

ABSTRACTS

MARIA LUISA DOGLIO, *Poesia dell'institutio. Sul canto XVII del Purgatorio*

Contrary to now prevalent tendency to read Canti XVI, XVII and XVIII of the *Purgatorio* in a single block this essay has deliberately chosen the *lectura Dantis* method in order to reiterate the central importance of this triptych for the whole *Commedia*. This because an autonomous consideration of each canto in its essential unity of composition allows us to fully evaluate the structure, complexity and scansion of Virgil's lesson on love. It is a lesson in which the figurative dialectic of teacher and pupil does not appear to translate into an «spettacolo estetico» in accordance with Benedetto Croce's interpretation. What does appear to emerge is a spiritual movement aimed at clarifying its objective of showing and making understood the genuine novelty, importance and universality of his concept of love in an ordered and clear way. Love is understood here not as the love of troubadour poets, of *stilnovismo* and Guido Cavalcanti, who emphasised its sensual character, but as the fount of every virtue and every vice, of all good and all evil. Thus even this first part of the lesson indicates a higher plane, very different from what Gianfranco Contini called the «etica mondana» of *Vita nuova* and a decisive turning point in the context of the thirteenth century debate. Following on from Giovanni Getto who spoke for the *Paradiso* of «poesia dell'intelligenza» and on the basis of the ancient commentaries, by Buti in particular, this essay puts forward the idea of a poetry of the *institutio*, of the teaching of the charismatic masters, Virgil here and earlier in the *Inferno*, Statius, intermediate guide between Virgil and Beatrice, St. Bernard Dante's last «dottore» on his journey towards God.

NICOLA LONGO, *L'arte della ripetizione nella Divina Commedia*

This research examines a number of occurrences of repetition in its diverse rhetorical specifications with the aim of demonstrating that the fundamental instrument with which debates are organised, if used skilfully, can attribute diverse expressive functions to words and phrases (from anger to sarcasm, for example) and sometimes further meanings. All this very frequently constitutes the intrinsic virtue of linguistic codes in literariness. The *Commedia* is thus analysed citing the repetitions which are most present in readers' memories (from the *incipit* of Canto III to the anaphora of Canto V) and in which that extra meaning emerges every time with

the force of great poetry. A special case of repetition is that in which it is ordered with acrostic (*Purg.* XII 25-63; *Par.* XIX 115-140) because the amplification of the meaning is to be found precisely in its vertically ordered word.

GIUSEPPE PATOTA, *Le lingue e gli stili di Giovanni Boccaccio*

Of the work of the Boccaccio school in the Neapolitan period, that written in verse was written in a language and style which is much more immediate than the language and style of the prose work. The language of *Caccia di Diana* is not markedly poetic with the exception of the presence of rare monophthong forms, very rare phonetic or lexical Latinisms and equally rare morphological Sicilianisms. Similarly, the octaves of the *Filocolo* were written in a language which can be considered medium in both phonomorphological and lexical terms. Thus in neither one nor the other does Boccaccio pursue anti realism. Rather the prose of the *Filocolo* is crowded with mythological and metaphoric disguises embellished with Latinisms and supported by a complex syntax packed with inversions and other modules which imitate the Latin period such as *coniunctio relativa* and the declarative phrase constructed with the accusative and the infinitive. After an overview of judgements relative to the work written in the Florentine period, from which it emerges that the linguistic and stylistic panorama is similar, the author moves on to analyse certain sequences from the *Decameron* and VI 10 37-52 in particular, an extraordinary example of Boccaccio's ability to sound out all the expressive potential of his contemporary Florentine from the sophisticated language which evoked the elegance of Latin to the colloquial or low Florentine which echoed the noisy, humorous daily language of the squares and marketplaces.

FRANCO PIPERNO, *Boccaccio in musica nel Cinquecento: fortuna e ricezione delle ballate del Decameron*

The success of the *Decameron* in the sixteenth century is evident not only in literary history but also in the history of music. Secular polyphonic production in the sixteenth century showed a limited but significant interest in lyrical Boccaccio and specifically in the *ballate* used to close each of the *Decameron giornate*. This study examines the recurrence of these *ballate* in the poetic choices of the sixteenth century madrigal players in connection both with the *Decameron's* publishing success and the commercial, didactic and literary taste strategies which led musicians or their clients to choose certain musical texts rather than others. The *ballate* (nine out of ten plus one belonging to the *Rime*) were sung with a certain continuity from the 1530s to 1612. In the case of composer-publisher Scotto they were frequently chosen as "classic" texts – like the sonnets of Petrarch and the Ariosto octaves – to support polyphonic compositions intended for didactic use. The papal censorship which was imposed on the *Decameron* between 1559 and 1573 had no impact on the minimal but constant presence of the Boccaccio *ballate* in the poetic choices of the madrigal players of those years.

ALESSANDRO ZUCCARI, *Caravaggio e la questione del disegno*

Still open Caravaggio related issues include the fresh attention currently being given to his use of drawings which had been thrown into doubt by the absence of sheets which can be traced with any certainty to Merisi. On the strength of an inappropriate interpretation of the literary sources, many scholars argued throughout the twentieth century that Caravaggio painted without the assistance of preliminary plans. This hypothesis has been refuted by a more accurate analysis of the archive and literary sources (it was not his first biographers who perceived this but Bellori and Scannelli, fervent supporters of classicism and academic procedures) and by new data on the painter's technique which has emerged from recent diagnostic enquiries. Underdrawings have been traced in his earlier work (graphic traces in *Ragazzo con canestra di frutta* in the Borghese) and in his mature work (for example the painting design in the two versions of the *Martirio di san Matteo*. This and other data, added to the use of "incisions" which have long been traced in Caravaggio's work, show careful and complex planning which was modified over time moving away from customary procedures without ever, however, abandoning the use of drawings. On the other hand it is possible that Merisi – introduced by Peterzano to the use of drawings and to the Lombard-Veneto school – was inspired by theories on «Lumi» in the writings of his fellow countryman Giovan Paolo Lomazzo in his achievement of the painting formula which Longhi appropriately called «plastico luminosa».

EMILIO RUSSO, *Castelvetro nel primo Seicento (Tassoni, Marino, Stigliani)*

This work examines certain aspects of the reactions to Ludovico Castelvetro's work in early seventeenth century culture. Certain pages from Alessandro Tassoni from his letters, *Pensieri* and his poetry notes are first examined to analyse the take up to the commentary on Aristotle's *Poetics* set out by Castelvetro. Significant comparisons have been carried out with Tasso's position on one hand and that of Benedetto Fioretti on the other to the same purpose. In the second part, the presence of Castelvetro as critic and adversary of Caro are analysed, elements which were made opportune use of in the debates centring around Giovan Battista Marino. Certain episodes relating to Ferrante Carli and, above all, Tomaso Stigliani have been reinterpreted making use, in relation to the latter, of a number of unpublished works.

SALVATORE CANNETO, *Pastoral-iter: Bartolomeo Nappini, Arcangelo Spagna e la politica culturale di Crescimbeni*

This essay examines certain specific elements in the life of Bartolomeo Nappini, respected, Calabria-born pedantic poet active in Rome at the turn of the seventeenth century and in particular, his relationship with Arcadia which, according to Crescimbeni who wrote a brief official biographical profile of him, was marked by an adherence broken only with the schism of 1711 during which Nappini opted for

sober neutrality. A fervent exponent, together with his companion abbot Arcangelo Spagna, of the Accademia degli Infecondi, in actual fact Nappini's opinion of Arcadia throughout his work was completely and unrestrainedly negative. In particular, Custode Crescimbeni was subjected to serious criticism of his management of the academic institutional apparatus in an exchange of letters in verse between Nappini and Spagna dating to 1715-1716. They argued that Crescimbeni's management of Arcadia was not lacking in errors and illegitimate actions which, in the last analysis, revealed the personal and instrumental nature of his objectives. These accusations were, moreover, substantially in agreement with the writings of Domenico Ottavio Petrosellini in *Giammaria*, Pier Jacopo Martello in *Satire* and Girolamo Gigli in *Brandaneide*.

ANDREINA GRISERI, *Il Settecento a Roma: strategie in avanguardia*

The critical analytical profile documented by Paolo Coen, *Il mercato dei quadri a Roma nel diciottesimo secolo*, with a wide ranging preface by Enrico Castelnuovo on historic sales and collections, I-II, Leo S. Olschki Editore, MMX, discusses the economic figurative strategies begun in eighteenth century Rome, provokes thought on the activities of salespeople, artist-merchants, intendants, mediators attentive to the cultural nodes offered by Arcadia, the growth in real value labels of identities with multiple roots, alternative spaces between curiosity and surprise for the arts and crafts enjoyed during the Enlightenment.

ANTONIO ROSTAGNO, *Dante nella musica dell'Ottocento*

After two centuries of almost total lack of interest by musicians, Dante was set to music more than a hundred times in the nineteenth century. Apart from the numerous songs on the *Stil novo* Dante's texts, attention focused on a few musical settings from the *Commedia*: from *Ugolino* by Nicola Zingarelli (for soprano and strings, 1804) and Gaetano Donizetti (for bass and piano, 1828) via Rossini, more Donizetti and Verdi (two pieces on the same text of the *Ave Maria* translated by Antonio da Ferrara, which, however, they thought was by Dante), Franz Liszt (a Hungarian by origin who lived in Rome for much of his life and partly composed the *Dante-Symphonie* there) and Antonio Bazzini (the author of the first Italian symphonic poem, *Francesca da Rimini*) up to Giuseppe Verdi and his *Laudi alla Vergine Maria* (published in 1898) to which the final paragraph of the essay is devoted. It is an *a cappella* four female voice setting of Saint Bernard's prayer *Vergine Madre figlia del tuo figlio*. The attitude of the various musicians testifies to a synchronic evolution from the "culture of the side notes" to Dante's text to the "culture of the comment" represented above all by Francesco De Sanctis. The two positions are exemplified in music by Zingarelli and Liszt and Bazzini's symphonic poems respectively. As orchestral compositions in free form, the symphonic poems do not use Dante's text directly, they do not set it to music verse by verse, image by image, but they offer a sort of comment at the end of the reading in the same way

as De Sanctis in his essays on Dante in those years. The late Verdi of the *Laudi* once more follows Dante's text strictly, declaiming and punctually interpreting it with the compositional device of the neo-madrigalistic counterpoint: a return to Dante's text. Two amongst many examples are those of the musical image of the "fontana di speranza" (spring of hope) or of the grace "liberamente" (freely) bestowed by the Virgin. This late Verdi-Dante masterpiece was later used by twentieth century composers such as Malipiero and Petrassi. A certain distance between Dante and the melodrama emerges from the outlined overview (the titles of operas echoing the *Commedia* are nearly always inspired by other sources and traditions). However, notwithstanding this distance, Dante culture passed through nineteenth century Italian history of music without a break and constituted a fundamentally important chapter in it.

LEOPOLDO GAMBERALE, *Tria corda. Cesare de Titta fra italiano, dialetto, neolatino*

Cesare de Titta, a key player in Abruzzo literary culture at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, dealt frequently with themes deriving from the rural culture of his region in dialect, Italian and neo-Latin poetry and moved close to popular literature. He also often wrote poetry for music. In contrast to other scholars of his time – some of whom, like Gennaro Finamore, were friends of his – he claimed there can be no good popular literature or music unless it is backed up by high quality artists. A neo-Latin poet who deserves to be re-evaluated, de Titta breathed new life into poetic forms like the Latin sonnet, a tradition which had persisted at least from the end of the Middle Ages, and was probably the first to transpose 'stornelli' into neo-Latin, in a little poem written for the second Virgil bi-millenary in 1930. This little poem may justly be considered one of the most successful of de Titta's poems in the popular and classical culture, autobiography and literary traditions.

ROBERTO RISSO, *Il «graticcio della pagina informe». Racconto della lettura e lettura del racconto ne L'avventura di un lettore di Italo Calvino*

This essay analyses the functions and role of the reader in Italo Calvino's narrative prose focusing in particular on an interpretation of the main character in the short story, *L'avventura di un lettore* (1958) published in the collection *Amori difficili* (1958 and 1970) up to *Se una notte d'inverno un viaggiatore* (1979). Calvino's characterisation of the reader triggers an analysis of the act of reading as a source of knowledge and escapism and establishes a unique theoretical relationship between contemporary and culturally similar intellectuals in Italy and France. Moving from Calvino's critical essays on European literature in the nineteenth century and echoes of them in his narrative prose, the essay interprets his short story about a reader who is split between a desire for pure contemplation and the need for action and human relationships in the light of the French theories of the *École du regard* and certain novels based on pure description and visual representation such

as Alain Robbe-Grillet's *La Jalousie* and the same author's critical writings on the subject of the new novel. Furthermore the essay develops Calvino's web of critical relations with Maurice Blanchot's critical thinking both on the infinity of the text and the idea of literary space as well as Umberto Eco's critical essays on the functions of literature.