

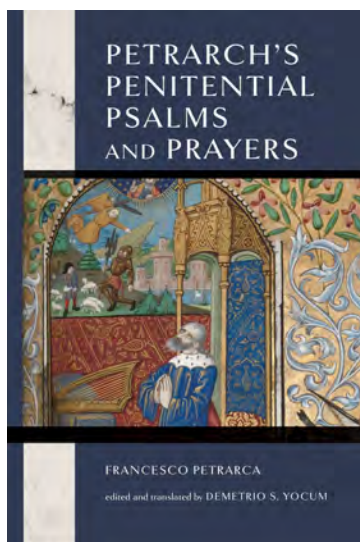
THE WILLIAM AND KATHERINE
DEVERS SERIES IN DANTE AND
MEDIEVAL ITALIAN LITERATURE

2024



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Literary Criticism / Medieval
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Petrarch's Penitential Psalms and Prayers

Demetrio S. Yocum, Francesco Petrarca

Summary

Winner of the 2023 Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies

The first English translation of Petrarch's *Psalms* and *Prayers* provides an intimate look at the personal devotions of the "Father of Humanism."

Throughout Petrarch's work, there is an undercurrent of tension between the secular and the sacred. In this captivating new translation of the *Psalms* and the *Prayers*, Demetrio Yocum turns to a previously overlooked area of Petrarchan studies to open a window on the scholar's innermost religious thoughts.

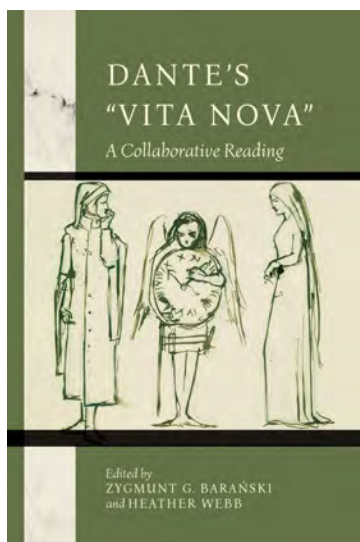
The *Psalms* and *Prayers* are intricately crafted poetic and devotional works, presented in facing Latin/English format. In his extensive introduction and commentary, Yocum situates these bold, original compositions within their historical, literary, and religious contexts, deftly drawing connections to classical texts, the Bible and the writings of the church fathers, and Petrarch's own life, work, and poetics.

This remarkable first-ever English translation of the *Psalms* and *Prayers* helps to reconcile Petrarch's classical humanism with his devout, deeply personal Christianity.

Contributor Bio

Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374) was a scholar and poet of early Renaissance Italy. He is widely recognized as the "Father of Humanism" as he laid the foundation for Renaissance humanism, emphasizing the study of authors and thinkers from classical antiquity through the Middle Ages.

Demetrio S. Yocum is senior research associate for the Notre Dame Center for Italian Studies. His most recent publications include his monograph *Petrarch's Humanist Writing and Carthusian Monasticism*, his co-edited volume *At the Heart of Liturgy*, and his translation *Mary of Magdala: Revisiting the Sources*.



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Dante's "Vita Nova"

A Collaborative Reading

Zygmunt G. Baranski, Heather Webb

Summary

This original volume proposes a novel way of reading Dante's *Vita nova*, exemplified in a rich diversity of scholarly approaches to the text.

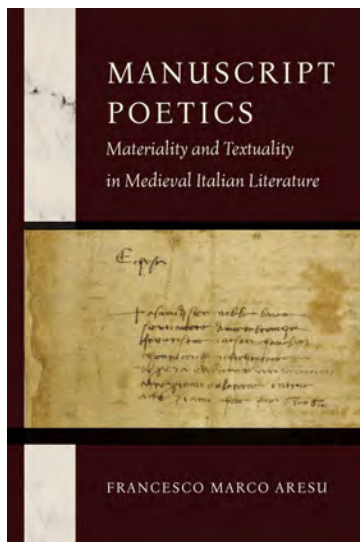
This groundbreaking volume represents the fruit of a two-year-long series of international seminars aimed at developing a fresh way of reading Dante's *Vita nova*. By analyzing each of its forty-two chapters individually, focus is concentrated on the *Vita nova* in its textual and historical context rather than on its relationship to the *Divine Comedy*. This decoupling has freed the contributors to draw attention to various important literary features of the text, including its rich and complex polysemy, as well as its structural fluidity. The volume likewise offers insights into Dante's social environment, his relationships with other poets, and Dante's evolving vision of his poetry's scope. Using a variety of critical methodologies and hermeneutical approaches, this volume offers scholars an opportunity to reread the *Vita nova* in a renewed context and from a diversity of literary, cultural, and ideological perspectives.

Contributors: Zygmunt G. Barański, Heather Webb, Claire E. Honess, Brian F. Richardson, Ruth Chester, Federica Pich, Matthew Treherne, Catherine Keen, Jennifer Rushworth, Daragh O'Connell, Sophie V. Fuller, Giulia Gaimari, Emily Kate Price, Manuele Gragnolati, Elena Lombardi, Francesca Southerden, Rebecca Bowen, Nicolò Crisafi, Lachlan Hughes, Franco Costantini, David Bowe, Tristan Kay, Filippo Gianferrari, Simon Gilson, Rebekah Locke, Luca Lombardo, Peter Dent, George Ferzoco, Paola Nasti, Marco Grimaldi, David G. Lummus, Helena Phillips-Robins, Aistė Kiltinavičiūtė, Alessia Carrai, Ryan Pepin, Valentina Mele, Katherine Powlesland, Federica Coluzzi, K. P. Clarke, Nicolò Maldina, Theodore J. Cachey Jr., Chiara Sbordonì, Lorenzo Dell'Oso, and Anne C. Leone.

Contributor Bio

Zygmunt G. Baranski is Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Notre Dame, Emeritus Serena Professor of Italian at the University of Cambridge, and Fellow of New Hall. He is co-editor of *Petrarch and Dante: Anti-Dantism, Metaphysics, Tradition*.

Heather Webb is professor of Italian literature and culture at the University of Cambridge and author of *Dante, Artist of Gesture*.



Manuscript Poetics

Materiality and Textuality in Medieval Italian Literature

Francesco Marco Aresu

Summary

***Manuscript Poetics* explores the interrelationship between the material features of textual artifacts and the literary aspects of the medieval Italian texts they preserve.**

This original study is both an investigation into the material foundations of literature and a reflection on notions of textuality, writing, and media in late medieval and early modern Italy. Francesco Marco Aresu examines the book-objects of manuscripts and early printed editions, asking questions about the material conditions of production, circulation, and reception of literary works. He invites scholars to reconcile reading with seeing (and with touching) and to challenge contemporary presumptions about technological neutrality and the modes of interfacing and reading. *Manuscript Poetics* investigates the correspondences between textuality and materiality, content and medium, and visual-verbal messages and their physical support through readings of Dante Alighieri's *Vita nova*, Giovanni Boccaccio's *Teseida*, and Francesco Petrarca's *canzoniere* (*Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*). Aresu shows that Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarca evaluated and deployed the tools of scribal culture to shape, signal, or layer meanings beyond those they conveyed in their written texts. Medieval texts, Aresu argues, are uniquely positioned to provide this perspective, and they are foundational to the theoretical understanding of new forms and materials in our media-saturated contemporary world.

Contributor Bio

Francesco Marco Aresu is an assistant professor of Italian Studies at the University of Pennsylvania.

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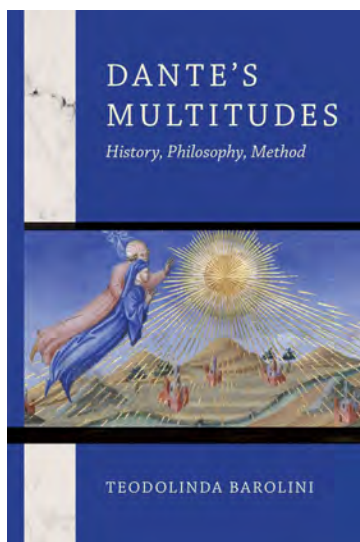
528 Pages

19 color illustrations, 2 b&w illustrations

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410 Pages
19 b&w illustrations
Religion / Christianity
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Dante's Multitudes

History, Philosophy, Method

Teodolinda Barolini

Summary

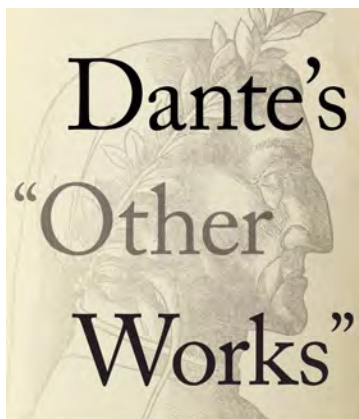
A critical addition to Dante studies that illuminates the poet's disruptive impact within Italian culture and foregrounds Barolini's marked contribution to the field.

In *Dante's Multitudes*, the newest addition to the renowned William and Katherine Devers Series in Dante and Medieval Italian Literature, Teodolinda Barolini gathers sixteen of her essays exploring the revolutionary character of Dante's work. Embracing the *Vita Nuova*, *De vulgari eloquentia*, *Convivio*, *Epistles*, *Monarchia*, and *Rime*, and of course the *Divine Comedy*, these essays together feature the many facets of the poet's enduring legacy.

Dante's Multitudes showcases the poet's embrace of multiplicity, difference, and disruption in five parts, each with its own general focus. It begins with an introductory essay on method and the use of history in order to set the stage for the expert analyses that follow. Barolini treats various topics in Dante studies, including sexualized and racialized others in the *Comedy*, Dante's unorthodox conception of limbo, his celebration of metaphysical difference within the paradoxical unity of the *Paradiso*, and his use of Aristotle to think disruptively about wealth and society, on the one hand, and about love and compulsion, on the other. The volume closes with a final meditation on method and "critical philology," highlighting the ways in which philology has been used uncritically to bolster fallacious hermeneutical narratives about one of the West's most celebrated and influential poets. Barolini once again opens avenues for further research in this compelling collection of essays. This volume will be of interest to scholars in Dante studies, Italian studies, and medieval and Renaissance literature more broadly.

Contributor Bio

Teodolinda Barolini is the Lorenzo Da Ponte Professor of Italian at Columbia University and author of a number of books, including *The Undivine Comedy: Detheologizing Dante* and *Dante's Poets: Textuality and Truth in the "Comedy."*



ASSESSMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Edited by Zygmunt G. Baranski and Theodore J. Cachey, Jr.

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Literary Criticism / Medieval
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Dante's "Other Works"

Assessments and Interpretations

Zygmunt G. Baranski, Theodore J. Cachey, Jr.

Summary

Prominent Dante scholars from the United States, Italy, and the United Kingdom contribute original essays to the first critical companion in English to Dante's "other works."

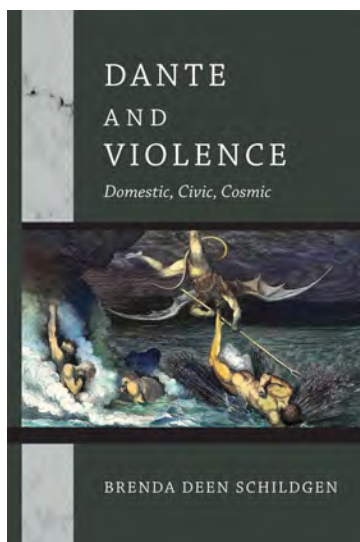
Rather than speak of Dante's "minor works," according to a tradition of Dante scholarship going back at least to the eighteenth century, this volume puts forward the designation "other works" both in light of their enhanced status and as part of a general effort to reaffirm their value as autonomous works. Indeed, had Dante never written the *Commedia*, he would still be considered the most important writer of the late Middle Ages for the originality and inventiveness of the other works he wrote besides his monumental poem, including the *Rime*, the *Fiore*, the *Detto d'amore*, the *Vita nova*, the *Epistles*, the *Convivio*, the *De vulgari eloquentia*, the *Monarchia*, the *Egloge*, and the *Questio de aqua et terra*. Each contributor to this volume addresses one of the "other works" by presenting the principal interpretative trends and questions relating to the text, and by focusing on aspects of particular interest. Two essays on the relationship between the "other works" and the issues of philosophy and theology are included. *Dante's "Other Works"* will interest Dantisti, medievalists, and literary scholars at every stage of their career.

Contributors: Manuele Gagnolati, Christopher Kleinhenz, Zygmunt G. Barański, Claire E. Honess, Simon Gilson, Mirko Tavoni, Paola Nasti, Theodore J. Cachey, Jr., David G. Lummus, Luca Bianchi, and Vittorio Montemaggi.

Contributor Bio

Zygmunt G. Barański is Serena Professor of Italian Emeritus at the University of Cambridge and R. L. Canala Professor of Romance Languages & Literatures Emeritus at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of numerous books, including *Dante*, *Petrarch*, *Boccaccio: Literature, Doctrine, Reality*.

Theodore J. Cachey, Jr., is Fabiano Collegiate Chair of Italian Studies and Ravarino Family Director of the Center for Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author, editor, and co-editor of several books, including *Dante e la cultura fiorentina*.



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Literary Criticism / Medieval
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Dante and Violence

Domestic, Civic, Cosmic

Brenda Deen Schildgen

Summary

Winner of the Helen and Howard Marraro Prize in Italian Literature

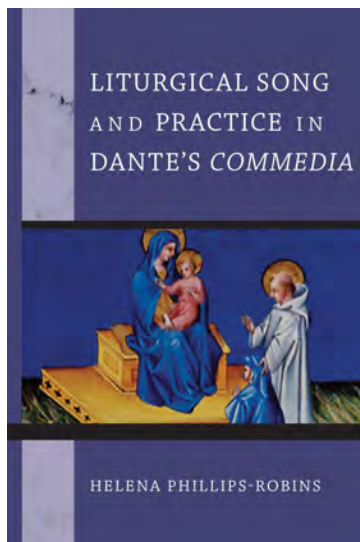
This study explores how Dante represents violence in the *Comedy* and reveals the connection between contemporary private and public violence and civic and canon law violations.

Although a number of articles have addressed particular aspects of violence in discrete parts of Dante's oeuvre, a systematic treatment of violence in the *Commedia* is lacking. This ambitious overview of violence in Dante's literary works and his world examines cases of violence in the domestic, communal, and cosmic spheres while taking into account medieval legal approaches to rights and human freedom that resonate with the economy of justice developed in the *Commedia*. Exploring medieval concerns with violence both in the home and in just war theory, as well as the Christian theology of the Incarnation and Redemption, Brenda Deen Schildgen examines violence in connection to the natural rights theory expounded by canon lawyers beginning in the twelfth century. Partially due to the increased attention to its Greco-Roman cultural legacy, the twelfth-century Renaissance produced a number of startling intellectual developments, including the emergence of codified canon law and a renewed interest in civil law based on Justinian's sixth-century *Corpus juris civilis*. Schildgen argues that, in addition to "divine justice," Dante explores how the human system of justice, as exemplified in both canon and civil law and based on natural law and legal concepts of human freedom, was consistently violated in the society of his era. At the same time, the redemptive violence of the Crucifixion, understood by Dante as the free act of God in choosing the Incarnation and death on the cross, provides the model for self-sacrifice for the communal good. This study, primarily focused on Dante's representation of his contemporary reality, demonstrates that the punishments and rewards in Dante's heaven and hell, while ostensibly a staging of his vision of eternal justice, may in fact be a direct appeal to his readers to recognize the crimes that pervade their own world.

Dante and Violence will have a wide readership, including students and scholars of Dante, medieval culture, violence, and peace studies.

Contributor Bio

Brenda Deen Schildgen is distinguished professor emerita of comparative literature at the University of California, Davis. Her previous books include *Divine Providence: A History*; *The Bible, Virgil, Orosius, Augustine, and Dante* and *Dante and the Orient*.



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Literary Criticism / Medieval
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Liturgical Song and Practice in Dante's *Commedia*

Helena Phillips-Robins

Summary

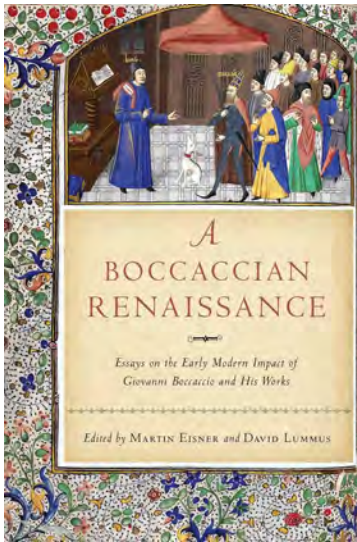
This study explores ways in which Dante presents liturgy as enabling humans to encounter God.

In *Liturgical Song and Practice in Dante's "Commedia,"* Helena Phillips-Robins explores for the first time the ways in which the relationship between humanity and divinity is shaped through the performance of liturgy in the *Commedia*. The study draws on largely untapped thirteenth-century sources to reconstruct how the songs and prayers performed in the *Commedia* were experienced and used in late medieval Tuscany. Phillips-Robins shows how in the *Commedia* Dante refashions religious practices that shaped daily life in the Middle Ages and how Dante presents such practices as transforming and sustaining relationships between humans and the divine. The study focuses on the types of engagement that Dante's depictions of liturgical performance invite from the reader. Based on historically attentive analysis of liturgical practice and on analysis of the experiential and communal nature of liturgy, Phillips-Robins argues that Dante invites readers themselves to perform the poem's liturgical songs and, by doing so, to enter into relationship with the divine. Dante calls not only for readers' interpretative response to the *Commedia* but also for their performative and spiritual activity.

Focusing on *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, Phillips-Robins investigates the particular ways in which relationships both between humans and between humans and God can unfold through liturgy. Her book includes explorations of liturgy as a means of enacting communal relationships that stretch across time and space; the Christological implications of participating in liturgy; the interplay of the personal and the shared enabled by the language of liturgy; and liturgy as a living out of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and love. The book will interest students and scholars of Dante studies, medieval Italian literature, and medieval theology.

Contributor Bio

Helena Phillips-Robins is a research fellow of Selwyn College, University of Cambridge.



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Hardcover

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Literary Criticism / European
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A Boccaccian Renaissance

Essays on the Early Modern Impact of Giovanni Boccaccio and His Works

Martin Eisner, David G. Lummus

Summary

A Boccaccian Renaissance brings together essays written by internationally recognized scholars in diverse national traditions to respond to the largely unaddressed question of Boccaccio's impact on early modern literature and culture in Italy and Europe. Martin Eisner and David Lummus co-edit the first comprehensive examination in English of Boccaccio's impact on the Renaissance.

The essays investigate what it means to follow a Boccaccian model, in tandem with or in place of ancient authors such as Vergil or Cicero, or modern poets such as Dante or Petrarch. The book probes how deeply the Latin and vernacular works of Boccaccio spoke to the Renaissance humanists of the fifteenth century. It treats not only the literary legacy of Boccaccio's works but also their paradoxical importance for the history of the Italian language and reception in theater and books of conduct.

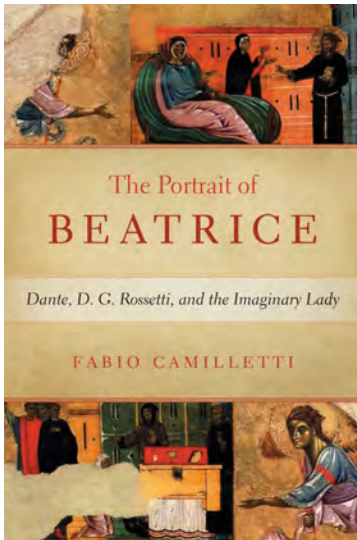
While the geographical focus of many of the essays is on Italy, the volume concludes with three studies that open new inroads to understanding his influence on Spanish, French, and English writers across the sixteenth century. The book will appeal strongly to scholars and students of Boccaccio, the Italian and European Renaissance, and Italian literature.

Contributors: Jonathan Combs-Schilling, Rhiannon Daniels, Martin Eisner, Simon Gilson, James Hankins, Timothy Kircher, Victoria Kirkham, David Lummus, Ronald L. Martinez, Ignacio Navarrete, Brian Richardson, Marc Schachter, Michael Sherberg, and Janet Levarie Smarr

Contributor Bio

Martin Eisner is associate professor of Italian studies at Duke University. He is the author of *Boccaccio and the Invention of Italian Literature: Dante, Petrarch, Cavalcanti, and the Authority of the Vernacular*.

David Lummus is assistant director of the Center for Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame and editor of the American Boccaccio Association's *Lectura Boccaccii* for Day 6 of the *Decameron*. His publications on Boccaccio and Petrarch have appeared in *Speculum* and *Renaissance Quarterly*.



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Portrait of Beatrice

Dante, D. G. Rossetti, and the Imaginary Lady

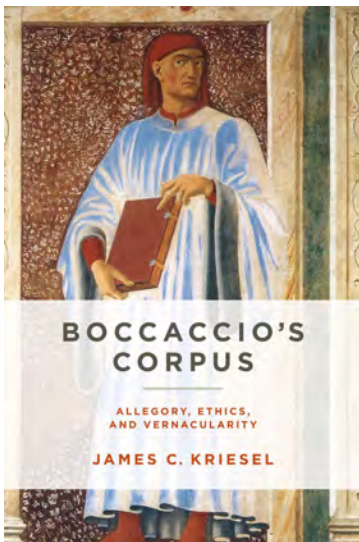
Fabio Camilletti

Summary

The Portrait of Beatrice examines both Dante's and D. G. Rossetti's intellectual experiences in the light of a common concern about visibility. Both render, in different times and contexts, something that resists clear representation, be it the divine beauty of the angel-women or the depiction of the painter's own interiority in a secularized age. By analyzing Dante's *Vita Nova* alongside Rossetti's *Hand and Soul* and *St. Agnes of Intercession*, which inaugurates the Victorian genre of 'imaginary portrait' tales, this book examines how Dante and Rossetti explore the tension between word and image by creating 'imaginary portraits.' The imaginary portrait—Dante's sketched angel appearing in the *Vita Nova* or the paintings evoked in Rossetti's narratives—is not (only) a non-existent artwork: it is an artwork whose existence lies elsewhere, in the words alluding to its inexpressible quality. At the same time, thinking of Beatrice as an 'imaginary Lady' enables us to move beyond the debate about her actual existence. Rather, it allows us to focus on her reality as a miracle made into flesh, which language seeks incessantly to grasp. Thus, the intergenerational dialogue between Dante and Rossetti—and between thirteenth and nineteenth centuries, literature and painting, Italy and England—takes place between different media, oscillating between representation and denial, mimesis and difference, concealment and performance. From medieval Florence to Victorian London, Beatrice's 'imaginary portrait' touches upon the intertwinement of desire, poetry, and art-making in Western culture.

Contributor Bio

Fabio Camilletti is reader at the School of Modern Languages and Cultures at the University of Warwick. He is the author of a number of books, including *Leopardi's Nymphs: Grace, Melancholy, and the Uncanny*.



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Boccaccio's Corpus

Allegory, Ethics, and Vernacularity

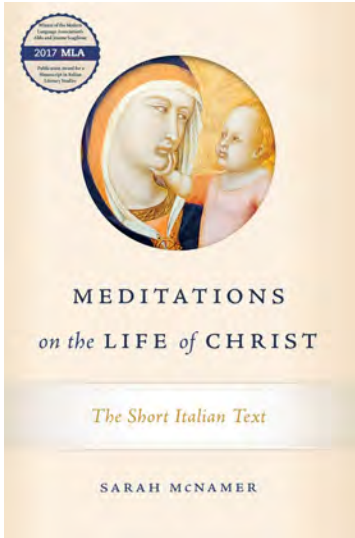
James C. Kriesel

Summary

In *Boccaccio's Corpus*, James C. Kriesel explores how medieval ideas about the body and gender inspired Boccaccio's vernacular and Latin writings. Scholars have observed that Boccaccio distinguished himself from Dante and Petrarch by writing about women, erotic acts, and the sexualized body. On account of these facets of his texts, Boccaccio has often been heralded as a protorealistic author who invented new literatures by eschewing medieval modes of writing. This study revises modern scholarship by showing that Boccaccio's texts were informed by contemporary ideas about allegory, gender, and theology. Kriesel proposes that Boccaccio wrote about women to engage with debates concerning the dignity of what was coded as female in the Middle Ages. This encompassed varieties of mundane experiences, somatic spiritual expressions, and vernacular texts. Boccaccio championed the feminine to counter the diverse writers who thought that men, ascetic experiences, and Latin works had more dignity than women and female cultures. Emboldened by literary and religious ideas about the body, Boccaccio asserted that his "feminine" texts could signify as efficaciously as Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Petrarch's classicizing writings. Indeed, he claimed that they could even be more effective in moving an audience because of their affective nature—namely, their capacity to attract, entertain, and stimulate readers. Kriesel argues that Boccaccio drew on medieval traditions to highlight the symbolic utility of erotic literatures and to promote cultures associated with women.

Contributor Bio

James C. Kriesel is assistant professor of Italian at Villanova University.



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444 Pages
2 tables

Literary Criticism / European

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9 in H | 6 in W

Meditations on the Life of Christ

The Short Italian Text

Sarah McNamer

Summary

2017 Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Publication Award for a Manuscript in Italian Literary Studies

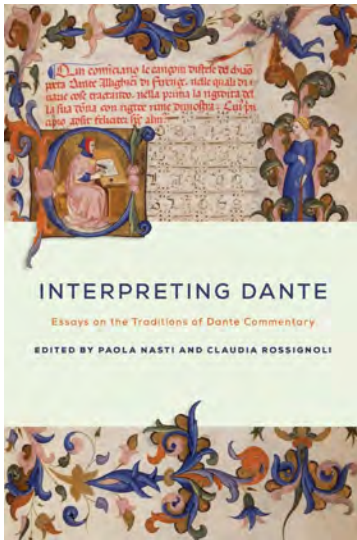
The Meditations on the Life of Christ was the most popular and influential devotional work of the later Middle Ages. With its lively dialogue and narrative realism, its poignant and moving depictions of the Nativity and Passion, and its direct appeals to the reader to feel love and compassion, the *Meditations* had a major impact on devotional practices, religious art, meditative literature, vernacular drama, and the cultivation of affective experience.

This volume is a critical edition, with English translation and commentary, of a hitherto-unpublished Italian text that McNamer argues is likely to be the original version of this influential masterpiece. Livelier and far more compact than the Latin text, the Italian “short text” possesses a stylistic and textual integrity that appears to testify to its primacy among early versions of the *Meditations*. The evidence also suggests that it was composed by a woman, a Poor Clare from Pisa—an author whose work McNamer contends was obscured by the anonymous Franciscan friar who subsequently altered and expanded the text. In bringing to light this unique Italian version and building a case for its origins and importance, this book will encourage a fresh look at the *Meditations* and serve as a foundation for further scholarship and debate concerning some of the most compelling subjects in Italian and European literary and cultural history, including the role of women in the invention of new genres and spiritual practices, the early development of Italian prose narrative, the rise of vernacular theology, and the history of emotion.

McNamer’s volume will be of significant interest to medievalists, especially those who study medieval women, devotional literature, manuscript studies, and textual criticism. The linguistic analysis expands that audience to include those of a philological bent.

Contributor Bio

Sarah McNamer is professor of English and medieval studies at Georgetown University. She is the author of *Affective Meditation and the Invention of Medieval Compassion* (2010).



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Poetry / European

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Interpreting Dante

Essays on the Traditions of Dante Commentary

Paola Nasti, Claudia Rossignoli

Summary

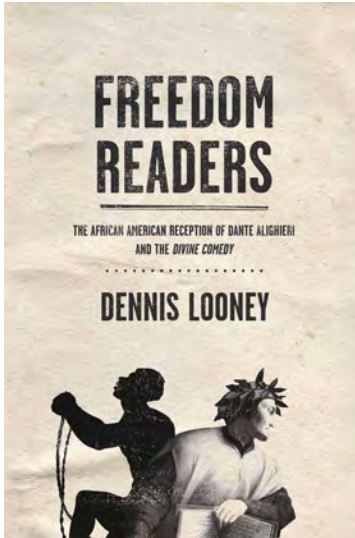
In *Interpreting Dante: Essays on the Traditions of Dante Commentary*, Paola Nasti and Claudia Rossignoli gather essays by prominent scholars of the Dante commentary tradition to discuss the significance of this tradition for the study of the *Comedy*, its broad impact on the history of ideas, and its contribution to the development of literary criticism.

Interest in the Dante commentary tradition has grown considerably in recent years, but projects on this subject tend to focus on philological reconstructions. The contributors shift attention to the interpretation of texts, authors, and reading communities by examining how Dante commentators developed interpretative paradigms that contributed to the advancement of literary criticism and the creation of the Western literary canon. Dante commentaries illustrate the evolution of notions of "literariness" and literature, genre and style, intertextuality and influence, literary histories, traditions and canons, authorship and readerships, paratexts and textual materiality. The volume includes methodological essays exploring theoretical aspects of the tradition, such as the creation of a taxonomy for categorizing typologies of commentaries; the relationship between commentators and their contemporary readers; the interplay between written and visual commentaries; and the impact of patronage on the forms of exegesis. Other essays, including two in Italian, examine case studies of individual commentaries, giving an account of the *modus operandi* of Dante's exegetes by relating their approaches to the cultural, ideological, and political agendas of the community of readers and scholars to which the commentators belonged.

Contributor Bio

Paola Nasti is associate professor in Italian Studies at the University of Reading.

Claudia Rossignoli is lecturer in Italian at the University of St. Andrews.



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296 Pages

Literary Criticism / American
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Freedom Readers

The African American Reception of Dante Alighieri and the Divine Comedy

Dennis Looney

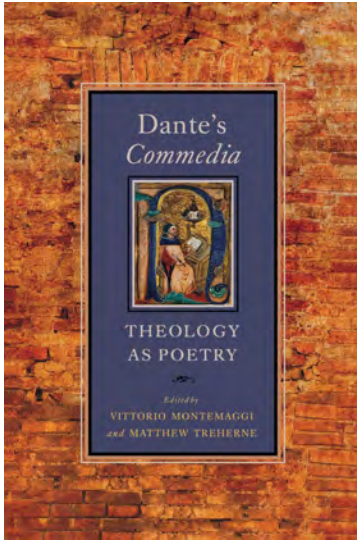
Summary

Freedom Readers: The African American Reception of Dante Alighieri and the Divine Comedy is a literary-historical study of the many surprising ways in which Dante Alighieri and the *Divine Comedy* have assumed a position of importance in African American culture. Dennis Looney examines how African American authors have read, interpreted, and responded to Dante and his work from the late 1820s to the present.

In many ways, the African American reception of Dante follows a recognizable narrative of reception: the Romantic rehabilitation of the author; the late-nineteenth-century glorification of Dante as a radical writer of reform; the twentieth-century modernist rewriting; and the adaptation of the *Divine Comedy* into the prose of the contemporary novel. But surely it is unique to African American rewritings of Dante to suggest that the *Divine Comedy* is itself a kind of slave narrative. Only African American "translations" of Dante use the medieval author to comment on segregation, migration, and integration. While many authors over the centuries have learned to articulate a new kind of poetry from Dante's example, for African American authors attuned to the complexities of Dante's hybrid vernacular, his poetic language becomes a model for creative expression that juxtaposes and blends classical notes and the vernacular counterpoint in striking ways. Looney demonstrates this appropriation of Dante as a locus for black agency in the creative work of such authors as William Wells Brown, the poet H. Cordelia Ray, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison, Amiri Baraka, Gloria Naylor, Toni Morrison, and the filmmaker Spencer Williams.

Contributor Bio

Dennis Looney is professor of Italian and classics at the University of Pittsburgh.



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Dante's Commedia

Theology as Poetry

Vittorio Montemaggi, Matthew Treherne

Summary

In *Dante's Commedia: Theology as Poetry*, an international group of theologians and Dante scholars provide a uniquely rich set of perspectives focused on the relationship between theology and poetry in the *Commedia*. Examining Dante's treatment of questions of language, personhood, and the body; his engagement with the theological tradition he inherited; and the implications of his work for contemporary theology, the contributors argue for the close intersection of theology and poetry in the text as well as the importance of theology for Dante studies. Through discussion of issues ranging from Dante's use of imagery of the Church to the significance of the smile for his poetic project, the essayists offer convincing evidence that his theology is not what underlies his narrative poem, nor what is contained within it: it is instead fully integrated with its poetic and narrative texture.

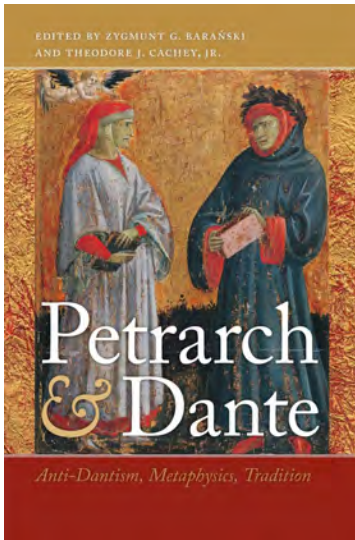
As the essays demonstrate, the *Commedia* is firmly rooted in the medieval tradition of reflection on the nature of theological language, while simultaneously presenting its readers with unprecedented, sustained poetic experimentation. Understood in this way, Dante emerges as one of the most original theological voices of the Middle Ages.

Contributors: Piero Boitani, Oliver Davies, Theresa Federici, David F. Ford, Peter S. Hawkins, Douglas Hedley, Robin Kirkpatrick, Christian Moevs, Vittorio Montemaggi, Paola Nasti, John Took, Matthew Treherne, and Denys Turner.

Contributor Bio

Vittorio Montemaggi is associate professor of religion and literature at the University of Notre Dame.

Matthew Treherne is senior lecturer in Italian and co-director of the Leeds Centre for Dante Studies, University of Leeds.



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Petrarch and Dante

Anti-Dantism, Metaphysics, Tradition

Zygmunt G. Baranski, Theodore J. Cachey, Jr.

Summary

Since the beginnings of Italian vernacular literature, the nature of the relationship between Francesco Petrarch and his predecessor Dante Alighieri has remained an open and endlessly fascinating question of both literary and cultural history. In this volume nine leading scholars of Italian medieval literature and culture address this question involving the two foundational figures of Italian literature.

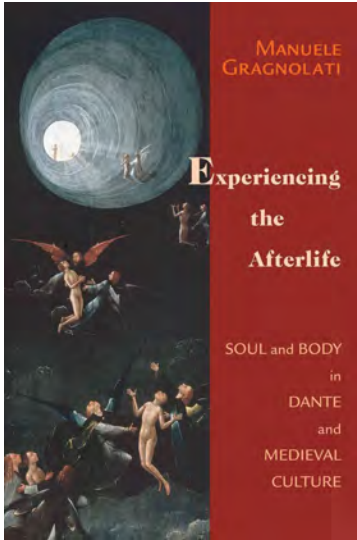
The authors examine Petrarch's contentious and dismissive attitude toward the literary authority of his illustrious predecessor; the dramatic shift in theological and philosophical context that occurs from Dante to Petrarch; and their respective contributions as initiators of modern literary traditions in the vernacular. Petrarch's substantive ideological dissent from Dante clearly emerges, a dissent that casts in high relief the poets' radically divergent views of the relation between the human and the divine and of humans' capacity to bridge that gap.

Contributors: Albert Russell Ascoli, Zygmunt G. Baranski, Teodolinda Barolini, Theodore J. Cachey, Jr., Ronald L. Martinez, Giuseppe Mazzotta, Christian Moevs, Justin Steinberg, and Sara Sturm-Maddox.

Contributor Bio

Zygmunt G. Baranski is Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Notre Dame, Emeritus Serena Professor of Italian at the University of Cambridge, and Fellow of New Hall.

Theodore J. Cachey, Jr., is the Inaugural Academic Director of the Notre Dame Rome Global Gateway as well as the Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Family Director of Dante and Italian Studies and professor of Italian at the University of Notre Dame.



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Experiencing the Afterlife

Soul and Body in Dante and Medieval Culture

Manuele Gragnolati

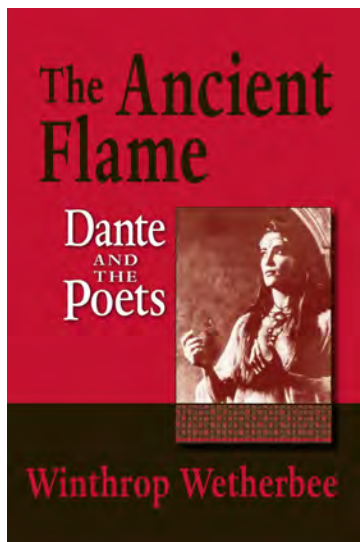
Summary

Experiencing the Afterlife provides the first sustained analysis of popular, vernacular depictions of the afterlife written in Italy before the *Divine Comedy* by authors such as Uguccione da Lodi, Giacomino da Verona, and Bonvesin da la Riva. Manuele Gragnolati uses his readings of these poets to provide a new interpretation of Dante's work. Combining elements from several disciplines, he investigates the richness of high medieval eschatology and the concept of personal identity it expresses. Gragnolati is particularly concerned with how the notions of body and pain characteristic of medieval spirituality and devotion inform the eschatological representations of the time, especially in their paradoxical urge to stress at once the physical experience of the separated soul and the final necessity of bodily resurrection.

By integrating lesser-known texts and scholarship from other disciplines into the specialized field of Dante studies, Gragnolati sheds new light on some of the most vigorously debated and crucial questions raised by the *Divine Comedy*, including the embryological discourse of *Purgatorio* 25, the relation between the soul's experience of pain in Purgatory and the devotion that late medieval culture expressed toward Christ's suffering, and the significance of the audacious vision of resurrected bodies that Dante the pilgrim enjoys at the end of his journey. At the same time, Gragnolati brings these questions back into contemporary discussions of medieval eschatology and opens new perspectives for current and future work on embodiment and identity. Scholars and students of Dante and Italian studies, as well as those in medieval history, religion, culture, and art history, will be rewarded by the fresh insights contained in *Experiencing the Afterlife*.

Contributor Bio

Manuele Gragnolati is Fellow and Tutor in Italian at Somerville College, Oxford. Before joining the Oxford faculty in 2003, he taught Italian and Comparative Literature at Dartmouth College. His latest book is *Amor che move. Linguaggio del corpo e forma del desiderio in Dante, Pasolini e Morante* (Milan: il Saggiatore 2013).



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The Ancient Flame

Dante and the Poets

Winthrop Wetherbee

Summary

While the structure and themes of the *Divine Comedy* are defined by the narrative of a spiritual pilgrimage guided by Christian truth, Winthrop Wetherbee's remarkable new study reveals that Dante's engagement with the great Latin poets Vergil, Ovid, Lucan, and Statius constitutes a second, complementary narrative centered on psychological and artistic self-discovery.

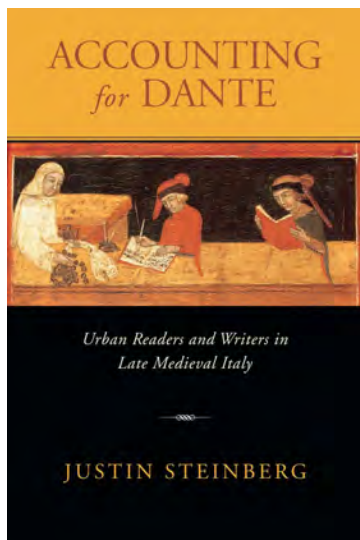
This fresh, illuminating approach departs from the usual treatment of classical poets in Dante criticism, which assigns them a merely allegorical function. Their true importance to Dante's project is much greater. As Wetherbee meticulously shows, Dante's use of the poets is grounded in an astute understanding of their historical situation and a deeply sympathetic reading of their poetry.

Dante may have been motivated to correct pagan thought and imagery, but more pervasive was his desire to recreate classical style and to restore classical *auctoritas* to his own times. Dante's journey in the *Commedia*, beginning with the pilgrim's assumption of a tragic view of the human condition, progresses with the great poetry of the classical past as an intrinsic component of—not just a foil to—the spiritual experience. Dante ultimately recognizes classical poetry as an essential means to his discovery of truth.

A stunning contribution by one of the nation's leading medievalists, Wetherbee's investigation of the poem's classicism makes possible an ethical and spiritual but non-Christian reading of Dante, one that will spur new research and become an indispensable tool for teaching the *Commedia*.

Contributor Bio

Winthrop Wetherbee is professor of English and Avalon Foundation Professor in the Humanities, Emeritus, at Cornell University.



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Accounting for Dante

Urban Readers and Writers in Late Medieval Italy

Justin Steinberg

Summary

In *Accounting for Dante*, Justin Steinberg reexamines Dante's relation to his contemporary public, an audience that included those poets who responded to Dante's early work as well as the readers who first copied, preserved, and circulated his poetry. Based on original research of manuscripts and documents, Steinberg's study reveals in particular the importance of professional, urban classes—namely, merchants and notaries—as cultivators of early Italian poetry.

Although not officially trained as glossators or scribes, these newly educated readers were full participants in an emergent vernacular literature, demonstrating at times a marked degree of sophistication in their choices of which lyric poems to include in their personal anthologies. Adapting their methods of memorializing contracts and keeping accounts to the collecting of medieval Italian poetry, these urban readers and writers made copying Italian poetry a crucial aspect of how they understood and represented themselves as individuals and communities. Steinberg describes how notaries and merchants transcribed Dante's poetry in nontraditional formats, such as in the archival documents of the *Memoriali bolognesi* and the register-book *Vaticano Latino 3793*.

In bringing to light evidence of the urban reception of the early Italian lyric, Justin Steinberg restores the political, social, and historical contexts in which Dante would have understood the poetic debates of his day. He also examines how Dante continuously responded in his literary career—from the *Vita Nuova*, to the *De Vulgari eloquentia*, to the *Commedia*—to the interpretations and misinterpretations of his early lyrics by this municipal audience.

Contributor Bio

Justin Steinberg is professor of Italian Literature at the University of Chicago. He is editor-in-Chief of *Dante Studies*.

Understanding
dante



john a. scott

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Understanding Dante

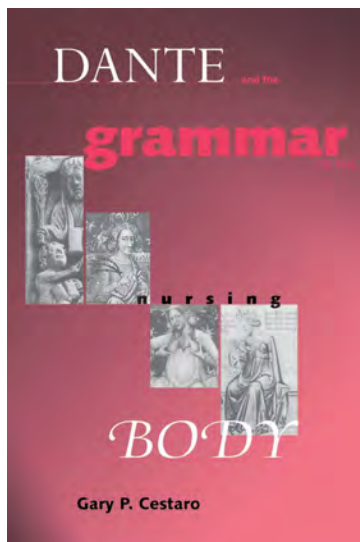
John A. Scott

Summary

Firmly grounded in the latest advances of Dante scholarship, *Understanding Dante* offers an original and uniquely detailed, global analysis of Dante as poet of the *Comedy* that will be welcomed by those who read the poem in translation as well as by those who study the original Italian text. At the same time, Scott's book will be welcome for its rich and insightful analysis of the whole corpus of Dante's writings, as well as Scott's mastery of the vast sea of critical literature in various languages. Scott bridges the gap that often exists between Dante studies in English-speaking countries and the great tradition of Dante scholarship in the poet's homeland. No work in English about the great Italian poet can rival *Understanding Dante's* scope in both depth and breadth of close reading and critical vision.

Contributor Bio

John A. Scott is an Emeritus Professor/Senior Honorary Research Fellow in the department of European Languages and Studies at the University of Western Australia.



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Dante and the Grammar of the Nursing Body

Gary P. Cestaro

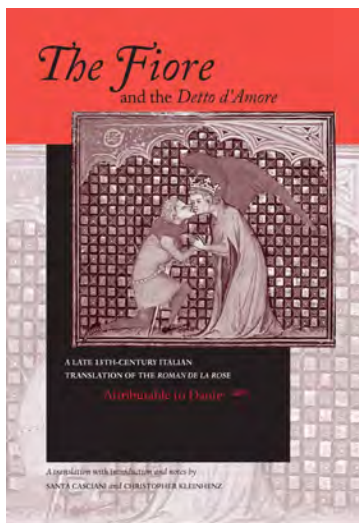
Summary

Dante and the Grammar of the Nursing Body takes a serious look at Dante's relation to Latin grammar and the new "mother tongue"-Italian vernacular-by exploring the cultural significance of the nursing mother in medieval discussions of language and selfhood. Inspired by Julia Kristeva's meditations on the maternal semiotic, Cestaro's book uncovers ancient and medieval discourses that assert the nursing body's essential role in the development of a mature linguistic self.

The opening chapters locate traces of the nursing motif in Dante's minor works and particularly in his Latin treatise on the mother tongue, *De vulgari eloquentia*. Cestaro argues that a primal scene of suckling motivates the poet's musings on language and brings the work to its premature end. Subsequent chapters explore the evolution of the nursing body in the *Comedy*: from the parodic anti-nurse of *Inferno* (archetypically Circe with her poison milk), to the Christian deconstruction and reconstruction of selfhood in intimate association with female nursing on the mountain of Purgatorio. The book ends in *Paradiso* with a dramatic metaphorical celebration of the nursing body as a site of eternal truth and emblem of the resurrected body promised by medieval Christianity.

Contributor Bio

Gary P. Cestaro is associate professor of modern languages at DePaul University.



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The Fiore and the Detto d'Amore

**A Late-Thirteenth-Century Italian Translation of the Roman de la Rose
Attributable to Dante Alighieri**

Santa Casciani, Christopher Kleinhenz

Summary

This is the first English translation of *Il Fiore*, the late-thirteenth-century narrative poem in 232 sonnets based on the Old French *Roman de la Rose*, and the *Detto d'Amore*, a free-wheeling version of many Ovidian precepts of love in 240 rhymed couplets. The elaborate allegory of the *Fiore* presents the complex workings of love, understood primarily as carnal passion, in the human psyche through the use of personifications of a wide array of characters who engage in various social (and bellic) interactions. There are personifications of social stereotypes and attitudes, mythological figures, abstract qualities, psychological and physical states, and personality traits.

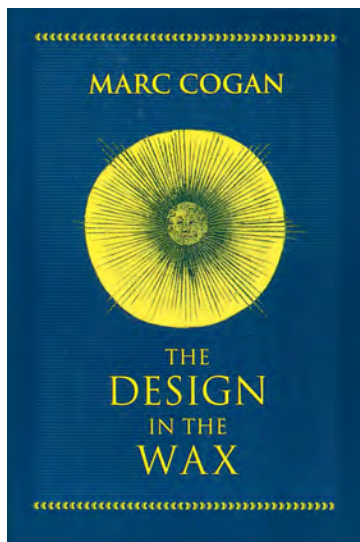
The *Detto d'Amore* includes features of the perennial controversy between proponents of the pleasures of erotic passion and those who counsel pursuit of the sublime joys found solely in the exercise of reason. The incomplete poem also contains a conventionalized—and idealized—description of the physical traits of the lady, as well as a portrait of the perfect courtly lover.

The importance of these two works lies in part in their possible attribution to the great Florentine poet Dante Alighieri. But even if Dante is not the author, the *Fiore* is a valuable witness to the literary taste and cultural concerns of medieval Italy and to matters of poetic influence and reception among different literary traditions.

Contributor Bio

Santa Casciani is Director of the Bishop Anthony M. Pilla Program in Italian American Studies at John Carroll University, Cleveland, Ohio. She is the editor of *Dante and the Franciscans* (2006) and co-editor of *Word, Image, Number: Communications in the Middle Ages* (2002).

Christopher Kleinhenz is Carol Mason Kirk Professor of Italian Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He is co-editor of *Medieval Multilingualism: The Francophone World and Its Neighbors* (2011) and editor of *Medieval Italy: An Encyclopedia* (2003).



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The Design in the Wax

The Structure of the Divine Comedy and Its Meaning

Marc Cogan

Summary

The Design in the Wax recovers the specifically medieval interpretation of the structure which underlies each part of the poem and the poem as a whole, and shows readers how to discover the single consistent principle which organizes each part and the overall narrative. The incidents of the poem would remain hopelessly ambiguous were it not for the philosophical and theological distinctions embodied in the structure of the narrative, in whose light it is possible to reduce the ambiguity of concrete incidents to their intended allegorical content. Through medieval interpretations of Dante's sources, Marc Cogan discovers a single consistent moral and theological principle organizing each of the sections of the poem and its overall narrative. He argues that, using one common principle, Dante brings the separate allegories of the *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso* together into one great allegory, making the transformation of the principle into an ordered set of variations on the theme of love and its representation in human beings as the image of God. This allegory, he points out, provides a meditation on the nature of God and the capacities of human beings. *The Design in the Wax* is a thought-provoking tool for all students of the *Divine Comedy* interested in studying Dante's calculated use of poetry to overcome the limits of human understanding.

Contributor Bio

Marc Cogan is Associate Professor in the Department of Humanities at Wayne State University in Detroit. He is the author of *The Human Thing: The Speeches and Principles of Thucydides' History*.



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The Fiore in Context

Dante, France, Tuscany

Zygmunt G. Baranski, Patrick Boyde, Theodore J. Cachey, Jr.

Summary

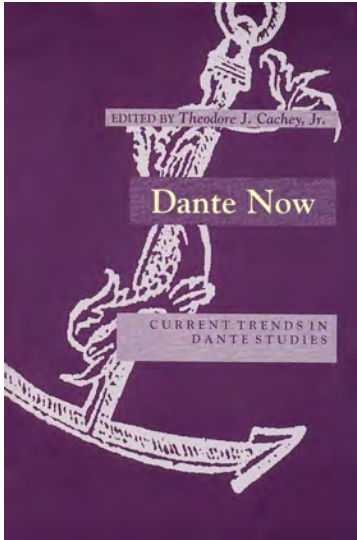
The second volume in the original William and Katherine Devers Series in Dante Studies, *The Fiore in Context: Dante, France, Tuscany* is the record of a milestone in the study of the *Fiore*, and perhaps in Dante studies: the international conference on the *Fiore* held at St. John's College, Cambridge, in September 1994. The conference, attended by most of the world's leading experts on the *Fiore*, examined many aspects of the poem, including textual questions, its cultural context, and its relations with the *Roman de la Rose* and the *Comedy*. Above all it constituted, in the judgment of the participants themselves, the most important discussion of the poem's attribution to Dante since Contini's pronouncement of the question in 1965. The published proceedings reproduce both the questionnaire that framed the conference, in which each participant weighs all the principal arguments for and against attributing the *Fiore* to Dante, as well as the lively discussion that followed each paper.

Contributor Bio

Zygmunt G. Baranski is Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Distinguished Visiting Professor at the University of Notre Dame, Emeritus Serena Professor of Italian at the University of Cambridge, and Fellow of New Hall. He is co-editor of *Petrarch and Dante: Anti-Dantism, Metaphysics, Tradition*.

Patrick Boyde is Emeritus Professor of Italian at St. John College in the University of Cambridge. He is the author and editor of several books on Dante, including *Perception and Passion in Dante's Comedy*.

Theodore J. Cachey Jr. is the Inaugural Academic Director of the Notre Dame Rome Global Gateway. He is a Professor of Italian and the Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Family Director of Dante and Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He earned his B.A. from Northwestern University and his Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the author of *Le isole fortunate: Appunti di storia letteraria italiana* and of *A. Pigafetta's "First Voyage around the World."* He is also the edi...



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Dante Now

Current Trends in Dante Studies

Theodore J. Cachey, Jr.

Summary

Written by ten distinguished Dante scholars, the essays in *Dante Now* represent the most significant areas of contemporary Dante studies. This collection, originating from a 1993 University of Notre Dame conference, includes some of the particular on three intensely cultivated areas of Dante studies: poetics, "minor works," and reception.

The stimulating ferment on the problem of Dante's poetics is well represented in the first three essays. These range in approach from the stylistic-ideological treatment of Zygmunt G. Baranski's essay to the inter- and intra-textual concerns presented by Christopher Kleinhenz, to the compelling hermeneutical and epistemological reflections on Dante's poetics given by Giuseppe Mazzotta. Dante's so-called "minor works" have increasingly become a focus of attention in contemporary Dante studies, and the textual problems represented by the *Vita nuova* are sweepingly reconsidered by Dino S. Cervigni and Edward Vasta. Ronald L. Martinez dedicates a substantial essay to Dante's poem of exile "Tre donne," and Albert Russell Ascoli addresses the issue of the relationship between Dante's *Commedia* and the minor works, especially the *Monarchia*. The final section of essays examines the phenomenon of the original and continuing vitality of Dante's work as a profoundly of influential, enduring, and enlivening literary classic. R.A. Shoaf addresses the literary influence of Dante in medieval England; Kevin Brownlee investigates Dante's most important medieval French connection in the works of Christine de Pizan; and Nancy Vickers illuminates Dante's translatability into avant-garde films and videos. Finally, Brian Richardson considers the *Commedia*'s Fortunes during the Renaissance in terms of its remarkable editorial and publishing history.

Contributor Bio

Theodore J. Cachey Jr. is the Inaugural Academic Director of the Notre Dame Rome Global Gateway. He is a Professor of Italian and the Albert J. and Helen M. Ravarino Family Director of Dante and Italian Studies at the University of Notre Dame. He earned his B.A. from Northwestern University and his Ph.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the author of *Le isole fortunate: Appunti di storia letteraria italiana* and of A. Pigafetta's "First Voyage around the World." He is also the editor of *Dante Now: Current Trends in Dante Studies*, a volume in the William and Katherine Devers Series in Dante Studies, which he co-edits with Christian R. Moevs, published by the University of Notre Dame Press.

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