

clusion. Why would an anachronistic Trecento fresco be preferred to a prestigious fresco cycle by Mantegna that provided suitable models?

This book is a focused and extremely scholarly study intended for specialists in early Renaissance manuscript and printed book illustrations. A census of extant copies of the 1476 *Libri degli uomini famosi*, color plates, a comprehensive bibliography, and indexes complete this learned contribution.

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Petrarch's "Fragmenta": The Narrative and Theological Unity of "Rerum vulgarium fragmenta." Thomas E. Peterson.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016. xi + 330 pp. \$75.

Thomas Peterson's book is a welcome addition to North American scholarship and criticism on Petrarch's Italian poetry. Differences between scholarship and criticism in Italy and their equivalents west of the Atlantic are well defined. As Peterson understands it, the Italian variety pays serious attention "to bridging the gap between philology and criticism by considering the work integrally, connecting its formal structure and the stages of its composition to the interrelated questions of narrative and theology" (4). Peterson aims to present an Italianist view of Petrarch grounded in the poet's late medieval world and shaped by its literary, cultural, and theological values. The result is a study of his poetry that non-Italianist scholars and critics of his work should digest.

Peterson insists that perspectives for viewing the texts are embedded in manifold layers of textuality itself: "With the title *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta*, Petrarch indicates the work's materiality, multiplicity, and linguistic character" (22). From this angle Peterson accommodates modern perspectives to medieval ones. "More than a new interpretation of the *Fragmenta*," he writes, his goal is to provide "an accurate reading, situated in the author's philological reality" (25). An important part of the evidence is the order of the 366 poems as they first appeared and were then rearranged into a sequence over time. To make sense of it, Peterson cites the great philological achievements of Italian scholars in weighing textual variants, examining revisions, and establishing the compositional order of the poems as opposed to their narrative placement. He quotes extensively from their work and translates his quotations for the widest possible anglophone readership. Included are Marco Santagata, Giuseppe Savoca, Rosanna Bettarini, Stefano Carrai, Paolo Cherchi, Enrico Fenzi, Michelangelo Picone, and Amedeo Quondam, among others.

At the same time Peterson assimilates their findings to semiotics and structuralist theory pioneered by Roman Jakobson, Roland Barthes, Gérard Genette, Cesare Segre, Maria Corti, Yuri Lotman, and others. A key concept is the division of narratological roles among the author, or historical Petrarch; the narrator, or speaking voice that in-

flects their articulation; and the character, or represented personage of the lover whose experiences are recounted. The book's seven chapters examine their tension by parceling the *Fragmenta* into clusters defined by thematic focal points. Poems 1–10 constitute an extended proem that introduces the collection, followed by a dozen poems that announce related themes (chapter 1). Poems 22–100 circulate various mythic prototypes for the lover's experience of temporality and erotic desire (chapter 2). Poems 92–124 sustain a language and expression of foreboding and lament that frame the speaker's sense of history (chapter 3). Poems 125–83 express his attempt to distance himself from worldly history through self-awareness (chapter 4). Poems 184–263 depict his movement toward penitence and an accommodation with temporality (chapter 5). Poems 264–318 mingle his distress and longing with the healing power of religious consolation and hope (chapter 6). Poems 319–66 ascend toward an atemporal experience of time, devotion, and consecration (chapter 7).

This framework generates impressive readings of individual poems, especially of longer ones. The consideration of sestina 22 and canzone 23 as a dyad on the natural world and destabilizing transformation is particularly effective. I have to admit that I've never paid much attention to the hermetic *frottola* 105, but Peterson's careful examination of its obscure proverbs convinces me that there's more to the biblical subtext of this poem than has met my eye. The identification of themes in canzoni 125 through 129 linked to the speaker's separation from Laura shows how canzone 128 on contemporary Italian history is integrated with the other poems on the lover's personal history. Likewise the linkage of canzone 207 to sonnets that follow it through connections to *De Otio Religioso* and *De Vita Solitaria* proves deeply rewarding. The exegesis of canzone 366 as recapitulating many themes in the *Fragmenta* presents a solid case central to Peterson's book as a whole.

If there's any criticism that I might register, it would be that to defend the kind of unity posited at the beginning Peterson would—strictly speaking—need to account for the revision and placement of every single poem in the collection. While not an impossibility, the result would be a book, if not unwritable, most likely unreadable. Faced with choices to limit his discursive analysis, Peterson makes appropriate decisions. But this is a cavil on my part. The substance of Peterson's book is timely, admirable, and useful for a broad and diverse readership.

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