



## Abstracts

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## ABSTRACTS

### The Classical and Medieval Tradition

GIANPIERO ROSATI

*The Impossible Form: The Genealogies and the Ancient Mythographic Tradition*

This study deals with the structure of the *Genealogies* and their relationship with the ancient mythographic tradition. Although only indirectly known to Boccaccio, Hesiod, the author of *Theogony* and *Catalogue of Women*, could be seen as a cultural model for the “dialogue” with King Hugh (who had commissioned the *Genealogies*), especially for his idea of the political function of literature, which had already inspired men of letters in Augustan society (especially Virgil and Horace) and was the best reference framework for poets and intellectuals who were seeking the protection of power. The model most widely present in the *Genealogies* is, however, Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, whom Boccaccio considered as his main literary model.

AUGUSTO GUIDA

*From Leonzio Pilato to Tomasi di Lampedusa through Boccaccio. Literary and Textual Notes*

This essay shows that the cultural and literary programmatic principles proudly declared by Boccaccio in the *Genealogie deorum gentilium* laid the foundations of Florentine Humanism: Varro’s advice to abandon the Latin models and search for the Greek sources of culture, reported by Cicero in such a rare text as the *Academica posteriora*, was eagerly embraced and declared by Boccaccio, and *ad fontes* became the motto of a new age and a new philology, frequently repeated by the humanists. Boccaccio’s teacher, Leonzio Pilato, was the first to disclose Homer to the western Latin world. Some aspects and problems of his translations are herein examined, so as to show how his influence, through Boccaccio’s *Genealogies*, can be traced all the way down to the modern novel.

MATTEO VENIER

*Citation Praxis and Fragments from the Protocosmo in the Genealogies*

The author reviews the quotes, attested in the *Genealogies*, from the poem *Protocosmos* attributed to Pronapide. He disputes the argument, put forward by Carlo Landi and subsequently accredited by other scholars, that there had been a Latin metric version of the Greek poem. He also advances the assumption that in the *Genealogies* Boccaccio made use of the *cursus*.

MINO GABRIELE

*The Name and Image of Demogorgon*

The essay enquires into the meanings and historico-critical and figurative fortune of Demogorgon, a divinity whose name and image have fascinated poets, artists and mythographers, from Boccaccio’s sophisticated invention to the XVIII century.

STEFANO TROVATO

*Julian the Apostate in Boccaccio's De casibus*

In *De casibus virorum illustrium*, Boccaccio dedicates a chapter (VIII.11) to the tragic death of Julian the Apostate, presenting him as a victim of divine anger because of his attempt to revive paganism. A comparison of chapter VIII.11 with others of the same work, with Boccaccio's sources and with other passages regarding Julian by earlier writers helps to show how Boccaccio followed the medieval tradition of condemning the Apostate. He therefore did not share the more positive judgment of Julian given by later humanists, which culminated in the *Compendium Romanae historiae* by Pomponius Laetus, who was the first, after the medieval condemnation, to openly celebrate Julian.

LAURA PANI

«*Simillima pestis Florentie et quasi per universum orbem*»: Boccaccio and Paolo Diacono's *Historia Langobardorum*

This essay deals with Boccaccio's recently discovered autograph of Paul the Deacon's *Historia Langobardorum*: the manuscript London, British Library, Harley 5383. Along with its *membra disiecta* Firenze, Biblioteca Riccardiana, 627 and 2795<sup>VI</sup>, it forms a handbook of ancient, Roman and medieval history almost entirely copied by Boccaccio (besides the *Historia Langobardorum*, there are Paul Orose's *Historiae adversus paganos*, Paul the Deacon's *Historia Romana*, books XIII-XVI, and Pasquale Romano's brief epistle *De origine civitatis Aretii*). After recalling the circumstances of its finding, the essay points out that text of *Historia Langobardorum* contained in Harley 5383 and in its *membrum disiectum* Riccard. 2795<sup>VI</sup> is abridged, with more than 20 percent of its chapters missing or epitomized. Whether Boccaccio was the author of this version of Paul the Deacon's work or simply its scribe remains under discussion.

MARIA LUISA DELVIGO

Ut ait Servius: *The auctoritas of Virgil's Commentary in Boccaccio's Genealogies*

This essay analyses the different ways in which Boccaccio uses the commentary on Virgil by Servius, above all as a mythological authority. Special attention is paid to etymology and to the possible knowledge of materials which belong to the so-called Servius Danielis.

GIUSEPPE CHIECCHI

*Caleon e Idalogos: Authorial Function and Self-representation in Boccaccio's Filocolo*

The essay analyses two characters of Boccaccio's *Filocolo* as the realization of the authorial function (Caleon) and the self-representation of the author (Idalogos), respectively. Both come from the intimacy of the work and belong to the consciousness of the writer, who constantly raised the issues of narrative perspectives, of the structural planes of the story and of the relationship between the subjectivity of the inventor and the objectivity of representation.

GIUSEPPE ANTONIO CAMERINO

*The Sin of Fortune: On a Topos of the Decameron*

For the first time this study focuses on the so-called *Sin of Fortune* (*Il peccato della Fortuna*), a notable basic definition in Boccaccio's *Decameron*, which recurs several times in the great storyteller's masterpiece, beginning from the *Preface* (*Proemio*), but which also emerges in his previous writings such as *De casibus virorum illustrium*. This article also reveals and proves a clear link with a specific passage from Dante's *Convivio*.

## On Giovanni Boccaccio's Fortune

RENZO RABBONI

*Boccaccio and the Cantari: A Late XIV-Century Anthology in the Octave Scheme (Laur. Plut. LXXVIII. 23, cc. 138-178) and the Corbaccio*

The article focuses on the contiguity between Boccaccio and the genre of the *cantari* – a relationship which is well-ascertained and repeatedly emphasized by scholars in his early works and in the *Decameron*, to the point of proposing Boccaccio as the inventor of the octave scheme. After a mention to the more general and debated issue, the essay examines a new piece of this proximity, consisting of a few papers (ff. 138-178) contained in the miscellaneous Laur. Plut. LXXVIII. 23. These papers are already known and studied, particularly in relation to the *Cantari of Lancelotto*, a significantly fortunate episode of the Arthurian subject matter in Italy. After proposing a new dating of the document (last quarter of the XIV century), the study examines the four *cantari* gathered here and correlates them with the *Corbaccio*, which seems to translate into action the faithful reprehension against the reading tastes of the widow who “crushes herself” reading French novels and Latin songs.

ANDREA BOCCHI

*Notes for Reading the De Canaria*

The small treatise *De Canaria* was written by Boccaccio in the *Zibaldone Magliabechiano* (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, B.R. 50). The Latin text announces the discovery of the Canary Islands (1341) on the basis of information brought to Florence by a lost letter written in Seville by Florentine merchants. The authorship of *De Canaria*, as well as the opinions about the landscape and inhabitants of the islands, are discussed through the rhetorical structure of the treatise. A new translation of chapter 2 is proposed in order to avoid a supposed gap in the text.

LUCA RUGGIO

*The Decameron and Humanist Comedy: Novellas and Pleasantries in XV-Century Latin Theatre*

This article investigates the models and sources employed by humanist playwrights in their works showing how, in addition to the classical models of Plautus and Terentius, they also drew on contemporary novellas such as Sercambi's *Novelliere*, Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle*, and Bracciolini's *Liber facetiarum*, paying particular attention to Boccaccio's *Decameron*. In particular, there are links with the theme of the unhappy married woman through strong sexual innuendos and the use of certain names for the characters.

MAIKO FAVARO

*Aretinian Echoes and Religious Unrest. Le lettere sopra le Diece Giornate del Decamerone (1542) by Francesco Sansovino*

Francesco Sansovino (1521-1583) was an influential man of letters in Renaissance Venice, thanks also to his remarkable editorial activity. This essay analyses his *Lettere sopra le diece giornate del Decamerone* (*Letters on the 10 Days of the Decameron*, 1542), a collection of letters all written by Sansovino and each inspired by a different novella from Boccaccio's *Decameron*. In the first part, the author examines how Sansovino uses Boccaccio to develop subjects typical also of Pietro Aretino (who was a friend of Sansovino's) and to convey some autobiographical reflections. In the second part, the author considers Sansovino's ideas on religion, which are interesting for their relationship with the contemporary religious unrest.

SILVIA CONTARINI

*Verbal Gestures: Jolles' Reading of Decameron, VI, 9*

In 1921 the Dutch scholar André Jolles offered an original reading of *Decameron*, VI, 9, the novella featuring Guido Cavalcanti. Already with an eye to his future synthesis in *Simple Forms* (1931), Jolles draws some clues from former exchanges with Warburg and transfers them to the literary field, presenting Guido's gesture – linked to the birth of a new literary form, the joke – as the expression of a *pathosformel*.

ILVANO CALIARO

*Echoes of Boccaccio in D'Annunzio*

D'Annunzio considered himself as the last humanist who was bequeathed not only with the entire Greek and Latin traditions, but also with the Italian and French ones, too. Especially in *Francesca da Rimini*, where he re-writes the famous story of the unhappy lovers, D'Annunzio wanted to follow the two *auctoritates*, Dante and Boccaccio, whose influence is also notoriously present in his previous works. In *Francesca da Rimini* D'Annunzio has in mind the narrative structure of the tragedy found in Boccaccio's *Exposures above Dante's Comedia*. Moreover, he also resorts to the *Decameron* as a source – namely the memorable stories of Nastagio degli Onesti and Elisabetta da Messina – in order to create the tragic atmosphere and the sequences of misfortunes which distinguish the story.

### **Boccaccio in the Veneto and Friuli Venezia Giulia Regions**

MARCO CURSI

*Two Ancient Unbound Anthologies of the Decameron in Udine*

The contribution offers a palaeographical and codicological analysis of ms. 30 of the Civic Library "V. Joppi" (Udine). This codex (consisting of three quires without binding) contains a short selection of tales from Boccaccio's *Decameron* (III, 10; introduction to the IV day; X, 5). It was written at the end of the XIV century by Domenego Caronelli, a copyist and literate from Conegliano, who also transcribed a complete edition of the *Centonovelle* (ms. Vat. Rossiano 947). The Udine papers witness a specific kind of circulation of the *Decameron* tales, which we can call "in dribs and drabs", inserted as they are in a text folder which is difficult to define and only partially comparable to the book form.

ANTONIO FERRACIN

*Domenico Caronelli's Copy of the Decameron in the Veneto Tradition*

This essay analyses codex Vaticano Rossiano 947, a copy of the *Decameron* transcribed in Conegliano in 1395 by Domenico Caronelli, and reconstructs the philological relations with the two most important witnesses of the manuscript tradition pertaining to the *Decameron* (cod. Parigino Italiano 482 and cod. Hamilton 90). It also points out unknown connections with the manuscripts Italiano X, 14 (6950) of the Biblioteca Marciana and 952, partly explaining the nature of Caronelli's specific interventions on Boccaccio's work.

ELISA CURTI

*«Miserie historie» and «pietose novelle» in the Veneto-Friuli Area*

The essay analyses a group of four novellas about tragic love linked by their Venetian setting. Mostly known as *Refugio de' miseri* or *Refrigerio de' miseri*, these tales widely circulated in handwritten versions between the XVI and XVII centuries. After analysing the remaining copies and their characteristics, the essay examines the conspicuous memory of Boccaccio present in the novellas, both on a textual level and more generally on a thematic one. It also considers, in particular, their connections with *Elegia di Madonna Fiammetta* and the tradition of Tuscan elegies that derives from it.

FRANCO FINCO

*The Tale "in Friulian" in the Avvertimenti della lingua sopra 'l Decamerone by Lionardo Salviati*  
In 1584 Lionardo Salviati, the promoter of the Accademia della Crusca, published the first volume of *Avvertimenti della lingua sopra 'l Decamerone*. Besides analyzing the features of Boccaccio's language, the author argues the supremacy of contemporary Florentine over the other Italian dialects. In this book he compares the original text of the shortest tale of the *Decameron* with its versions in twelve other Italian vernaculars, including Friulian. This is the first prose text edited in Friulian, but nevertheless it has not yet been studied in detail. In this paper the linguistic features of this tale translated into Friulian will be analysed.

UGO ROZZO

*The Censorship of the Decameron until the Venetian Index in 1549*

The conviction and "correction" of the *Decameron* did not take place until 1559. The censorship of Boccaccio's book led to the destruction of many copies of earlier editions. During the XV century eleven editions were printed, the first one in 1470, and during the XVI century there were at least forty publications, all dated before 1557. Today only one percent of these have survived. Since its release and until 1488, theologians and missionaries of that century had deemed the *Decameron* to be immoral. Bernardino da Feltre and Girolamo Savonarola collected and publicly burned thousands of objects and books, including Boccaccio's works. In the XVI century the bishops Guevara and Vergerio, and authors such as Vives, Agrippa and Putherbeus criticized the Church for the lack of prompt action against "romantic" literature.

LORENZO DI LENARDO

*Giovanni Marco Astemio and the Printing of the Decameron in Venice between 1516 and 1526*

This article considers two Venetian editions of the *Decameron*: the printed edition of 1516, edited by Nicolò Dolfín, and the one printed by Giovanni Antonio Nicolini da Sabbio and brothers in 1526. The latter edition was dedicated to the nobleman Antonio della Frattina by Giovanni Marco Astemio of Valvasone (near Portogruaro), a very active editor in XVI-century Venice. In the final appendix there is a list of known works edited by Astemio or with which he was connected.

FABIANA SAVORGNAN DI BRAZZÀ

*Boccaccio in the Biblioteca dell'Eloquenza italiana by Giusto Fontanini*

The article outlines the controversial figure of Giusto Fontanini (1666-1736), his difficult relations with Ludovico Antonio Muratori, his work *Biblioteca dell'eloquenza italiana* published in 1706, its successive revisions, and the edition of 1753 with the annotations, adjustments and additions made by Apostolo Zeno. The bibliographical and philological contributions to Boccaccio's works are here outlined and particular attention is focused on a corrupt passage of *Amorosa Visione* in Vittore Branca's critical edition (vv. 82-84, p. 182) which concerns Ezzelino and the attribute of liege lord of Honara/Navarra. Although Fontanini lucidly detects the problem concerning the oscillations of proper names in Boccaccio and fully understands the value of Salviati's and Borgini's studies on the *Decameron*, his own interpretation of Boccaccio's masterpiece is limited by his moralistic prejudices.

KRISTINA LAZAR

*Mannerist Elements in a XIV-century Masterpiece: The Decameron Censored by Luigi Groto (1541-1585)*

In 1588 the last of the three censored versions of the *Decameron* from the late XVI century was published. Its author, Luigi Groto, not only followed the main rule of Counter-Reformation censorship, eliminating every reference to the clergy and the Catholic world, but also tried to narratively fill the gaps created by expurgation, in some cases changing the plot to the point that some of the stories were barely recognisable. Groto's version is usually described as the most

distorted and bizarre among the three Counter-Reformation versions. This article is an attempt to provide an explanation for the changes by analysing Groto's corrective strategies, his stylistic peculiarities and his adhesion to Mannerism.

### Further Suggestions for Reading

GIAMPAOLO BORGHELLO

*Snow and Fire: Character Dynamics in the Novella of Madonna Dianora* (*Decameron*, X, 5)

The story of Madonna Dianora (*Decameron*, X, 5) takes place between the two poles of snow and fire. The character dynamics include impossible trials, keeping one's word at any cost, and the marginalization and objectification of the female characters so that the final outcome is a matter between men. The novella has meaningful connections with other two stories in the *Decameron*: X, 4 and VIII, 7.

PIA CLAUDIA DOERING

*Madonna Filippa Summoned. Natural Law and Positive Law in the Decameron*

The novellas in the *Decameron* portray an increasingly complex society. Different disciplines were developing, notably medicine, theology, philosophy, law and literature. Boccaccio, who studied law for six years on request of his father, was an expert in the literary as well as in the legal field. The *Decameron* gives outstanding evidence of its author's knowledge of law and of the juridical practice of his day. The present article explores the opposition of natural law and positive law as it crops up in the frame story of the *Decameron* and in the novella of Madonna Filippa (VI, 7). It shows how Boccaccio portrays the medieval legal system through the eyes of female characters.

WINFRIED WEHLE

*In the Purgatory of Life. Boccaccio's Project for a Narrative Anthropology in the Decameron*

When writing the *Decameron* Boccaccio created his literary prose by resorting to the scientific theory of humour-pathology, which not only knew the risks inherent in vegetative human nature, but also the cure for it: literary speech therapy which brings to ethical action.

ANGELA FABRIS

*The Representation of Urban Space in the Decameron*

The focus of this article is on urban space and its semantics in the geography of the *Decameron*. In fact, despite the great prominence given to the countryside, it can be maintained that, in Boccaccio's view, man can fulfil himself only within the urban dimension to which he pays special attention. Consider, for instance, the opening image of the plague-stricken city, the descriptions left to the concreteness of a series of toponymic references bearing the impression of realism, and – as one example after the other will show – the string of anthropological sites endowed with historical, relational and identifying significance.

HELMUT METER

*Towards the Birth of the Modern Individual: Simulation and Dissimulation in the Decameron*

The binomial concept of *simulatio* and *dissimulatio* did not have a good reputation in Classical antiquity and in the Middle Ages. Up to Augustinus and Thomas Aquinas this panchronic phenomenon was considered as an aspect of lying and had to be banished from any civil behaviour. With Boccaccio's *Decameron*, however, a remarkable step forward to a changed consideration of the two variations of hypocrisy, the active one and the passive one, can be noticed. In Boccaccio's novellas, indeed, the frequent and positive reference to simulation and dissimulation develops into an important feature of the sprouting modern individualisation. Thus the bipartite form of

mystification is to be considered as a part of the new anthropology beginning with the Pre-Renaissance Age. But despite Boccaccio's psychological innovation, his concept of mystification does not mark a virulent transgression of the limits given by Christian morality or the Thomistic *lex naturalis*. In various ways the author remains a representative of the medieval world.

ÉMILIE ZANONE GERCI

*Having Fun at Night: Some Considerations on the "Brigata dell'andare in corso" (Decameron, VIII, 9) and the "Tregenda" (Specchio di vera penitenza, section 5)*

This study focuses on the connection between the "Brigata dell'andare in corso" described in Novella VIII, 9 of the *Decameron* and the "Tregenda" society presented by Friar J. Passavanti in his treaty, *Specchio di vera penitenza*. Through a detailed analysis of the descriptions of these groups and a comparison of the results, it shows that the similarities between these groups are not as abundant as literary criticism has shown until now. It also questions the links between fictional texts and historical documents. The elements present in the two texts were probably not invented by the author, while those presented only in the tale probably were. Boccaccio's novella proves capable of providing information about the context in which it was written and about past mentalities. Finally, this research expands and enriches our knowledge of the literary text. Parallels between the tales and historical documents can lead us to explain a certain number of elements which acquire a new meaning.

CRISTIANO LORENZI

*«Io spero in te e 'n te sempr'ho sperato»: Boccaccio's Religious Poems*

This essay aims at propounding an analysis of Boccaccio's religious poems (CIX-CXIX in Branca's edition), pointing out the relationships with other poems and works of the Certaldese: in fact, many *topoi* and stylistic choices often recur both in the meditative and erotic poems, and the same images are re-employed with different functions to convey opposite messages. In the article the most evident reminiscences of Dante and Petrarch's writings are also highlighted: in particular, Petrarch's quotations can provide useful indications for a late dating of some of Boccaccio's sonnets dedicated to God and the Holy Virgin.

SERGIO ORSO

*«Le parole soave»: Some Aspects of Boccaccio the Poet*

The sonnet *Le parole soave* is brought to us and attributed to Boccaccio only by the XVI-century "Raccolta Bartoliniana". It is necessary to discuss at least two important matters: namely, we must try to confirm the attribution and see if it is possible to date this lyric through observations deduced by the comparison with other works by Boccaccio and probable cultural sources. The text seems to be involved with verses by Cino da Pistoia and Dante, and only "polygenetically" with Petrarch's *Canzoniere*. Stylistic facts show a certain coherence of *Le parole soave* with Boccaccio's other works written in the years between 1341 and 1344, confirming the authorship of the sonnet and suggesting its dating.

ROBERTO NORBEDO

*Attilio Hortis and Boccaccio. Notes from the Unpublished Letters (including three letters from Oscar Hecker)*

This essay moves from a recent discovery made at the Public Library of Trieste (Archive Diplomatic Fund A. Hortis): the letters received by Attilio Hortis (1850-1926), the librarian, politician and scholar of historical studies whose worked focused mainly on Petrarch and Boccaccio. In particular, it gives an account of letters by correspondents who have dealt with the study of Boccaccio. As an appendix, it includes three letters by Oscar Hecker which deal with studies around Boccaccio's works.