

REVIEWS

Il latino di Dante.

Paolo Chiesa and Federica Favero, eds.

Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2022. 171 pp. €34.00.

Il latino di Dante brings together some of the contributions of the 23rd annual meeting of the *Società Internazionale per lo Studio del Medioevo Latino*, SISMEL (December 2020). It features five essays on topics ranging from the ambitious *Vocabolario Dantesco Latino* to the analysis of Dante's letters vis-à-vis the *artes dictaminis*, the neologisms and hapax of *Monarchia*, the language of the *Eclogues*, and Dante's juridic Latin. *Il latino di Dante* has two evident merits: first, through its rich apparatus of footnotes, it offers an updated and comprehensive bibliography on the studies of Dante's Latin; second, it presents effective approaches and directions for new research on the topic.

The first essay, "Nel cantiere del *Vocabolario Dantesco Latino* (VDL): le ragioni e lo sviluppo di uno strumento necessario," by Gabriella Albanese, presents the first accomplishments of the team which is developing the VDL, highlighting the importance of this free-access research tool. By delving into a series of case studies, Albanese effectively shows the importance of a combined investigation of Dante's Latin and vernacular vocabulary. Her contribution effectively calls for an "interaction between lexicography, philology, and hermeneutics" (41), today more achievable than ever thanks to digital tools such as the *Vocabolario Dantesco* and the *Vocabolario Dantesco Latino*. Her discussion of Dante's knowledge and use of medieval lexicographers (35-41) is particularly interesting: what emerges from her survey is that Dante's Latin is relatively rife with terms that are not found in classical and medieval Latin outside of medieval dictionaries, before and after their occurrence in Dante's works. Much in line with Albanese's line of inquiry is Riccardo Macchioro's contribution on the neologisms and hapax in the *Monarchia*, entitled "Indagini lessicografiche sul latino di Dante: *graeca*, tradizione e innovazione nel lessico della *Monarchia*.". Also informed by the VDL, one of the most fascinating conclusions of Macchioro's analysis is that Dante's creative relationship with Latin led him not only to form new words but also to recast old ones by attaching brand new meanings to them. Among the interesting points raised by Macchioro, I would like to highlight his discussion of the key position that Dante's neologisms often occupy in his works, that is, in "contexts of strong rhetorical connotation" (91).

No analysis of Dante's Latin neologisms can escape a discussion of their role in *cursus*. While both Albanese and Macchioro linger over Dante's *cursus*, Benoît Grévin's essay, "Reintegrare il *dictamen* di Dante nel suo contesto stilistico. Ricette e proposte per un'analisi formale dell'epistolario (I-XII)," most explicitly investigates Dante's use of *cursus*, especially in relation to common *formulae* and the

examples set by papal, imperial, and communal letters, as well as the ones collected in the *summae dictaminis*. Grévin presents the results of research conducted on a database of around 3500 texts that he interrogated in search of formulas, syntagms, and collocations that resurface in Dante's letters. His work proves that Dante absorbed scribal practices typical of different 13th-century *milieux*. While Grévin demonstrates the fruitfulness of an analysis that resituates Dante's Latin in the context of 13th-century letter writing, Diego Quaglioni proves that in order to understand Dante's political Latin, we cannot overlook the juridical Latin of his time. His essay reveals how many *cruces* of the *Monarchia* find a solution without any need to amend the text when we interrogate the legal sources with which Dante shows incredible familiarity.

Marco Petoletti is the author of the only contribution dealing with Dante's single attempt at Latin poetry. His essay "Il latino delle *Egloghe*" discusses some unique challenges faced by the scholars that study the Latin of the *Eclogues*, the limited corpus available, for example, and the conservative nature of a genre explicitly inspired by Virgil. Interestingly, Petoletti proposes supplying a textual interpretation for a technical aspect, such as Dante's tendency to make the syllable long in front of a *cesura pentemimera* (a caesura after the first syllable of the third foot). As Petoletti argues for in a line of the second *Eclogue*, such elongation might aim to place particular emphasis on a key word (132). This conversation between form and content, technique and meaning certainly succeeds in proving the relevance of a thorough investigation of Dante's Latin, not only for philologists and linguists, but also for scholars and critics with various degrees of interest in Dante's work.

Il latino di Dante is a small yet dense volume that begs readers to engage more closely with Dante's complex diglossia. Its contributions reveal that Dante is perfectly capable of bending the strict rules of Latin to his political, poetic, and rhetorical advantage. At the same time, these essays bring to the surface the wealth of classical and, most importantly, medieval models, interlocutors, and sources that nourished Dante's language and style. Ultimately, *Il latino di Dante* reveals that there is still much work to be done to fully understand Dante's cultural and linguistic background.

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La lirica italiana. Un lessico fondamentale (secoli XIII-XIV).

Lorenzo Geri, Marco Grimaldi, and Nicolò Maldina, eds.

Rome: Carocci, 2021. 343 pp. €29.00.

Despite the title of the volume, *La lirica italiana. Un lessico fondamentale (secoli XIII-XIV)* is not a lexicon of early Italian lyric. While it is conceived as a collection of 20 contributions organized alphabetically, only a few of its entries form a lexicon