

**THE CANZONIERE OF  
DANTE, A CONTRIBUTION  
TO ITS CRITICAL EDITION**

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The canzoniere of Dante, a contribution to its critical edition by Aluigi Cossio

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**ALUIGI COSSIO**

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*A CONTRIBUTION TO ITS  
CRITICAL EDITION*

BY  
ALUIGI COSSIO



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TO THE LOVERS OF DANTE

AND

TO THE MOST REVEREND EDWARD J. HANNA, D.D.

ARCHBISHOP OF SAN FRANCISCO

WHO GENEROUSLY ENCOURAGED ITS PUBLICATION,

THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

BY THE AUTHOR

IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION.

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of Lib.

## INTRODUCTION

This volume is intended to be but a modest contribution to the critical edition of the *Canzoniere* of Dante. I have divided the work into five parts: 1. Bibliography; 2. Manuscripts; 3. Editions; 4. Prolegomena; 5. the new text of the *Canzoniere*. I could easily have enlarged the proportions and size of each part of it, by adding a great quantity of material that was at my disposal. By doing so this work would perhaps appear to be more critical and learned; but I preferred to summarize in it only the most useful and necessary things, and the best conclusions illustrating the origin, the composition, the paleographical tradition, the editions and the literary illustrations of this important work of Dante.

In dividing the work into five parts, I was moved by the deep conviction, obtained from my studies in this field, that the new critical edition of the *Canzoniere* should have as its foundation: (a) those Manuscripts which contain the whole *Canzoniere*; (b) those Manuscripts which contain at least part of the *Canzoniere*; (c) the most important editions, representing both extant Manuscripts and Manuscripts which are now lost; (d) the best studies and essays, written on this subject.

The text I have adopted for the *Canzoni*, is based upon the authority of the famous Manuscript, which most probably belonged to Petrarch, and which I had the opportunity of examining in the Rylands Library of Manchester. The text of the other poems is based also on the best Manuscripts of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. This new text of the *Canzoniere* will not present much that is unknown; the editors who have preceded me, have already used the best of the above-mentioned Manuscripts. Some poems attributed to Dante in other editions are omitted; others, which were omitted, have been accepted in



accordance with the results of recent studies and research. The distribution of the poems of the *Canzoniere* is quite different from the order followed in other editions. I preferred, on this subject, to follow the paleographical tradition of the Manuscripts, rather than personal and private judgment or taste, which is always more or less arbitrary. A more important change introduced here is that which regards the new rules of orthography, of phonetics and morphology. Following the important contributions of Rajna, Beck and Barbi on this subject, I think that the new critical edition should appear only in the form and exterior dress, which I have already given to the charming little poems of the *Canzoniere* of Dante.

The kindness of all those, who helped me with their valuable suggestions as well as the courtesy of the Librarians, who allowed me to examine Manuscripts, or who collated those Manuscripts for me, I shall ever treasure in grateful remembrance.

ALUIGI COSSIO.

Washington, D. C., 1918.

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