

Interpreting and Judging Petrarch's "Canzoniere" in Early Modern Italy.

Maiko Favaro, ed.

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In the ever-expanding field of research on the reception of Petrarch in the early modern period and beyond and in the wake of the recent UK project Petrarch Commentary and Exegesis in Renaissance Italy, c. 1350–c. 1650 (in which some of the contributors participated), this volume presents examples of the variety of the vast amount of materials that remain to be studied and exemplifies some of the critical approaches through which they may be examined. Over nine chapters covering a wide chronological span, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, the contributors analyze various genres, from treatises, speeches, and editions of Petrarch's *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Canzoniere*) to academic lectures, a commentary, and a journal.

In his introduction, Maiko Favaro outlines, in broad strokes and in a limpidly clear fashion, the commentary tradition from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, before providing an overview of the book. There follows his own contribution, in which he offers an analysis of Petrarch's problematic, ambivalent, and contradictory authority in matters of love in an array of treatises from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. In chapter 2, Cristina Acucella deals with the dispute between Girolamo Ruscelli and Ludovico Dolce through a comparison of their two editions of the *Fragmenta*, both of which appeared in 1554, focusing on their differing editorial choices, paratextual materials, and philological questions as well as their relationship with the Aldine edition of 1501. Chapter 3, by Guglielmo Barucci, centers on the figure of Laura as it is deployed in and emerges from an examination of two sixteenth-century Florentine speeches by Simone della Barba (1554) and Francesco de' Vieri (1580). He shows how these texts construct a pseudobiographical portrait of Laura and how she is utilized by Della Barba in a broad discussion of nobility and by De' Vieri as an exemplary model for modern women.

For his part, in chapter 4, Giacomo Comiati examines Celio Magno's *Prefazione sopra il Petrarca* (ca. 1558) as a product of discussions of poetry and poetics in the Accademia della Fama in Venice, its relationship to Bernardo Tasso's *Ragionamento de la poesia* (1562), and its influence on Magno's own poetry. Also in the context of academic production, this time in Brescia, in chapter 5, Simona Oberto interrogates the poetic anthology *Rime degli Accademici Occulti* (1568), where she finds what she terms a "doctrinization" of Petrarchism. Moving to Perugia, Lorenzo Sacchini in chapter 6 analyzes the manuscripts of the lectures of Gregorio Anastagi delivered at the Accademia degli Eccentrici, their focus on technical aspects of Petrarch's poetry, their different forms, and their intended audience, the reader and potential writer.

The last three chapters take us into the more uncharted waters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Chapters 7 and 8, by Andrea Lazzarini and Laura Benedetti respectively, center on Alessandro Tassoni's *Considerazioni sopra le Rime del Petrarca* (1609). Lazzarini's focus is on the history of its composition and its three editions, the hybridity of

the text (commentary vs. noncommentary), and the author's polemical critique of Petrarch reminiscent of the burlesque commentary tradition. Benedetti's interest is in the controversy generated by the *Considerazioni* between Tassoni and Giuseppe degli Aromatari, who undertook a defense of Petrarch by invoking the authority of Aristotle, attracting the attention of the Inquisition. The final chapter consists of an analysis by Giacomo Vagni of an eighteenth-century journal, Apostolo Zeno's *Giornale de' letterati italiani* (1710–18), and its vindication of the Italian lyric and Petrarch and Petrarchism in particular.

As is evident in this brief summary, this volume provides a window into the immense and multiform exegetical tradition of Petrarch's *Fragmenta* beyond the well-known and studied major sixteenth-century commentaries. The wide range of genres explored by the contributors—in both manuscript and print, familiar and unknown—give us a sense of the richness of the materials that constitute the plurisecular history of Petrarch exegesis. The analyses offered from a variety of perspectives broaden our understanding of the diverse ways in which the poet was interpreted and evaluated over a span of three centuries. The result in part of the cataloguing and digitization project mentioned above, this book is an excellent example of the many possibilities for future research in the field of Petrarch's reception.

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Don Quixote in the Context of Modern Chinese Culture. Zhi Li.
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Li's bracing and insightful book *Don Quixote in the Context of Modern Chinese Culture* explores the Chinese reception of Cervantes's masterpiece from the appearance of its first Chinese translation in 1904 to 1978 in relation to the evolution of modern Chinese culture. It is appropriate for her study to focus on this period, as in this period dominated by literary instrumentalism, Chinese culture had the most profound influence on the translations and interpretations of *Don Quixote*. The chapters are well organized and very informative. There is much to commend in the author's method of combining historical analysis with cultural analysis. Li is intent on mapping the shaping factors that bore upon *Don Quixote's* Chinese reception. Another notable strength of the book is that translation is given ample attention. Li is particularly strong on the new meanings generated by the vitalizing process of translation.

Chapter 2 explores the reception of *Don Quixote* from 1904 to the New Culture Movement (1915–23), a period dominated by reformist culture. Particularly impressive is Li's examination of Lin Shu's widely influential translation. By transforming Quixote and Sancho into self-serving, opportunistic partisans, Li observes perceptively, the socially minded Lin Shu satirized the toxic partisanship of the early Republican era.