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CRAFT TALK**

SWEET NEW STYLES: Petrarch & Calvocoressi

**Petrarch 190
Vocabulary**

Il dolce stil novo (stilnovismo): “sweet new style” of 13th and 14th century Italian poetry. Key poets: Guido Cavalcanti, Guido Guinizzelli. Later, Dante. Petrarch comes after this group but is influenced by key elements of the style. Characterized by two main themes: Divine Love (*Amore*) and Noble Mindedness (*Gentilezza*). Key features:

- 1) sophisticated use of metaphors & symbols
- 2) introspection (the poet’s inner feelings are stirred by the beloved’s outward beauty)
- 3) vivid depictions of female beauty
- 4) vernacular language (Tuscan/Italian over Latin)
- 5) double meanings

La donna angelicata: A key feature of Petrarchism. A depiction, in poetry, of woman as a symbol of spiritual perfection. The physical features of the beloved are exalted by means of idealization via the blazon (golden hair, eyes like stars, lips like rubies, etc.). To write poetry praising the beauty of the beloved is to make a “bridge” connecting the pilgrim-poet to the Divine.

Typical Petrarchan lines: *hendecasyllables* (11-syllable lines) or *septenaries* (7-syllable lines)

**Petrarch 190
(composed ca. 1327-1368)**

ITALIAN	ENGLISH (A.S. Kline, trans.)
Una candida cerva sopra l'erba verde m'apparve, con duo corna d'oro, fra due riviere, all'ombra d'un alloro, levando 'l sole a la stagione acerba.	A pure white hind appeared to me with two gold horns, on green grass, between two streams, in a laurel's shade, at sunrise, in the unripe season.
Era sua vista sí dolce superba, ch'i' lasciai per seguirla ogni lavoro: come l'avarò che 'n cercar tesoro con diletto l'affanno disacerba.	Her aspect was so sweet and proud I left all my labour to follow her: as a miser, in search of treasure, makes his toil lose its bitterness in delight.
"Nessun mi tocchi - al bel collo d'intorno scritto avea di diamanti et di topazi - : libera farmi al mio Cesare parve."	"Touch me not,' in diamonds and topaz, was written round about her lovely neck: 'it pleased my Lord to set me free.'
Et era 'l sol già vólto al mezzo giorno, gli occhi miei stanchi di mirar, non sazi, quand'io caddi ne l'acqua, et ella sparve.	The sun had already mounted to mid-day, my eyes were tired with gazing, but not sated, when I fell into water, and she vanished.

Whoso List to Hunt

(composed ca. 1530s, published 1557)

BY SIR THOMAS WYATT

Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind,
But as for me, alas, I may no more.
The vain travail hath wearied me so sore,
I am of them that farthest cometh behind.
Yet may I by no means my wearied mind
Draw from the deer, but as she fleeth afore
Fainting I follow. I leave off therefore,
Since in a net I seek to hold the wind.
Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt,
As well as I may spend his time in vain.
And graven with diamonds in letters plain
There is written, her fair neck round about:
Noli me tangere, for Caesar's I am,
And wild for to hold, though I seem tame.

Note: Wyatt replaces Petrarch's sonnet structure (of an 8-line octave and 6-line sestet) with a new form better suited to English. "Whoso List to Hunt" features three 4-line units and a final couplet.

"It's significant that the gemstones on Petrarch's doe include topazes as well as diamonds. The topaz represents chastity, the diamond, steadfastness. Wyatt's hind wears only diamonds (a deer's best friend?) His quarry is steadfast, but not to him, or only in her rejection of him. It seems she may not be chaste."

-The Guardian