

taphs (Piacentini), and the aspects that distinguish and unite, beyond the specific content of Christian doctrine, between the Dantean corpus and the theological program of the Scrovegni Chapel.

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*La tradizione della "Commedia" dai manoscritti al testo II: I codici trecenteschi (oltre l'antica vulgata) conservati a Firenze.* Sandro Bertelli.

Biblioteca dell'Archivum Romanicum" Serie I: Storia, Letteratura, Paleografia 448. Florence: Olschki, 2016. vii + 608 pp. + 64 color pls. €65.

The study of the textual and material aspects of Dante Alighieri's *Comedy* is an infamously thorny problem due to the lack of an autograph of the poem. This absence stands in stark contrast to the number of extant manuscripts. The tradition of Dante's masterwork consists of more than 850 codices, complete or fragmentary, corrupted and contaminated from the poem's first circulation in single canticles or cantos.

Bertelli's dense volume represents the second phase of his six-fold project of systematic reconsideration of the unique textual tradition of the *Comedy*. In the first volume (for which see Beatrice Arduini's review in *Renaissance Quarterly* 66.1 [2013]: 324–26) Bertelli had examined the manuscripts preserved in Florence that are included in the so-called *antica vulgata*, i.e., the corpus of manuscripts produced before Giovanni Boccaccio's editorial interventions on Dante's poem. The most prominent Dante scholar of the fourteenth century (with the possible exception of Dante's own son Pietro), Boccaccio copied the *Comedy* three times from the 1350s on, often collating manuscripts and contaminating them with obviously deleterious consequences for the textual accuracy of the poem. This second volume looks beyond the *antica vulgata*. It is dedicated to the manuscripts kept in Florentine libraries that date back to the second half of the fourteenth century (including one of Boccaccio's aforementioned influential copies).

The volume is articulated like its predecessor and consists of three sections. The first section ("The Codices, the Copyists, and the Scripts") is a comprehensive study of the codicological data inferred from the catalogue of sixty-five manuscripts presented in the third section ("The Codices"). It is intended mainly as a paleographic inventory. It describes and visualizes the scribal features of the various copyists that engaged in the reproduction and transmission of Dante's poem. A paleographer and codicologist by training, Bertelli does not turn away, however, from textual criticism and editorial issues. In fact, the second section ("The Text") is a repertoire of the *varia lectio* offered by this corpus of manuscripts, i.e., the different readings of selected passages that the manuscripts present. Bertelli naturally bases his choice of significant passages on the 396 *loci critici* fixed by Michele Barbi in 1891, integrated with the 477 *loci* considered

by Giorgio Petrocchi for his authoritative edition of the poem (1966–67). The third section consists of the catalogue of the manuscripts proper. The description of the manuscripts is brief but very thorough (shelf mark, place of origin, date, content, material, number and size of folios, size of written space, fasciculation, pricking and ruling, script, decoration, binding, cover, conservation status, history of the manuscript, bibliography). The third section also includes seventy-two tables with photographic reproductions of relevant folios from the manuscripts, which illustrate all the hands documented in the volume. The volume is accompanied by several overview graphs, which help the consultation of the various sections.

The merits of Bertelli's book are many. First, it reaches a higher degree of precision in ascertaining the date and provenance of the manuscripts. Bertelli manages to assign the codices to their specific century quarter. Of the sixty-five manuscripts sampled in the volume, twenty-six receive a more pertinent date and fifteen a more precise determination of their geographic origin, with significant repercussions on what we know about the early circulation of Dante's work. Second, the volume moves toward a crucial reconsideration of the whole manuscript tradition of the *Comedy*. Bertelli shows the necessity of a systematic *recensio* of the whole corpus of manuscripts that accounts for its specific scribal practices. Third, the tables at the end of the volume (and the images dispersed within) allow for a clear visualization of the more technically descriptive segments of the volume. It is difficult to overestimate the importance of such a visual apparatus not only for Dante scholars, but also for the students of manuscript culture and history of the book.

The intended audience of the volume consists primarily of Dante scholars with an expertise in manuscript studies and textual studies. For those able to read its data, the volume sheds light on the circulation and reception of the poem, on the various features of the long-lasting scribal activity around it, and on their possible implications for its readership.

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*Selected Letters*. Isabella d'Este.

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This volume is a monumental addition to the series *The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series*. In physical size alone this collection of letters testifies both to the immense commitment of the editor and translator, Deanna Shemek, to such a daunting project and to the epistolary output of Isabella d'Este (1474–1539). As Marchioness of Mantua, Isabella d'Este kept copybooks of her voluminous corre-