

" Scattered Anime Fragments Collected ": Love Poetry and Augustinian Morality in The *Secretum* and The *Canzoniere*

Mateo Saldado

National Commission For Scientific and Technical Research, Argentina

Email: mateo.saldado89@gmail.com

Abstract

The issue of poetry's intrinsic value is no stranger to the internal tensions of Petrarch's thought. Although Petrarch defends poetry as a means of accessing Truth, itself the source of moral elevation, vulgar poetry cannot, for him, play the same role. In the third day of the *Secretum*, he uses an Augustinian moral framework to condemn love poetry. This censure, which appears to be categorical, does not explain why he would continue to compose and organize his *Canzoniere* until the end of his life. However, by studying the narrative structure of the text and certain compositions which give structure to the collection of poems, a response can be formulated which reconciles these verses with Augustinian morality.

Keywords: Petrarch, Augustine, *Canzoniere*, *Secretum*, Poetry.

A. INTRODUCTION

If there is one characteristic that defines Petrarch's thought - and the literature of Humanism in general - it is the tensions that arise from within his work. One of the most famous in Petrarch is the question of poetry and its value. During Humanism, poetry began to take an ever greater role in the new civil reality. More and more poets are becoming spiritual and moral guides. If there is one characteristic that defines Petrarch's thought - and the literature of Humanism in general - it is the tensions that arise from within his work. One of the most famous in Petrarch is the question

of poetry and its value. During Humanism, poetry began to take an ever greater role in the new civil reality. More and more poets are becoming spiritual and moral guides (Ronconi, 1976). Petrarch is certainly not alien to this phenomenon. There are few occasions in which he presents himself as a defender of the value of poetry as a means of access to truth, an art that has the same capacity as other disciplines to transmit it (Antognini, 2007). There is in it an attempt to transpose the valid allegorical model for theological discourse in poetry (Fenzi, 2002). There is in Petrarch the claim of a *curiositas*, a claim of the aesthetic dimension of the discourse that far if it is *vain*, it leads to practical effectiveness (Moreu, 1999). However, this defense is not towards any kind of poetry, but towards Latin poetry, the "*heroyca*", different from the "*scenicae meretriculae*". But the fate of vulgar poetry is very different. When reading the third book of the *Secretum*, it is clear that the love rhymes for Laura seem to be definitely condemned within the framework of an Augustinian morality. However, it is known that at the time of composition of the dialogue, the *Canzoniere* is a work in progress. The collection of her

rhymes has not yet reached its final form and will not do so until the last years of her life. With this in mind, the tension would seem to have no solution. Indeed, despite the literary and, therefore, fictional dimension of the dialogue, in it Petrarca condemns the love rhymes and, at the same time, continues to work on them. However, if one takes into account the narrative structure that encompasses and frames an apparently fragmentary work (as, on the other hand, the first sonnet in which he calls them " *rime sparse* " declares), it is possible to offer an answer.

The present article, then, consists of two moments. In the first, I will reconstruct the different arguments present in the third day of the *Secretum* that would seem to propose a definitive condemnation of vulgar poetry. In a second moment, I will focus on the narrative framework offered by the rhymes that have been arranged in their last arrangement. It will be this that will allow me, finally, to account for the extent to which vulgar poetry exempts itself –or not– from its condemnation.

B. METHOD

The way to understand the object and answer the problem formulation is by using methods. The method used must be precise and in accordance with the characteristics of the object of study and the nature of the research. So, this study uses a qualitative descriptive method, namely the data obtained will be described to understand and know the phenomena in the study. This method aims to understand the underlying meaning of human behavior. In addition, qualitative methods are also used to produce in-depth data and get a comprehensive picture. This research was conducted using *library research* , which is research conducted by examining data sources in the form of books, papers, articles, and other research results that are still relevant to the object of research (Creswell, 2010).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. THE SECRETUM

On the third day of the *Secretum* , Agustín addresses the two chains - or the *duo nodi* - that oppress the poet's spirit: love and glory. It is not about any love or desire for glory, but rather, as Rico (Chico-Rico, 1996) has already pointed out , it is about both evils taken not only in the dimension of man, but in their literary dimension. That is why, despite the fact that both can be redirected to lust and pride, two sins that were dealt with already on the second day, are dealt with in a separate day. The *Franciscus* of the third book is essentially the Petrarch man of letters, the writer. When dealing with love for Laura, the " *lauro* " , this is defined as literary love. Just beyond the actual or nonexistence of Laura, love is poetry, is the *laurel* symbolizing the consecration of the poet and consequently his glory. The second evil, glory, is the one born from study, of scholarship. It is a glory that looks for curiosities and elegance in other people's

books to reflect them in its own. It is the Petrarch of Latin humanistic works: that of the *De viris illustribus* and that of *Africa*.

In line with the two preceding days, the entire dialogue turns on the conflict between “*velle*” and “*posse*”, and on the axis of the wrong valuation of the good, always looking at a single goal: to convince *Franciscus* that in the face of the proximity of old age and death must change their spirit and their customs. This *mutatio moris et animi* proposed by *Augustinus*, consists of a radical change in both the ethical and cultural values that up to now guided his life and his literary production. The contact between the *duo nodi* is articulated in a complex system of symbols, the structure of which is given by the triad “love, glory, poetry”: love is love for Laura, which gave her literary fame as the subject of her poetry.

To the character of *Augustinus* the task is proposed arduous, since the two chains are all the more difficult to loosen, as they deceive with a certain appearance of beauty that makes both evils are reputed as the greatest assets by *Franciscus*. The Saint must convince the poet that his love is not pure love, but that it is drenched in sensuality and that it is covered with an illusory appearance of virtue. De Laura not only loves virtue, but also his body. It is even more difficult to convince him that his love is not a good as a source of improvement, an idea in which *Franciscus* insists on remaining. You must show him that his error lies essentially in a wrong valuation of the scale of goods, that is, in a reversal of the *ordo amoris*.

Augustinus tries to persuade *Franciscus* that even the most beautiful things can be loved *turpiter*. Laura is essentially a mortal woman, in whose praise and regret she has wasted the best years of her life. The old man begins by arguing that love is one of the greatest follies. But *Franciscus* replies: “If I burn for an infamous and indecent woman, it is undoubtedly a senseless burning; But what if a true model of virtue seduces me and I give myself completely to love and respect him? What do you think then, you don't make any difference between things so different (...)?” (Moreu, 1999), and later “I already said that you were wasting your efforts, because I don't remember ever loving anything awkward, on the contrary, I have only loved the most precious” (Gargano, 2012). All the erotic doctrine that will run through the pages of the third book can be defined as a concentrate of *Stilnovism*: of woman as a sign of God's beauty, a way to heaven, as a model of virtue and a stimulus for ethical refinement.

Obstinate, *Franciscus* insists that Laura is far from all worldly concern, that her soul has a nature superior to that of any mortal and that in her shine signs of divine beauty: “Do you realize that you have referred to a woman whose soul disregards all concerns on the ground and ignites in heavenly desires? Do you realize that in his appearance, to do justice, signs of

divine beauty shine, that his voice and the light of his eyes have nothing mortal and his walk is not human?" (Abeledo, 2016) . Laura is also an angelic woman: "It was not a mortal thing but angels / their way of walking; and his words / sounded different from what is human " (Nussmeier, 2012) , and also:" If you were known / the divine and incredible beauty / of which I speak " .

Augustinus' strategy is thus to show her that he is burning with desire for a mortal. Indeed, when the lady is dead, *Franciscus* will lament for having dedicated his immortal spirit to a perishable body. He trusts that death will not take it from him before his time, since it is the natural order of things that the oldest die before. However, the Saint replies that it is crazy to deduce from the priority in being born the priority in dying. *Franciscus* insists, remaining in his position, and replies that he has not loved so much the mortal part, the body, as what is immortal in it, "that superior conduct whose example teaches me to live as in heaven (...) that I loved is his virtue, and it has not been extinguished" (Fenzi, 2013) .

In this sense, in song 70 appears the motif of Laura Petrosa who does not give in to the wishes of her lover:

Wandering thoughts that slowly have led me to reason so loud,
see that she has an enamel heart, so hard that I cannot pierce it.
She to look so low does not deign
what about our words
take care, since the sky
He does not want to,
and I am tired of opposing him,
and thus,
as I harden in my chest, thus in my speech I would like to be harsh .

The last verse is the first of one of Dante's petrous rhymes. The harshness of the lady " *'l cor di smalto* ", in the face of the lover's desire, *sets her up as a model of purity, " she non degna di gaze si basso ."* Laura is an object of love, but increasingly and indissolubly also a model from which to become uniform, an object of emulation rather than love: a sublime object of love as a sublime object of emulation. In short, the emulation of the virtue of the beloved consists in knowing how to love in such a way that passion is not extinguished, but is freed from desire and thus purified.

Returning to the *Secretum*, the Saint replies that his mistake consists not in having loved his soul and his body, but in not having loved them in their proper measure: "Look, everything

created must be loved for the love of the Creator, you instead, a captive in the charms of a creature, you did not love the Creator due, despite admiring him as the architect of your beloved, as if he had not created anything more beautiful - when it turns out that physical beauty represents the smallest degree of beauty” . Agustín's words in *De vera religione* sound in the background, as an anticipated and indispensable gloss :

"Evil is the superstition of serving the creature instead of the Creator, and it will disappear when the soul, recognizing the Creator, submits to Him alone and sees that all other things are subject to it by Him. Thus, every creature (Tubau, 2009) Corporal, to the extent that it is possessed by the one who loves God, is very last and, in its kind, beautiful, because it bears a form or species imprinted; On the other hand, when it is loved by a negligent soul in divine service, not even then does it turn into evil, but, being bad the disorder with which it loves it, it is an occasion of torture for the lover, and captivates him with his miseries and he deceives with his false delights, because they neither abide nor satisfy, but torment; and passing with pernicious carnal delight through the fickle senses; when manipulating some images, thinks she understands, deluded with the shadow of her ghosts". (Jerez, 2000).

Every corporeal creature is good and beautiful in itself, insofar as it carries within itself the form or species imprinted by God. The evil is not in the creature, but in the disorderly love with which it is loved. This disorderly love is the root of all miseries, since it plunges man into torments: he is to such an extent taken by images or ghosts of sensible things, that by his own transitory and changing nature, he plunges into torture. Ghosts are nothing but images that the bodily senses extract from the shape of bodies and place in memory. On these the imagination operates dividing them, multiplying them, etc. The danger of ghosts is that it is difficult to get rid of them in the investigation of the truth, which can only be captured with the eyes of the mind, liberated from ghosts or false corporeal images because these are responsible for the diverse opinions. Indeed, the soul, prey to love and pain for passing things, and accustomed to the feelings of the body, is lost behind empty images and cannot see what can only be grasped with the intellect.

By loving the Creator not for himself, but as the creator of the beloved, the *ordo amoris* is subverted . Indeed, according to the Augustinian theory of *uti* and *frui* - linked to the dialectic of means and ends - God is the only one who is responsible for *frui*. That is, things that love each other by virtue of themselves are responsible for fruition, since they delight us by themselves without referring to other things . Only to the Creator belongs the *frui*, that is, to love him for himself and not for any other cause. The rest of the things can only be loved *uti* , that is to say, because of something else, as a means to achieve a higher good or other end (Magnavacca, 2005). Moral evil consists, then, in inverting the terms: enjoying relative

goods –such as the beauty of the loved one– as if they were absolut . *Franciscus* loves God as creator of Laura, when, on the contrary, he should love her because she has been created by God. Nothing engenders so much forgetfulness and contempt for God as love for the worldly, especially what is called love with an exclusive name, says Augustine.

The chaste and spiritual love for a lady is not condemned by the poet, as *Augustinus* claims , but is interpreted as positive and conducive to another higher love. This is attested by the last verses of song:

And I liked the sweet fire so much
that I passed with pleasure great hills to be able to catch those branches;
now the short life,
the place and time show me another path to go to heaven and bear fruit, not just
flowers or fronds.

Another love, other fronds and another fire,
another climb to the sky, other hills
I am looking for, how good is time,
and other branches.

Laura is an instrument of moral elevation. It has made him see in his maturity (*ora la vita breve e 'l loco e' l tempo*) another path (*altro sentier di gire al cielo*), making him prefer *altr'amor* , the love of Christ, *altre frondi* , the crown of thorns , *altro lume* , another guide, and *altri rami-* , those of the cross, different from the *amati rami* of the laurel.

The very idea that a mortal woman could be an instrument of elevation to the *face* , the love that purifies worldly feelings, is inconceivable to *Augustinus* . Quite the contrary, Laura has done nothing more than to distance him from divine love and, therefore, God's desire leaned towards the creature. She has been the path to her annihilation, because it was madness to submit her mind to the mortal goods that lit her spirit, and she does not know how to extinguish it nor can she remain until the end.

As *Augustinus* has shown him, he is also seduced by a woman's body. Love for Laura, then, is not just a love that emulates the beloved without wanting to possess her physically. Song 22 features a lover eager to possess the lady:

I would like to be with her without light,
and that only the stars would see us,

only one night,
and the dawn did not come;
and did not turn into jungle green.

The drive is clearly erotic in nature, the lover seeks to intertwine with the beloved in an endless night " *et mai non fosse l'alba* ." In the last three verses of the stanza, the Ovidian motif of Daphne and Apollo appears , in which Daphne transforms into a laurel to escape the siege of the god. Laura causes the lover to fall into anguish by rejecting the love correspondence. The poet, identifying himself with Apollo , lives it with frustration: the lady who refuses seems to him an enemy, a warrior, a harsh and fierce beast. Her chastity for the lover is nothing but harshness and lack of mercy. Along with the serene, beatific, salvific Laura and model of virtue, this Laura object of desire appears (Leoni, 2007).

Although the nuances of the love discourse in the *RVF* are very subtle, in my argument I will distinguish two great models of the poet's love for Laura: on the one hand, the lady as an object of love and desire, and love as disintegrating and destructive passion. and that, precisely because it is irrational, it undermines the identity of the subject and leads it towards dispersion; on the other hand, love as emulation, in which Laura is the object of love, yes, but of a love deprived of the desire for possession of the beloved, who seeks to imitate her in her chaste virtue (Wen-chin, 2016) . In the *Canzoniere* both coexist: the object of desire Laura and the exemplary behavior model Laura. Even so, the Laura in which signs of the divine shine, who does not give in to the wishes of the lover and therefore becomes an example of virtue, tends to be more prevalent in compositions after song 70 . Although in some compositions one follows the other, they tend not to overlap (Galey Manjón, 2011).

Augustinus enumerates to the poet the dangers of love: as soon as he fell prey to love, *Franciscus* fell into laments and sighs with destructive complacency. Thence, contempt for everything, abhorrence for life, desire for death, love of loneliness and wanting to get away from everything, paleness, the fading of the flower of youth, the confusion of intelligence, the restlessness of sleep, the weak babbling of speech and variable mood depending on the vision of the beloved. Once again, the previously quoted passage from *De vera religione* resonates in his words as an indispensable gloss.

The nucleus of the disease that arises from the love chain is enunciated with these words: "Nothing is capable of engendering so much forgetfulness and contempt of God as the love for the mundane; especially that which is usually called *love* with an exclusive name and even (and this transcends all sacrilege) *god* - perhaps to present a supernatural apology to human delusions and to sin more without restraint under the excuse of divine instigation" ; and also:

“These and others are the miseries of love. (...) However, the most terrible of all - I will return to my purpose - is the one that produces the forgetfulness of God, and at the same time, of oneself” (Morros, 2003) .

Two serious effects caused by love emerge from this nucleus. One of them is the lover's loss of freedom. He is no longer master of himself: his mood and external appearance are determined by the behavior of the beloved. This alienation corresponds to the obverse of the Stoic theory of wisdom. The negativity of the love desire precipitates the subject out of herself, into an alienated condition that fadings her balance, obscures reason and appears, finally, as the gravest possible threat to her moral and intellectual integrity. The second effect consists in the fact that the lover is recognized by the common people and pointed out. *Franciscus* takes very much into account the judgment that the common people will give of him as a poet, and he fears being the object of gossip and ridicule. Faced with this, he cannot but blush, he cannot enjoy such fame without the prerogatives of his being an intellectual coming to him. He is no longer a young man and must avoid giving the image of a old man who loves, a lustful old man. This is one of the elements that will influence the Petrarcheque project of the *mutatio vitae*.

Now, *Franciscus* has venerated the name of the beloved and has taken a liking to the laurel because it bore her name: “And, finally, since you were not given to wait for the imperial, you put your passion on the poetic laurel that promised you the merit of your studies, not loving it with more measure than if it were your own lady” . *Augustinus* accuses *Franciscus* of having an obsession with Laura's name (Latin " *Laurea* ") and with all things connected to her, especially laurel (Latin also " *laurea* "). In this sense, then, the poetic coronation is almost as reprehensible as the conquest of the lady. The sensuality associated with Laura is not elevated by the desire for lauro, for glory. Both Laura and the laurel can be more illusory than real: both belong to the earthly and transitory. Although there is a difference of scales between the immortal fame, the immortal poetry and the beauty of the lady, both are destined to be overcome by time and they must renounce.

This brings us to the next chain that remains to be analyzed, the glory. *Augustinus* identifies the glory that *Franciscus* pursues with fame, which "is nothing but the talk about someone habitual and spread on the lips of many". Although he has always despised the actions of the vulgar, he delights in their gossip and succumbs to pride. The poet must be aware that his efforts and work in the studios have consisted of gathering the flourishes of poetry, history, etc., to adorn his works and flatter the ears of those who listen to him. It would be better to dedicate your time to works on the useful knowledge for life that you have already acquired. However, he aspired to fame in posterity and for that reason he embarked on huge

works such as *Africa* and *De viris illustribus*, consuming his existence in huge occupations. Writing about others, he forgot himself. Nothing assures him that death is not near and that either of the two monumental works can be completed.

"I know well from which foot you are limping: you would rather abandon yourself than your meager books. [...] Get rid of the heavy burden of historical works: Roman deeds already shine enough for their own fame and for the talent of others. Abandon Africa, leave it to its inhabitants; [...] Postponing such books, then, restore yourself, and - to return to the starting point - give yourself to meditate deeply on death - that you approach it at times and do not notice it" (Antonelli, 2012).

On the other hand, despite the fact that fame is the desperate attempt of the man of letters to save the *humanoae litterae* from oblivion and death in order to safeguard them in memory, at bottom, it is nothing more than figurative lability. In this sense, he affirms in one of his epistles: "What is it towards which we so solicitously twist? The fame that we pursue is wind, smoke, shadow, nothing is". Indeed, time triumphs over fame and subjects it to its voracity. In the *Triumphs*, the triumph of Death is defeated by that of Fame and this, in turn, by that of Time. Thus, he affirms in the *Triumphs*: "After under heaven I did not see anything / that was stable and firm".

Both love and glory are alienating. The first because the subject depends on the presence of the object of love; and the second because the subject strives to please the common people. Obviously, both are in contradiction with the Stoic ideal of the freedom of the sage. The fragmentation of the lover, the variation of his feelings, of which the *RVF* is presented as a moral and structural reflection, are opposed to the Stoic ideal of the apathy of the wise man. But it could also be read - typical of Petrarch's taste to link Stoic theories with Augustine - in the sense that the problem of the *duo nodi* consists, in some way, in a kind of Augustinian *distentio animi*. The *distentio* or dispersion is -in its negative meaning- a movement of the spirit outwards and downwards, axiologically speaking. It is a dispersion of the deep attention of the soul that suffers when it allows itself to be trapped by the attraction of the multiple and by different occupations or desires of what is transitory. This changing character of everything contingent is transmitted to the soul insofar as it constitutes the content of its thought (Sacchetto & Santagata, 2013). The writer Petrarca, who concentrates his intellectual production on Laura's love rhymes and humanistic works, loses himself in a multiplicity of occupations without paying attention to one, but in numerous tasks that not only disperse him, but also give him a they take time away from the cultivation of virtue.

The remedy that *Augustinus* proposes consists of a *mutatio moris* that, among other aspects, implies being present to oneself, concentrating one's attention in such a way as to prepare the mind for a constant and attentive *cogitatio mortis*. Composition 264 contains innumerable places parallel to this third book. Thus, on the question of returning to oneself "and while time flees / without taking care of myself, from another writing". And then, on the *cogitatio mortis* "Now that I think that leaving is approaching, / or is not far, like one who is wise, / and prudent turns when he loses, / I think again where I left the path / right that leads to happy port, and" with death near / for my life I seek other advice" (Santagata, 1988).

This *mutatio vitae* implies leaving aside the historical works whose purpose is to achieve fame, and turning towards interiority, towards a reflection on the individual and his circumstances. Towards the end of the *Secretum*, *Franciscus* says: "Do not abandon me as I can: I will gather the scattered fragments of my soul, and I will dwell with me jealously". Thus, the statement "*sparsa anime fragmenta recolligam*" is the announcement of the *Canzoniere* whose formation as a narrative work is taking place at the same time that *Petrarca* is writing *Secretum*. On this point, Santagata argues that there is a double referential regarding composition: it is not only the recomposition of the book, but this is, at the same time, the recomposition of the self as a single and inessential process (Santagata, 1988).

Now, the question that we must now ask ourselves is, in the words of Santagata, the following: "Can a vulgar poet tell a love story that denies itself and, paradoxically, recognizes its value only in being a stone of negative comparison?". To answer it, it is necessary to go to the *Canzoniere*.

2. THE CANZONIERE OR THE FRAGMENT COLLECTS

The *Canzoniere* is a text whose fragments can be read as independent units. Many times there are sets of compositions that are related by theme, or by a subtle play on words or rhymes. Although it is true that love rhymes are the most numerous, there are also compositions of a political tone or occasional rhymes dedicated to a character. It is also true that *Laura's* division into life and death rhymes does not exactly correspond to a chronological division of the story, since rhymes 264, 265, and 266 still show a living *Laura*. However, it can also be said that the set of *fragments* is framed within a framework or a narrative structure that begins with the first sonnet and ends with the last compositions (Santagata, 1988).

In the proemial sonnet, the work opens in a penitential tone, announcing the youthful error of a repentant man, who is ashamed and hopes "besides forgiveness, mercy". Here begins the

historical and exemplary parable of his love. The *sparse rhymes* presented in this introductory sonnet will reflect the passion of love, the "complaining son" of the hopes and pain it caused him, while now the author clearly knows and regrets the guilt of his "delirium", and recognizes the vanity and transience of all things earthly ("that how much it pleases the world is a brief dream"). It is this recognition that makes him another man than he was. In this sonnet, he opposes the past of amorous perversion to the present of the consciousness of repentance.

The *RVF* are configured, thus, from the beginning, as the journey that of the youthful error, brings us closer to the mature truth of a man who has become capable of recognizing him and placing himself as the protagonist of an exemplary experience that will go from disintegrating passion to awareness of your negativity. Of course, this journey will not be progressive, but will be represented in snapshots, condensed moments, return crises and they will end up being recomposed according to an external narrative framework that will unmask the implicit substance .

In this sense, then, song 264, which leads the second section, that of the rhymes on Laura's death, integrates the discourse of Augustinian moral problems into the work. Here the dimension of the crisis, the error and the repentance that had been opened in the sonnet first is recovered and the dilaceration of man, the tension between the consciousness of error and shame and passionate love becomes stronger and more evident. The song presents an internal debate between two opposing thoughts, a kind of distant prelude to the crisis, the effective debate of which will take place in song 360 and the *Secretum* debate . The subject is aware of the shortness of life and the proximity of death ("seeing the end closer each day, / a thousand times I have asked God for the wings / with which I know that he frees / our mortal prison intellect"), and asks God to enlighten him so that he can rise to heaven. He meditates on the cross: ("Those pious arms / in which I trust, I still see open"), but he fears because Laura and the desire for glory still goad him ("that others goad me") (Pérez Fernández, 2003).

One of the thoughts urges him not to wait any longer, to pull from his chest the root of the pleasures that choke him, that divert him from true happiness and plunge him into dispersion ("why trust him again, / if it lacks of peace and firmness?") . The sweetness of Laura's eyes, her image and her face made a flame of burning desire ignite in her chest that was never satisfied. And the poet reflects, if a movement of her eyes, or the song of the lady extinguished the desire on this earth, how much greater will be that pleasure that is in heaven. The other thought, "a sweet and bitter thought", the glory, fills his soul with desires and hope "only because of such glorious fame". But it will not accompany him after death: "But after the soul undresses, / this desire will not be able to accompany it; / and if the Latin

and Greek / after dying speak of me, it will be wind" . Love passion, moreover, seems to sadden and overshadow other thoughts or desires, and as he writes about others, he forgets himself: "and, while time flees / without taking care of me, of another writing". He wonders, then, "What is the use, then, of preparing / my basket with tar, if it is still held between rocks / two knots?" . The poet is fully aware of his actions, and the more guilty he is the more ignorance does not excuse him, but lets himself be carried away by passion ("And I feel how it reaches my chest / a bitter, severe and sweet disdain / than thought hidden/ makes it come out, showing it on the forehead") . And he feels a noble thought of indignation rise in his heart that shames him and makes other more secret thoughts pale. Shame denounces the indignity of such desires "because loving what is earthly / how much is owed to God, / is more despised in the one who craves the most" . Loving a creature with devotion only due to God is *Augustinus'* warning to *Franciscus* in the *Secretum* . And although the poet sees the best, the most straight path to salvation, nevertheless, he takes the other: "for my life I seek other advice / and I see the best, and I cling to the worst" (Disegni, 2011) .

If 264 is an internal debate between opposing thoughts, 360 is an effective debate in front of the court of reason. The poet quotes Love in front of the reason that arbitrates as judge. This song certainly has many parallels with the third book of the *Secretum*. What is peculiar about her is that the poet takes the position of *Augustinus* in the dialogue, and the Love, *Franciscus's* . The character of the poet accuses Amor of having filled his life with bitterness, taking away his peace and putting him in a state of permanent war. He managed to make me love God less than he should and not take care of a woman: "This man made me love God less / than he should, and I didn't take care of myself; / for a woman I put / all my thoughts into question" . Faced with these accusations, Amor responds that he freed him from law studies: "In his youth he gave himself up to the art / of selling little words, more, lies; / and does not feel ashamed" . It was he who catapulted him to fame, elevated his intellect, and set him apart from iniquities ("and managed to be famous / only for me, whose intellect / I elevated where it would never go") . What is noble and exquisite is thanks to Love and him. Amor gave him the instruments to rise to heaven through mortal things - Laura's beauty and perfection that are a *scala* to the Creator -:

And more, and the rest this surpasses,
wings I gave him to fly the sky
through things
who lead the Maker, though he judges; What if I had looked at the virtues
that in that hope they met, face to face
the first cause would arrive

However, he did not know how to take advantage of it and fell into the danger implied by wanting to rise to the Creator through mortal things: he reversed the order and took pleasure in the earthly and there he stayed. The song ends with both interlocutors waiting for a sentence from Reason. However, this one, smiling, responds: "but such litigation requires more time". That "time" is none other than the three days of the *Secretum*.

The last five compositions with which the Canzoniere concludes create the penitential atmosphere that will finally close the circle opened by the proemial sonnet. Sonnet 361 is that of an aging poet who experiences the inexorable symptoms of old age in his body: "Often the faithful mirror tells me, / the bark has changed, and already tired, / and my strength and dexterity diminish: / Don't hide, how old you have become". In the following sonnet, 362, he adds to the physical mutation, the spiritual one, but, this time, in Laura's mouth: "And my chest freezes when I sometimes hear / the one for which I turn pale / tell me:" Friend, now I love and honor you / because your hair and habits have already changed". Both sonnets focus attention on the figure of the poetic self and its double transmutation: the inner and the physical. From this point on, the discourse will focus on the protagonist and at the same time, the female figure will gradually fade to the point of its medusa transformation in the sonnet. 366: "The mistake and Medusa turned me / into a dripping stone" (Den Boer, 1998) .

Beginning with sonnet 363 and the next two, the atmosphere will become more and more penitential and religious until it ends in the song to the Virgin who closes the work. The protagonist evokes Laura dead, her dispersion ("it is the earth that gave me heat and cold") and her withering desire for glory ("and the laurel is withered, it is oak and elm") . Far from the yokes of love, he finds a sweet and bitter freedom and there is, in the last third, a return to God: "And to the Lord whom I adore and thank, / and who the sky governs with a gesture, / I return tired and fed up of life " (Sanchez, 1991) .

In 364, the poet repents of all the mistakes already tired. Finally the youthful error of the proemial sonnet is taken up: "I am tired now, and I regret / of all the errors that extinguished / of virtue the germ ...". In the last stanza he entrusts himself to God: "Lord, you have put me in this prison, / You save me from eternal harm: / I acknowledge my mistake and do not excuse it" .

Sonnet 365 is the sonnet of full spiritual conversion. The protagonist mourns the past times in which he loved things of this world: "I am crying my past times / in which I loved the things of this world, / without taking flight, having wings, / to give of myself perhaps noble example". He regrets not having risen to give himself or under an example. He invokes divine grace to come to the aid of his soul, and consecrates himself to God to accompany him in the

little time that he has left to live: "For the little living that I already have left / and for the good death give me your hand : / You know well that I trust no one else" (Butinyà, 2002).

Finally, song 366 closes the Canzoniere with the notes of a definitive balance that was prepared by the preceding sonnets. The poet entrusts his life in the hands of Mary: "Help me in my war, / even if it is earth, and you of heaven reign». He recognizes himself at the end of his days, and turns to the thought of death that is guessed closer and closer: «return your mind to the horrible storm / in which I find myself alone and without government, / and where I already hear the last creaking". It is the Virgin who can turn bitter tears into joy: "Oh Virgin, who turn / Eve's tears into joy. / Make me worthy of Him, because you can". The poet is earth, his cry is earth, his love was earthly: "With the knees of my mind on the ground / I pray that you guide me / and straighten my steps to the good end". Love for Laura, ultimately, has been nothing but deadly beauty. Finally, the poet is repentant in his heart ("have mercy on a repentant breast") and consecrates his chest, his name and his style to the Virgin: "Oh Virgin I consecrate / to your name the wit and style, / tongue, heart and sobs" (Escobar, 2015).

Thus, the *fragments* that made up his life remain as such, but now, in close connection with the proemial sonnet and the final song, they are embodied and can be seen as the vicissitudes of a negative experience that can be offered as an example. In this way, the question opened by Santagata, whether a vulgar poet can tell a love story that denies itself as a stone of negative comparison, seems to be answered in the affirmative.

In what sense, then, could the composition of the Canzoniere be considered an adequate response to the Saint's exhortations? Agustín's directives were clear: return to interiority, dwell in oneself, get away from the jungle of ghosts and external temptations that alienate and disintegrate the self, and rebuild as much as possible in such a way as to prepare their spirits for the *cogitatio mortis* .

D. CONCLUSION

That the *recolligere fragmenta* leads us directly to the Canzoniere is significant because it implies that such an operation is part of the re-founding of the intellectual program that Petrarca carried out around 1350. In that time reorders his vulgar lyrical production until then dispersed in rhymes and the burden of an Augustinian moral- religious meaning. The love story opens with a proemial sonnet in a penitential tone, and in the following compositions the poet plunges us directly into the love story. In the sonnet that works as a hinge between the rhymes in life and in death, the poet appears split between two contradictory thoughts, one full of sensuality and

love for Laura and the other aware of his error and the danger that it entails. The poetic subject knows the correct path, but does not take it. We will only have to wait until the end of the work for it to make sense and close the circle opened at the beginning. In the last sonnets the figure of the beloved is diluted and the divine figure begins to gain strength, the poet recognizes the error and the way to salvation. The play closes with an acknowledgment of error and old age, and with a prayer to the Virgin to come to his aid. It is true that the *mutatio* does not take place definitively, as is usual in the works of Petrarch.

It is clear, then, that the narrative structure that frames the work is constructed as a moral and exemplary book, in which the poet recounts his love experiences and entrusts them to the public, hoping for forgiveness on their part. They are the fluctuations of a spirit in love, conscious and sorry for its mistake. Through love, the self runs the risk of disappearing into the sensitive, illusory and ghost-ridden world, endangering the eternity of the future life because of love. In the Canzoniere there is still a tension between this fragmentary experience and the instance of recomposition that is never fully resolved.

The Augustinianism of the *Secretum* speaks of historical and scholarly humanistic works. Petrarca also includes the rhymes to Laura, that is, the "*rime sparse*", because the Canzoniere is the instrument by which he re-appropriates these scattered fragments, and thanks to which he transforms a discourse about and for others into a discourse about and for himself. himself, thus fulfilling the Augustinian exhortation, with the "*te tandem tibi restitue*". The work, far from being merely a monument to love for a woman, takes upon itself the moral responsibility, making it an exercise of return on itself, the reflection on an existential experience that is judged and made available to others as *exemplum vitae*. That of a lover who indulges in a fragmentary, disintegrating but, at the same time, amazing experience.

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