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Federica Brunori Deigan, Francesco Ciabattoni, and Stefano Giannini, eds. *Tradition and the Individual Text. Essays in Memory of Pier Massimo Forni.* MLN 134. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019. Pp. 447. ISSN 00267910. EBOOK.

This MLN 134 supplement is an appropriate tribute to Pier Massimo Forni (1952–2018) by covering the topics of interest to Forni: from Dante to Boccaccio to pedagogy. In tribute to their mentor, the editors (ix–xx) assert that “the teaching of Pier Massimo Forni at Johns Hopkins University has provided guidance for generations of Italian scholars in North America. His seminal essays in the field of Italian literature have been a beacon for researchers on both sides of the Atlantic” (ix). Professor Forni’s voice had resonance in America as much as in Italy: his essays on the Decameron (*Forme complesse del Decameron*, 1992; and *Lessico critico decameroniano*, 1995) have proven fundamental to many aspiring scholars of Boccaccio.

The book opens, touchingly, with an unpublished essay by Forni, found by Francesco Ciabattoni and edited by John McLucas, dating back to when the professor was a young and rising scholar. The contribution, entitled “A Metamorphosis of Love in Dante and Others” (xxi–xxvi), links Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio through a close reading of select passages of their works.

The other contributions are written in both Italian and English by alumni and colleagues of Professor Forni. The late Saverio Bellomo—with his “Dante e la decima Musa: la prima versione cinematografica dell’*Inferno*” (1–15) in which he examines the 1911 movie produced by Milano Films—commences a series of essays on Dante. Indeed, Renzo Bragantini (“*Purgatorio* 32: Dante apocalittico,” 16–32), Roberto Fedi (“Dante e Galileo,” 33–39), and Christopher Kleinhenz (“Dante’s Artistry in *Purgatorio*,” 40–55) follow Bellomo’s guidance in Dante’s world.

After this first Dantean section, the argument moves to Forni’s favourite author, Boccaccio. Susanna Barsella analyzes Boccaccio’s criticism of medicine and natural philosophy in her long essay “Natural Asymmetries: Medicine and Poetry in *Decameron* VI.9 and *Decameron* VIII.9” (56–77). The contributions on Boccaccio are numerous and noteworthy. Annelise Morani Brody (“Madonna Filippa: A Model of Polyamory in the *Decameron*,” 78–89), Federica Brunori Deigan (“The Author in the Pine Tree: Allegorized Autobiography and Arboreal Mythology in Boccaccio’s *Filocolo* and *Decameron*,” 90–104), Igor Candido (“Boccaccio Reading Cino Reading Dante in *Filostrato* 5.62–66,” 105–17), Francesco Caruso

(“Forgetting Dido: A Note on the *Decameron*, Introduction to Day Four,” 118–25), Christopher S. Celenza (“Philology, Philosophy and Boccaccio,” 126–37), Francesco Ciabattoni (“Music in Trecento Italy and the Soundtrack of Boccaccio’s *Decameron*,” 138–51), and Michael Papio (“On Boccaccio’s Debt to Stoicism,” 152–66) analyze the most important works by Boccaccio, offering original analyses, in some cases with what might be described as a “Fornian” approach.

The volume then shifts focus to other texts as in the musicological essay by Susan Forscher Weiss, “Perfect Beauty: Echoes of Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the Poetry and Music of the Trecento” (167–83) and in that of Martin Marafiori, “*Riguardando Giovanni Boccaccio*: Narrative Distraction as Self-Care in Franco Sacchetti’s *Trecentonovelle*” (184–92), in which the author investigates the parallelism between Sacchetti’s oeuvre and the *Decameron*. The section on the Renaissance also proves to be particularly rich: a greater heterogeneity reigns here, with contributions on Poggio Bracciolini (by Roberta Ricci, 193–214), Annibale Guasco (by Andrea Baldi, 224–38), and other authors (Massimo Ciavolella’s “Erotomia, Melancholy, Nostalgia: A Renaissance Perspective,” 215–23, examines works by Ficino, Cardano, Bruno, and others). Worthy of a separate mention are the two contributions by Laura Benedetti and Walter Stephens (authors, respectively, of “Tasso, Virgilio e il ‘sanguinoso manto’ di Goffredo: intertestualità e riscrittura nella *Gerusalemme Liberata*,” 239–51, and “Tasso, Poet of Doubt,” 252–71), since they constitute a remarkable—although small—section on Tasso.

The chronological trend of the book is abruptly interrupted; indeed, there is a leap forward with Ilona Klein’s essay (“When Good Girls Go Bad (Or Do They?): Nymphomania and Lycanthropy in Verga’s ‘La Lupa,’” 272–85), which analyzes female sexuality that emerges in the short story of Giovanni Verga. This is followed by the analysis of colonial hegemony in Sarah Annunziato’s “Lions and Tigers and Piracy! Colonialism in Two Versions of Emilio Salgari’s *Sandokan*” (286–302).

After the stimulating parenthesis on cinema by Francesco Fiumara (“A Light in the Classroom: Vittorio De Seta’s *Diario di un maestro* and the Bringing of Experiential Education into Italian Living Rooms,” 303–17), Stefano Giannini carefully explores poetic geography in Giorgio Simonotti Manacorda’s poetry (318–31), with particular attention to differences and analogies between abstract and real spaces. Geography and environment are the main subject also in Letizia Modena’s “Documenting Genoa’s Unseen: Bertora and Grippa’s *Per vie traverse – racconti dal Ghetto di Croce Bianca* (2011) and *Nessun fuoco nessun luogo* (2015)” (345–57) in which she analyzes the concept of spatial justice in Bertora’s and

Grippa's documentaries. Interrupting this thematic continuity is John McLucas's essay, "Calvino's *Ariosto's Orlando*: Selection, Omission, Praise, Paraphrase" (332–44). The volume concludes with Elsa Filosa's study, "Life is a Relational Experience: Teaching *Choosing Civility*" (358–71), which retraces Forni's important project on academic teaching and offers interesting insights to instructors of any level and context.

In summary, this volume attests to the value of close comparative readings. This collection of stimulating essays suggests new areas of investigation. The editors have curated a masterful selection of authors and essays that demonstrate faithfulness to the teachings of their maestro.

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