

*Le cronache volgari in Italia: Atti della VI Settimana di studi medievali (Roma, 13–15 maggio 2015)*. Giampaolo Francesconi and Massimo Miglio, eds.

Nuovi studi storici 105. Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 2017. 398 pp. €30.

---

This volume presents seventeen essays on late medieval and early modern historiography by some of its most important students, based predominantly in Rome and Naples. One of the book's more noteworthy aspects is its equal treatment of northern and southern Italian writing. While this is no innovation among Italians, it offers anglophone readers an important corrective to decades of publications that discuss the historiography of the Mezzogiorno peripherally, if at all, and then largely within the context of Norman history or of Renaissance humanism. Recent examples, such as Dale's *Chronicle History* and Witt's *Two Latin Cultures*, have continued the themes and dichotomies set by Cochrane in the 1980s. This collection also lays to rest Green's normative assumption of this late medieval historiography's "naive character." Here instead are essays that discuss works generated in Florence, elsewhere in Tuscany, in the northern communes, in Rome, and in the Mezzogiorno. One of this book's great merits is its comparative approach: by methodology, geography, authorial class, and genre. The research collected here also breaks down the standard divisions of medieval historiography into annal, chronicle, and history. It demonstrates the fluidity of genre and rhetorical modes and the openness of late medieval and early modern Italian writing to many forms of verbal and visual communication.

These forms could include traditional written narratives; "scritture esposte" (353), whether epigraphy, the *didascalìa* of public painting, or graffiti; the archival; memoirs and *ricordanze*; and an orality that flowed from chancellery and court to the street and the private house, and back again via networks of gossip, rumor, and the intermediation of the notarial class. These essays discuss both long-standing philological issues of textuality, authorship, and influence and new theoretical questions on audience, reception, and cultures of transmission.

An introduction by Gian Mario Anselmi focuses on narrative construction and the well-trodden issue of Dante as historian. The book is then divided into four parts. Part 1, "Testo, codice, ecdotica," addresses philological issues and contains essays by Francesco Montuori on the construction of the Neapolitan *Cronaca di Partenope*, Marcello Barbato on vernacular historiography up to Villani, and Rosario Coluccia on linguistic analysis of historical texts. Part 2, "Geografie," provides detailed analyses of local historiographies. After Giorgio Cracco's essay on Dante's historical sources, this section offers comprehensive research and current thinking on historiography in Florence (Giuseppe Porta); Tuscany, including Siena and its *contado* (Giampaolo Francesconi); Rome (Riccardo Gualdo and Tommaso di Carpegna Falconieri); and Naples (Chiara De Caprio). Part 3, "Contatti e ambienti di produzione," takes a comparative and sociological approach to his-

toriographies, whether discussing notarial (Marino Zabbia), chancellery (Francesco Senatore), mendicant (Giulia Barone), or university (Carla Frova) forms. Part 4, “Incroci di genere,” brings together some concluding thoughts on outstanding issues that cut across genres. These include memorialists (Raul Mordenti); public writing (Paolo D’Achille); and a final essay comparing the humanist historiographies of Bruni and Machiavelli (James Hankins).

One of the more impressive features of this collection is the interaction among disciplines and methodologies and an openness to recent theoretical frames. These range from French theory on textuality to current insights derived from the digital turn—both for the digital’s impact on research and for its metaphorical value in analyzing the fluidity and multipolarity of late medieval writing in Italy and its “cultura dell’informazione” (297). Hankins presents a classic textual analysis of Bruni’s and Machiavelli’s interpretations of Villani and their implications for civic and political history. Montuori, De Caprio, Senatore, and D’Achille offer sound philological method and new insights into the impact of memory, orality, archival culture, and visibility. Zabbia makes clear that distinctions between northern and southern historiography begin to break down when one investigates sociologies of texts: notarial cultures were remarkably consistent and interactive throughout the Italian Peninsula, for example.

This volume also pays tribute to Massimo Miglio, whose research, writing, lecturing, and teaching have been fundamental to late medieval studies. His directorship of the Istituto Storico has fostered a steady stream of important and far-reaching conferences on all aspects of medieval and early modern history and major publications derived from them. Alongside Dale’s *Chronicling History*, this volume offers researchers an invaluable and comprehensive introduction to current work on late medieval and early modern Italian historiography.

Ronald G. Musto, *Italica Press, New York, NY and Bristol, UK*

*The Routledge Research Companion to Early Modern Spanish Women Writers.*

Nieves Baranda and Anne J. Cruz, eds.

London: Routledge, 2018. xvi + 368 pp. \$240.

---

*The Routledge Research Companion to Early Modern Spanish Women Writers* does exactly what its title states: it acts as a research companion for any scholar of Spain’s early modern period. More specifically, the volume provides an in-depth and up-to-date overview of early modern Spanish women writers and their works. The editors, Nieves Baranda, and Anne J. Cruz, have compiled twenty-two articles, all written by scholars who are leaders in their respective fields. These articles focus on early modern Spanish women writers as a collective force that, together, contributed to the literary and extra-