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Notes on Rhyme Words in *Il Filostrato*

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0. Introduction

This preliminary study on rhyme words in *Il Filostrato* by Giovanni Boccaccio is based on a computer analysis.[1] The text used in the analysis is Vittore Branca: *Cuccina di Diana Filostrato*. Milano: Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1990.[2] The aims of the paper are

  1. To examine the structure of rhyme words of *Il Filostrato* and to
      describe some characteristics of rhyme in *Il Filostrato*.

  2. To list some of the words used in *Il Filostrato*.

The rhyme scheme of *Il Filostrato* is ottava rima. The poet is composed of eight-line stanzas with an abababcc. An rhyme scheme is

      Per che, venuto il vago tempo il quale

      riveste in prati d'erbette e di fiori

      e che gaio diviene ogni animale

      e 'n diversi atti mostra suoi amori

      li Troian padri al Palladio fatale

      fer preparare li consueti onori;

      alla qual festa donne e cavalieri

      fur parimente, e tutti volentieri.   (Parte Prima 18)

1. Nouns

There are two types of nouns in Italian: masculine nouns and feminine nouns. Both types are frequently used as rhyme words. For instance, (1-35[A]) sospiro, disiro, martiro, (1-8[C]) scienza, credenza, sofferenza and (1-13[C]) noia, Troia.[3]

The plurals of nouns also rhyme. Examples are: (1-25[A]) menti, intendienti, genti, and (1-23[C]) martiri, sospiri. Nouns often rhyme with words of other parts of speech like (1-47[B]) pensiero, vero, sincero (n. adj.

adj.), (1-22[B]) foglia, doglia, voglia (n. n. v.) and (1-18[C]) cavalieri,
volentieri (n. adv.).

2. Pronouns

There are a few instances where personal pronouns appear in rhyme. For
instance, (2-72[C]) lui, lui and (4-116[C]) mio, io. They also rhyme with other
pronouns like (1-24[A]) colui, cui, altrui and (1-29[A]) altrui, sui, lui.
Direct object pronouns with verbs, ie. clitic, sometimes stand in rhyme as
(5-2[C]) rammaricarsi, disfogarsi, (6-12[C]) domandarla, maritarla and (7-15[B])
appicarsi, rammaricarsi, indugiarsi. Pronouns rhyme with words of other parts of
speech, like (1-56[A]) questo, molesto, presto (pron. adj. adj.) and (2-32[C])
mia, sia (pron. v.).

3. Adjectives

Attributive adjectives appear as rhyme words. Examples are (1-52[A])
eccellenti, scontenti, dolenti and (1-6[B]) lagrimoso, pietoso, doglioso.
They rhyme with words of other parts of speech. Examples are (1-9[B]) saggio,
viaggio, visaggio (adj. n. n.),(1-39[A]) verace, piace, giace (adj. v. v.),
and (1-53[A]) dolente, solamente, sente (adj. adv. v.).

4. Adverbs

Adverbs ending in -ente sometimes rhyme with each other. For example,
(1-10[B]) generalmente, diversamente, reamente, (1-16[B]) sovente, vigorosamente,
fieramente. They also rhyme with words of other parts of speech:(1-55[B]) mai,
assai, guai(adv. adv. n.), (2-40[B] veramente, sente, subitamente(adv. v. adv.)
and (2-70[B]) miseramente, gente, niente(adv. adj. n.).

5. Verbs

The most featuring rhyme among verbs are infinitive, gerund and past
participle.
> (1) Infinitive[4]
>> The infinitive frequently occurs in rhyme. Their endings are -are,
>> -ire, and -ere. The examples are (1-1[B]) invocare, pregare, mutare,
>> (1-37[B]) provocare, cantare, amare, (2-77[B]) sapere, vedere, tenere,
>> (1-3[C]) venire, fornire and (5-14[C]) permutare, abbandonare.
> (2) Gerund

Gerunds ending in -ando and -endo rhyme with each other. Examples are (1-20[B]) veggendo, ponendo, riprendendo, (1-42[A]) andando, mangiando, pensando, (1-27[C]) facendo, rimovendo, and (1-33)[C] annovenrando, commendando.

(3) Past Participle

Past participles ending in -ato, -uto and -ito are frequently used as rhyme words. Examples are (1-10[A]) sentito, fuggito, fallito, (1-35[B]) perduto, saputo, conosciuto and (5-39[B]) venuto, saputo, voluto.

In addition, the conjugated verbs appear in rhyme. Examples of verb conjugations in the simple tenses are given below.

(1) Present

There are few rhymes of verbs in the present in *Il Filostrato*. One example in the first person singular is (3-68[C]) t'amo, bramo.

(2) Imperfect

(2-34[B]) amava, stava, salutava (1-48[C]) portava, stava.

(3) Past Historic

(1-39[C]) gittasti, mostrasti (4-7[C]) recai, lasciai (7-30[A]) lasciai, menai, guastai.

(4) Present Subjunctive

(1-6[A]) ch'ascoltiate, sentiate, preghiate (4-129[C]) dogliamo, possiamo (4-103[C]) partiate, sfoghiate.

(5) Imperfect Subjunctive

(1-43[B]) dicesse, volesse, movesse (6-18[A]) avesse, antivedesse, facesse, (4-53[C]) ponessi, cessi

There are many other instances where verbs rhyme with words of other parts of speech. Among them are (1-14[A]) vorrai, avrai, assai(v. v. adv.), (1-33[B]) sedere, piacere, vere (v. v. adj.) and (1-10[C]) rimase, case(v. n.).

6. Prepositions

Prepositions are seldom are used as rhyming words. The prepositions like a, con, da, di, in, su, per and tra never occur in rhyme in *Il Filostrato*.

7. Specimen of rhyme words

The following is a list of some words which appear in rhyme. The list

was generated by the programming language AWK. The numeral to the right of each index indicates the number of times the words appeared in rhyme. The sample here is from Part Nine of *Il Filostrato* which consists of eight stanzas.

ai 1
   (#9-5[A]: n'andrai, vederai, sarai)
ando 1
   (#9-3[A]: cercando, navigando, venerando)
are 1
   (#9-2[B]: fare, parlare, amare)
ari 1
   (#9-6[B]: dichiari, amari, chiari)
arsi 1
   (#9-7[B]: farsi, ritornarsi, dileguarsi)
ata 1
   (#9-8[A]: ambasciata, accettata, onorata)
eno 1
   (#9-4[A]: sieno, pieno, rendereno)
ente 1
   (#9-5[B]: mente, dolente, umilemente)
ento 1
   (#9-2[A]: sento, l'argomento, contento)
erto 1
   (#9-3[B]: aperto, 'ncerto, esperto)
esti 1
   (#9-8[B]: saresti, sapresti, presti)
ia 1
   (#9-7[A]: pia, mia, via)
ino 1
   (#9-4[B]: cammino, pellegrino, vicino)
one 1
   (#9-1[A]: cagione, afflizione, ragione)
osa 1
   (#9-1[B]: pietosa, dogliosa, nascosa)

oso 1

    (#9-6[A]: lagrimoso, noioso, doglioso)

ato 1

    (#9-2[C]: stato, disiato)

enza 1

    (#9-6[C]: partenza, presenza)

ii 1

    (#9-8[C]: sii, t'invii)

ire 1

    (#9-7[C]: ire, morire)

ore 1

    (#9-1[C]: valore, core)

ori 1

    (#9-4[C]: onori, amori)

ute 1

    (#9-5[C]: virtute, salute)

uto 1

    (#9-3[C]: dovuto, conosciuto)

8. Final Remarks

I would like to summarize the tendencies of rhyme words in *Il Filostrato*.

(1) Nouns are are frequently used as rhyme words.

(2) Adjectives appear as rhyme words.

(3) Adverbs ending in -mente are used as rhyme words.

(4) Infinitives ending in -are, -ire and -ere, the gerund ending in -ando, -endo and past participles ending in -ato, -uto, and -ito are used as rhyme words.

(5) Conjugated verbs in the simple tenses also appear in rhyme.

(6) Prepositions seldom stand in rhyme.

Finally, I would like to note how rhyme in *Il Filostrato* compares with the ones of Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde*. Michio Masui said in his book points some characteristics of Chaucer's rhyme structure.[5] It is interesting to say that Boccaccio and Chaucer have some in common in the structure of rhyme words. The phenomena mentioned above, (1)(2)(3)(4)(6) are seen in both Boccaccio and Chaucer.

Notes

(1) I wish to thank for Mr. Katsutoshi Nakamura at Toyohashi University of Technology.

(2) All Boccaccio quotations are taken from this book.

(3) The numeral indicates the part and stanza. Each capital alphabet A, B, C corresponds to aaa, bbb, cc of rhyme scheme shown in the introduction.

(4) Technical terms of Italian verbs used in this section are taken from Anna Laura Lepschy and Giulio Lepschy. *The Italian Language Today*, 2nd. ed. London Melbourne Sydney Auckland Johannesburg: Hutchinson, 1988. 133-148.

(5) Michio Masui. *The Structure of Chaucer's Rime Words, An Exploration into the Poetic Language of Chaucer.* Tokyo: Kenkyusha, 1989. 263.

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