

accounts of or by the period's well-known playgoers (e.g., Simon Forman). His discussion of lesser-known plays in addition to canonical ones, however, provides critical insight into England's theatrical networks. Part 2's examination of how drama negotiated relationships between chivalric ideals and commerce is another especially valuable contribution to early modern scholarship. Those pursuing early modern genre, maritime, and theater studies will likely find *Dramatic Geography* sophisticated, informative, and thought provoking.

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*Nell'arte narrativa di Giovanni Boccaccio.* Giuseppe Chiecchi.

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Giuseppe Chiecchi's volume takes us inside Boccaccio's narrative art by investigating the genesis and evolution of patterns, figures, and spaces structurally functional to his literary inventions. Following a methodological premise, seven chapters explore Boccaccio's narrative "machinerie" by focusing on his vernacular works. The book offers valuable insight and stimulates reflection on various aspects of Boccaccio's writing technique: from the narrative use of the epistolary genre (chapter 1); to the analysis of "narrative spaces" triggering narration itself, as in the descriptions of the gardens or of the plague (chapters 2 and 4); to the construction of a space surrounding and defining characters and narrators. Freedom of invention and suspension of moral judgment characterize these spaces, which give origin to other possible narrative transformations, as is the case with the character of Fiammetta (chapters 3 and 6).

The first chapter examines Boccaccio's exploitation of the narrative potentiality of the epistolary genre as a form of "dialogue in absence." Chiecchi shows how Boccaccio's technical apprenticeship in the epistolary *dictamen* influenced his use of the letter, which becomes an integral part of the narrative structure of almost all his vernacular works. From a simple means of communication among characters in *Filocolo* or *Filostrato*, the letter gradually evolves to cover the entire narrative in the *Elegy of Lady Fiammetta*, and eventually becomes a structural element in the *Decameron*, where the book itself can be interpreted as a letter the writer addresses to his readers. The second chapter, "Dal *Filocolo* al *Decameron*," shows Boccaccio's transformation of natural space into a metaphoric place of literary invention. In the *Decameron*, the topos of the *locus amoenus*, combined with the theology of the *hortus conclusus*, redefines the relationship between artificial and natural landscapes as one of physical and ideal continuity. The proximity of the *brigata's* gardens to the plagued city suggests that these two spaces are complementary rather than antithetical, as in the tradition of the garden as Edenic space of nostalgic evasion. In Chiecchi's view, this reflects

Boccaccio's new vision of the relationship between humankind and nature. The novelle of the garden in winter (*Filocolo* 4.3 and *Decameron* 10.5) are exemplary of the gradual evolution of the garden's function as vehicle of metaliterary analysis.

The third chapter investigates Boccaccio's creative use of classical myth and its corresponding literary sources in constructing the character of Fiammetta as protagonist, narrator, and "heroine of sorrow" in the *Elegy of Lady Fiammetta*. The use of ancient and modern feminine myths of unhappy love, such as the Ovidian heroines or Francesca da Rimini, develops in a reiterate narrative pattern to define Fiammetta as elegiac exemplary figure. Projected in a modern psychological narrative, Fiammetta uses the myth to consolidate her figure as a modern heroine of grief, subordinating the tragic to the needs of the elegiac. The examination of Boccaccio's narrative "machinerie" continues in the following chapter, which is dedicated to the plague and the novelle of Andreuccio da Perugia (2.4) and Ghismonda (4.1). Expanding on Branca's idea of the structural necessity of the plague in the *Decameron*, Chiecchi shows how Boccaccio utilizes the horrifying spectacle of the plagues city to dramatize the characters' encounter with death and the obscure forces inhabiting the human mind. The plague justifies both action and narration, opening a narrative space that provides the hermeneutic foundation of the *Decameron* itself. Andreuccio's and Ghismonda's encounters with death, in comic and tragic keys, respectively, could not be completely understood outside the field of narratological tensions Boccaccio is able to create by building on his initial dramatization of the plague.

Chiecchi dedicates his last three chapters to the genesis of the narrative mechanisms of three novelle. Chapter 5 follows Boccaccio's reelaboration of novella 62 in *Decameron* 3.1; chapter 6 exposes the duality of Fiammetta's character as *senhal* of the author in giving voice to both Florentine and Neapolitan cultures in novella 3.6. The last chapter illustrates Boccaccio's use of "amphibious language" as a structural element shaping the meaning of novella 6.9, where Bolognese and Florentine wisdom are critically set in dialogue. Chiecchi's is an elegantly written volume that contributes significantly to our understanding of Boccaccio's art. It appeals not just to the scholars and students of Boccaccio, but also to all those interested in gaining insight on the art and craft of writing.

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*Rethinking Gaspara Stampa in the Canon of Renaissance Poetry*. Unn Falkeid and Aileen A. Feng, eds.

Women and Gender in the Early Modern World. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015. xiv + 222 pp. \$104.95.

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This rich and well-organized collection of scholarly essays entirely dedicated to the poetry of Gaspara Stampa (ca. 1523–54) represents an important step for studies on