

*Autori e lettori di Boccaccio*. Atti del Convegno internazionale di Certaldo (20–22 settembre 2001). Ed. Michelangelo Picone. Firenze: Franco Cesati, 2002. Pp. 434. € 50.00.

This eclectic collection of essays, fruit of the 2002 Certaldo conference, includes contributions from Boccaccio scholars from around the world. The homonymous conference opened a wide umbrella; one is reminded of the iconography of the *Madonna della misericordia*, or perhaps, to cite an analogy closer to home, of Emilia's defense of variety as she frees her companions from a storytelling theme for the ninth day of the *Decameron*: "veggiamo ancora non esser men belli ma molto più i giardini di varie piante fronzuti che i boschi ne' quali solamente querce veggiamo." Following this principle, the organizers produced a collection that offers something for every reader of Boccaccio, and that testifies to the wealth of approaches to Boccaccio studies around the world.

The volume itself consists of four sections. The first, "Boccaccio europeo," examines the reception of Boccaccio's works, and principally the *Decameron*, in late medieval and early modern England (Piero Boitani), in Spain (Hans-Jörg Neuschäfer on Boccaccio and Cervantes; María Hernández Esteban on translation of the *Decameron* into Castilian). Stefano Carrai offers early evidence of reception of the *Decameron* in Francesco Mannelli's *postille* to Laurenziano XLII 1, a manuscript of Boccaccio's masterpiece dating to the late fourteenth century. One essay, by Raffaella Castagnola, leaps over the late Middle Ages and Renaissance to look at D'Annunzio's rewriting of *Decameron* VIII.6 ("Bruno e Buffalmacco imbolano un porco a Caladrino," here infelicitously—though really, one cannot help but smile—transcribed as "immolano un porco") in a story first published in *San Pantaleone*. Moving in an opposite direction, two other essays address issues of Boccaccio's reception of earlier sources. Michelangelo Picone, whose erudition and critical agility are second to none, addresses the theme of "la morte viva," the apparent death, a medieval *topos* that finds its way into the *Decameron*. Luciano Rossi offers insightful pages on the influence of Gallo-Romance narrative on Boccaccio.

In the book's second section, "Boccaccio e i generi letterari," contributors examine questions of literary genres from a variety of perspectives. Walter Haug revisits the problem of the genre of the *novella* and its uses prior to Boccaccio, demonstrating how Boccaccio destabilizes the traditional function of literature to explain reality. Luigi Surdich studies Boccaccio's transformation of narratives from other genres into *novelle*. Lucia Battaglia Ricci looks at juridical and philosophical sources for *Decameron* stories, suggesting new avenues for research. Bodo Guthmüller examines

the narrative effect when the “trasformazione magica” at the core of *Decameron* IX.10 is subjected to the generic rules of the *novella*, while Tatiana Crivelli and Teresa Nocita explore the relationship between text, hypertext, and literary genres in the *Decameron*.

The briefest section of the collection, dedicated to “Boccaccio fra Dante e Petrarca,” includes an essay by Janet Smarr on Boccaccio’s mediation of the other two crowns in his use of pastoral; Jonathan Usher’s essay on Boccaccio, Petrarch, and the “iter a Parnassum”; Claudette Perrus’ study on Boccaccio’s rewriting of Dante in both the *Decameron* and the *Esposizioni*; and Selene Sarteschi’s essay on Boccaccio’s reception of Dante in his *Rime*.

The majority of the essays in the fourth section, “Boccaccio e le arti,” consider Boccaccio in relation to the visual arts, but there is room as well for Boccaccio and music (Franco Alberto Gallo, on Boccaccio’s poetry written for music) and operatic versions of *Decameron* stories in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Anna Laura Bellina). Winifried Wehle’s essay on the *Decameron*’s “antropologia iconografica” examines how Boccaccio’s masterpiece answers the question, raised by the Black Death, of how one is to live. In an essay that might better have been placed in Part III, Victoria Kirkham examines the origins of Boccaccio’s Fiammetta in the Neapolitan princess Maria d’Angiò, her early development in the *Filocolo*, and the relation between this figure and Beatrice and Laura. Marie-Hélène Tesnière looks at the reception of the *De casibus* in fifteenth-century France, while Hermann Wetzels studies the relation between the *Decameron* and contemporary painting.

As should be clear from this brief summary of its contents, this book offers an exceptionally rich and varied set of topics related to Boccaccio. The volume also contains numerous illustrations, in both black and white and color, which complement the single contributions. As impressive as is the wealth of subjects, so too is the erudition of the single contributors, each of whom distills broad-reaching research into an accessible final product. As it should be, this volume is finally a tribute to Boccaccio himself, whose own rich knowledge and creative energy continues to delight and provoke today, as scholars explore the infinite ways in which the culture of the known world coalesced in his works, which in turn have spread widely into the world that followed him.

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