

Tristano multiforme: Studi sulla narrativa arturiana in Italia.

Marie-José Heijkant.

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The *matière de Bretagne*, and the *Tristan* cycle in particular, exerted a long-standing impact on the literature of medieval and early modern Italy. Written around the middle of the thirteenth century, the lengthy Old French romance known as *Tristan en prose* was especially popular in Tuscany and the Veneto and was the source of several rewritings and translations. Marie-José Heijkant's book deals with three of these Italian adaptations, which date between the end of the thirteenth and the first two quarters of the fourteenth century: the *Tristano Riccardiano* (preserved in the Biblioteca Riccardiana in Florence), the *Tristano Panciatichiano* (owing its name to its former owners, the Panciatichi family), and the *Tavola Ritonda*.

Heijkant's book updates, expands, and gathers fourteen essays that the scholar published over the course of thirty years; only three of these had previously appeared in Italian. The book is divided into three main sections: the first focuses on the *Tristano Riccardiano* and *Tristano Panciatichiano*; the second deals with the *Tavola Ritonda*; and the third consists of two essays on narratology and stylistics (chapter 13, on the presence of epistolography in the romance, and chapter 14, on Italian versions of Gawain's character). Heijkant's treatment of the subject is varied and includes analysis of the relationship between textual tradition and plot montage in the *Tristano Riccardiano* (chapter 1); studies on the use of formulaic language (transitions, incipits) and motifs (sieges, forsaken women) in the romance (chapters 2–4); an investigation into the compilatory nature of the *Tristano Panciatichiano* and a study on the topos of the knight's mental obnubilation (chapters 5–6); broader cultural and anthropological inquiries into medieval notions of regality and heroicity (chapters 7–8); and narratological as well as rhetorical studies (chapters 9–12) on secondary characters (Lady of the Lake, Ponzela Gaia, Ferragunze), episodes (the rape of the lady), and literary strategies (the *gab*, or vaunt). This multifocal approach to the various Italian renditions of the *Tristan en prose* is further enriched by the author's attention to the parallel interpretations of the *Tristan* saga in the romance sphere.

Variety is not the only virtue the reader will appreciate in Heijkant's book. The curator of two milestones of Italian philology (Ernesto Giacomo Parodi's edition of the *Tristano Riccardiano* and Filippo Luigi Polidori's edition of the *Tavola Ritonda*), Heijkant displays an impressive knowledge of the literary and legendary materials regarding the matter of Britain in the Italian vernaculars. The author combines the solidity of a rigorously philological approach to the text with a broader sociological interest for the new cultural context in which the Arthurian cycle is interpreted and rewritten. For the new audience of the Italian mercantile society, *Tristan* embodies not only the traditional chivalric (and courtly) values of liberality, courage, honor, and service, but

also the more entrepreneurial (and urban) virtues of prudence and industriousness, as well as “cunning and artistic creativity” (91). As Heijkant shows, “in the exemplary hero finally able to join the elite of Arthurian *societas* in spite of all prejudices against the Cornish, the new ruling class of the Communes could recognize their own aspiration to a higher social status” (25). The Italian context also provides a depository of folkloric and paraliterary materials that add themes and episodes to the intricate narrative of Tristan’s adventures. Without sacrificing clarity of argumentation and exposition, Heijkant demonstrates an intriguing way of retelling stories (very appropriate for this work).

A foreword by Daniela Delcorno Branca briefly introduces the collection and adds cohesion to it. A rich, multilingual bibliography, an *index nominum*, and a *conspectus siglorum* complete the volume. A final note of merit goes to the publishing house (Olschki, of Florence), which continues to provide typographically elegant and critically accurate tools in often-neglected areas of the humanities.

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Italien im Heiligen Land: Typologien frühneuzeitlicher Gründungsnarrative.

Judith Frömmer.

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The book offers a literary analysis of (predominantly) Italian texts related to the Crusades. The initial thesis is based on the observation that the Crusades and their ideal destination, Jerusalem, still produced texts in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in which the figure of the struggle for the Holy Land was transferred to completely different political contexts. It was precisely in Renaissance Italy that such “founding narratives” were in vogue. Judith Frömmer would like to demonstrate how the figurative (i.e., typological in the biblical sense) and teleological character of the Crusade shaped the “structure of the entire Western style of narration” (18). The “chronotope Jerusalem” (the term comes from Mikhail Bakhtin) must be compared with another constellation of space and time prominent in the Middle Ages and Renaissance: the “chronotope Rome.” While Jerusalem stood for the potentially revolutionary, messianic expectation of a new order, which was hardly fulfillable in this world, Rome served as cipher for the counter-revolutionary preservation of order and the postponement of the end of the world.

The relationship between these two chronotopes is explained in chapter 1, with the help of two very different sources: the Ebstorf world map (ca. 1300), on which Jerusalem is graphically and textually staged as the navel of the world, and Petrarch’s *Itinerarium ad sepulcrum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi*, in which Jerusalem, precisely