

apparentemente, come detto, l'assetto delle sestine a quella dei sonetti, nonché dall'uso dei segni di paragrafo alternativamente rossi e blu a segnare l'inizio di strofa come nelle canzoni (previsti anche nelle ultime quattro come assicurato dalla doppia lineetta a margine).

In conclusione, il lavoro di A. non solo ci fornisce notevoli spunti nuovi sull'opera dei tre maggiori autori del Trecento letterario italiano, ma soprattutto ci mostra la coesione, la duttilità e la produttività in termini di acquisizioni a livello scientifico, del metodo da lui utilizzato. Un metodo che ha saputo ben armonizzare non solo le sue dirette *auctoritates* citate in principio, ma, anche, gli spunti migliori della critica e della filologia 'materiale' nonché degli studi codicologico-paleografici degli ultimi anni. Ne risulta un lavoro assai denso, che ha bisogno di una lettura lenta e ruminante, ben difficile da riportare in tutte le sue pieghe e implicazioni in una sola recensione.

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Cristofano Guidini.

*Cantari sulla 'Legenda Aurea' e altri (Rieti, Bibl. Paroniana, MS. I.2.45).*

Attilio Cicchella and Thomas Persico, eds.

Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 2022. 584 pp. €55.00.

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With the foundation of the Mendicant Orders, preaching underwent a process of modernization that changed it deeply. The *sermo modernus* provided a new structure to the speech of preachers and required a similar change in most of the religious literature for lay people. This brought about a new form of hagiographies, the *legendae novae*, abbreviated legends of saints, whose length and structure could be used in preaching to provide an example of holy behavior. Jacopo da Varagine's *Legenda Aurea*, written around 1260, provided just what was needed: the collection of the Italian Dominican preacher gathered hundreds of saints' lives (often reworking stories from Bartholomew of Trent's *Liber epilogorum in gesta sanctorum* and Jean de Mailly's *Abbreviatio in gestis et miraculis sanctorum*), organized them into a liturgical calendar, and harmonized, when possible, multiple different traditions that had spread up to that point. Shortly after that, these hagiographies propagated throughout Christendom, were interpreted in other media, and were finally translated into several vernacular languages. The number of manuscripts still surviving and the adaptations of the collection in different genres testify to their popularity among all social classes. One of those literary forms that adapted legends of saints is the *cantare*, a verse genre in *ottava rima*, primarily used for epic narratives. There are several examples of these vernacular poems, including those that represent the subject of Attilio Cicchella and Thomas Persico's book. This is a critical edition of MS I.2.45, a manuscript composed around 1406 from the Paroniana Library in

Rieti, which collects the *cantari* written by Cristofano Guidini on the *Legenda Aurea*.

This edition opens with two short essays, the Foreword by Concetto del Popolo, and “Chiamiamola ‘letteratura,’ ‘faute de mieux’” by Giuseppe Noto. Both essays aim at placing the *cantari* tradition in the context of popular medieval literature, stressing the importance of the oral execution of the *cantare* and its implications. Noto [p. xxv] underlines how these written texts are the last step of a tradition that sometimes has years, if not centuries, of oral dissemination. Del Popolo [p. xii] reminds us that the meter of the *ottava* allowed for easy memorization, and thus the importance of this process in absorbing a religious message through the innate repetition of poetry. The oral nature of this genre is also the key challenge in working on the critical edition of these kinds of texts. Building on the 1961 De Robertis’s prominent position on the *cantare* and its challenges, the editors are aware of the complexity of working on an edition of this manuscript, and they amply discuss every aspect in their substantial introduction to the text. The “Introduzione” spans over eighty pages and details all the philological and codicological parts of the manuscript, starting with an overview of what is known of the author of the *cantari*. Cristofano (or Cristofaro) Guidini was a notary born shortly before the 1348 plague and is mainly connected with the city of Siena, for which he worked. He met Catherine of Siena and was a strong proponent and supporter of her beatification process (he died, however, in 1410, just one year before the campaign’s success). He translated, from vernacular into Latin, Catherine’s *Dialogo della divina provvidenza* and perhaps other texts. With these *cantari*, Guidini turns in verses several lives of saints, mainly from the *Legenda Aurea*, although personalizing these stories with great freedom. The editors notice how Guidini reduces or eliminates the parts of the *Legenda* that Jacopo wrote for his fellow preachers, including the meaning of names, and strongly abbreviates saints’ lives, focusing more on these stories’ didactic and moral purposes.

As said, most of these *cantari* originate from the *Legenda Aurea*. A more complex challenge arises from any attempt to determine the text of the *Legenda* Guidini had in front of him—if only one. The editors, although admitting that there is no definitive answer, believe that Guidini most probably used a vernacular translation of the *Legenda Aurea* as a source. There are some points of contact with the so-called tradition “B,” from the Siena area, of the vernacular *Legenda*, even though these *cantari* include scenes and elements external to that tradition that suggest a likely work of integration from other texts (impossible to determine if operated by Guidini or his source). After an overview of the literary aspect of these texts, the editors deal with the manuscript in question. Besides necessary information about the codicological aspects of the manuscript, the editors soon notice how the Florentine copyist diminishes the Siennese tracts of the original author, including linguistic elements of his city of origin. The copyist, who identifies himself in the text, is Paolo di Iacopo di Guido Puccini, from San Giovanni Valdarno, another notary connected to Florence. Besides these *cantari*, he copied a *Divine Comedy* and two related manuscripts. We do not know much about him besides this, nor the whole plan for this transcription.

After this thorough introduction, the book finally deals with the edition of the manuscript and its sixty-two *cantari* – with additional ones divided into two appendixes. Each *cantare* has extensive notes, with an introductory explanation of the day, the general structure of the *cantare*, and, more importantly, the direct or indirect comparison with the source (mostly the *LA*). When needed, the editors also include the critical apparatus.

As the editors affirm, the study of Guidini's *cantari* is relevant because they testify to an essential evolution of the genre and how it included stories with a religious end goal. In the late Middle Ages, preaching took many forms, usually from preachers intending to rival the lay literature of storytellers and poets. It started thus to expand into less orthodox genres so as to have a larger and more diverse audience. With Guidini, however, we see a more ambitious plan to present these legends in a verse form destined to have even greater success in the next century. The edition of this manuscript is an excellent tool for medieval literature scholars because it provides them with unique and, thus, significant texts of reception in the multifaceted world of medieval hagiographies. It also serves historians of Italian languages thanks to the significant interaction between the Sienese and Florentine of the manuscript and a thorough analysis by the editors.

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Albertino Mussato.

*De lite inter Naturam et Fortunam.*

Bianca Facchini, ed. and trans.

Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2021. 372 pp. €76.00.

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This is a most welcome contribution for all scholars of Latin medieval literature and philosophy. Bianca Facchini provides us with the first critical edition of Albertino Mussato's (1261–1329) *De lite inter naturam et fortunam*, along with an Italian translation and a generous introduction. Mussato's *De lite* is a dialogue between Nature and Fortune, in which they discuss their respective spheres of influence. The composition dates to the most mature phase of Mussato's lifetime. In the introduction, Facchini provides compelling arguments dating it to the year 1326, that is, a little earlier than suggested by previous scholars. The text, as it has been handed down to us, comprises five parts. It begins with a prologue (§ 1–2), followed by a description of the oneiric narrative framework of the work (§ 3–6). The central and most extensive part features the conversation between Nature and Fortune (§ 7–240). This is followed by the apparition of Christ (§ 241–249), who brings the work to completion by revealing the real nature of fate and free will (§ 250–268). Only the central part is developed in dialogic form, the others being laid out in monologic prose. The *De lite* belongs to the literary genre known as *altercatio* (or *lis*), which was very successful in the Latin Middle Ages. As a dialogue fictitiously taking place