

## Roberta Morosini. Il mare salato: Il Mediterraneo di Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio

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to the scholar's unending admiration and respect for the philosopher's moral conduct and intellectual action.

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**Roberta Morosini. *Il mare salato: Il Mediterraneo di Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio*. Roma: Viella, 2020. Pp. 348. ISBN 9788833131672.**

In *Il mare salato*, Roberta Morosini considers the sea not as a geographical space but as a literary space that can be “read.” Describing what she does as a “filologia mediterranea” (11) and dedicating a chapter to each of three canonical authors of the Italian fourteenth century—Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio—Morosini explores the role that the sea and navigation of the sea have in their works. Does the sea have a structural function? How does it reveal the poetic and philosophical vision of a given author?

Morosini readily admits that her project began with a focus on Boccaccio, to whom her second, very lengthy chapter is dedicated. Here Morosini advances key intriguing claims: that marine space is fundamental for Boccaccio's poetics; that in the *Decameron*, the sea traversed by merchants, pirates, preachers, women destined for marriage, and women who have been kidnapped replaces the forest into which the knight of medieval romance enters in order to prove his worth; that the sea permits these characters to transform their lives, to find new identities, to become rich or poor; that the liquid and unpossessable space of the sea highlights the demographic and deontological innovation of Boccaccio's work. To her readings of a wide range of *Decameron* novellas that feature maritime activity, Morosini adds compelling readings of visual representations of scenes from the *Decameron*, primarily from illuminated manuscripts. Especially fine examples of Morosini's ability to read novella and image side by side can be found on pages 162–63, where she highlights how an image in a Viennese manuscript assigns mobility to the man of *Decameron* 2.4, Landolfo Rufolo, and staticity to the woman who saves him, and on pages 199–203, where Morosini skillfully draws out key questions about female identity, solidarity among women, and women's integration into a foreign culture that emerge when one compares the little-studied novella of Costanza da Lipari (*Dec.* 5.2) and illustrations of this novella to the oft-studied

story of Zinevra (*Dec.* 2.9) and pertinent illustrations of it. To further allow us to appreciate the role the sea plays in the *Decameron*, Morosini turns to the role that the sea plays in *De mulieribus claris*, *De casibus virorum illustrium*, *De montibus*, and *Genealogie deorum gentilium*. She limits her analysis to the relation between famous women and the sea in these Latin works because the women featured are quite diverse and because her analysis thus far has shown them to be more affected than men by alterations of space. In her commentaries on figures such as Europa, Medea, Venus, Medusa, Dido, and Giovanna, queen of Jerusalem and Sicily, Morosini maintains that the sea in the Latin works is reduced to being a symbol of cruel immenseness and loses the fascination that it has in the *Decameron*.

While Morosini could have limited her study to Boccaccio, her chapters on Dante and Petrarch provide further confirmation of the narrative innovations that Boccaccio achieved in the *Decameron* by making marine space crucial for his poetics.

The first chapter, which focuses on the sea and navigation in Dante's *Commedia*, begins by labelling Dante's masterpiece "un poema acquoreo" (43). Morosini seeks to map Dante's Mediterranean and to determine the significance of the nautical and marine images in Dante's poem. She offers two itineraries: first, a geographical-representative one that charts the *Commedia*'s engagement with the entire Mediterranean and a poetic-representational one that identifies the symbolic force of the sea and of key images and classical figures associated with it (e.g., shipwrecks, sirens, Medusa, Circe, Hypsipyle, Jason). Morosini concludes that in the *Commedia*, the sea is the result of an experience that is not only visual but acoustic as well, a violent pounding that contributes to the poem's maritime quality. As a symbol of earthly passions and corruption, the sea becomes the space that the pilgrim as sailor must learn to navigate in order to arrive safely in port.

In her third chapter, Morosini shows how Petrarch "interiorizes" the sea, making it the symbol of his own disquiet and his own interior journey among tempestuous waves. She acknowledges that there is one exception to this kind of use of the sea: the *Itinerarium ad sepulchrum Domini nostri Ihesu Christi* (1358), which Petrarch wrote as a guide to a friend who intended to undertake a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Calling attention to the fact that Petrarch admits that he has not personally seen many of the places in Italy and abroad that he describes, Morosini maintains that Petrarch affirms that knowledge acquired through book learning is superior to knowledge acquired through direct experience. Having treated the exception, Morosini turns briefly to several Latin works in which Petrarch treats the theme of the "sea of life" (*Secretum*, *De remediis utriusque fortunae*) before turning

to the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*). In documenting the theme of the sea and of navigation in the *Rvf*, Morosini relies principally on work by Michelangelo Picone, who has studied these matters extensively; both she and Picone grant particular importance to *Rvf* 189, “Passa la nave mia colma d’oblio,” a sonnet that offers a dark vision of the tempestuous life. But whereas Picone and many others read the sea in *Rvf* 189 in an allegorical key, Morosini asks us to see it as site-specific, i.e., as the Mediterranean. She underscores the mention of Scylla and Charybdis in *Rvf* 189, as well as references to Mediterranean localities in *Rvf* 67 and 69. This leads her to assert that the sea of the *Rvf* is a *Mare meum*, a *Mare Francisci*, the Mediterranean rendered Petrarch’s own.

Morosini’s very learned book expands the itineraries available to scholars working in Mediterranean studies, it documents and analyzes Dante and Petrarch’s use of the sea and of navigation, and it contributes significantly to our understanding of Giovanni Boccaccio as a literary innovator.

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**Daniela Cavallaro, Luciana d’Arcangeli, e Claire Kennedy, a cura di. *Atti di accusa. Testi teatrali e interviste sulla rappresentazione della violenza contro le donne*. Roma: Aracne editrice, 2021. Pp. 264. ISBN 9788825536140.**

*Atti di accusa* è un libro sulla rappresentazione teatrale della violenza di genere che unisce tre progetti internazionali andati in scena in Italia, Australia, Nuova Zelanda e Inghilterra tra il 2014 e il 2019. Si tratta di *Processo per stupro*, scritto e diretto da Renato Chiocca; *Kubra*, scritto da Dacia Maraini e diretto prima da Nicolette Kay e poi da Ainsley Burdell; e *Un punto alla volta*, un’opera composta di quattro testi (*Gioco di prestigio* di Isley Lynn, *Da dove devo cominciare?* di Raúl Quirós Molina, *Congratulazioni* di Bahar Brunton, e *Mutante* di Karis E. Halsall) diretta e prodotta da Melissa Dean e Alex Crampton. Uno degli aspetti più significativi, che a mio parere dà al volume un effetto riuscito di oralità della parola scritta, è quello di essere un prodotto culturale dell’era COVID. L’impatto della pandemia è riconoscibile nell’intermedialità tra libro e tecnologia della comunicazione che ha permesso di rimanere in contatto nell’isolamento imposto dal virus. Oltre ai pezzi teatrali, *Atti di accusa* include infatti le interviste ai loro autori e autrici, registe e registi, che le curatrici, Daniela Cavallaro, Luciana d’Arcangeli e Claire