Bellay, *La Deffence*, pp.109-110.

<sup>35</sup> Scott, *Controversies*, Part II, p.18.