

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 plagued 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.

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

the Venetian poet and singer, on Renaissance women writers, and on Petrarchism. This book is a useful and important follow-up to the bilingual edition of Stampa's *Rime*, based on the 1554 edition, edited by Jane Tylus and published in 2010 in The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe series. The aim of the ten chapters of the volume under review is to offer an in-depth analysis of themes, language, and specific aspects of Stampa's poetry within and beyond the Petrarchist canon, in relation to Stampa's cultural context and network. Therefore, the volume offers a perspective that definitely overcomes the traditional critical tendency to prioritize Stampa's life and loves in the analysis of her poetic production. One of the aims of the book is to "reclaim Stampa's status as a poet and a major figure on the canon of Renaissance literature" (9), but it also reflects on the reasons why this status was not yet recognized, and on how Stampa was previously read and received.

The volume is divided into three thematic sections. The first part, "The Sublime," investigates Stampa's relationship with the sublime and contemporary Neoplatonism. Jane Tylus analyzes the interconnections between Stampa and the Greek poet-musician Sappho. She considers Stampa's understanding of Sappho and her use of the sublime, as well as the way in which the reception of the just-rediscovered Sappho influenced the reception of Stampa's *Rime*. Unn Falkeid underlines that Stampa's sublime, which includes elements of realism, is closer to medieval Neoplatonism and Franciscan spirituality than to Ficinian Neoplatonism. Federico Schneider reflects on Stampa's concept of poetry based on love pains and pathos due to a "sublime cause," in relation to Bembo's Petrarchism, underlining the importance given by Stampa to the ethical purpose of love pains in poetry and its aim to move the reader.

The following four chapters discuss "Real, Virtual, and Imagined Communities" in Stampa's *Rime*. Aileen A. Feng examines female rivalry and envy, and how female homosociality is represented. She argues that Stampa transformed female *invidia* into a positive and productive component in writing poetry, subverting its traditional negative attributes. Ann Rosalind Jones investigates how the theme of jealousy is represented in Stampa's poetry in relation to her lover, Collaltino di Collalto; Angela Capodivacca discusses the poetic exchange between Stampa and Hyppolita Mirtilla, demonstrating that it is fictional and that it has to be considered for its role in the economy of Stampa's *Canzoniere*, rather than as an actual example of female friendship. Through an exam of her network and the contemporary literati mentioned in her *Rime*, William J. Kennedy underlines the professionalism of Stampa as a poet, in opposition to her reception as an amateur, already encouraged in the princeps edition of her *Rime*, published posthumously. The chapters included in the last part, "Personae," consider Stampa's self-representations. Ulrike Schneider examines the way in which Stampa plays with different identities and roles, arguing that this implied a reflection on the fictional status of poetry. Veronica Andreani analyzes the rhetorical strategies used by Stampa to construct a poetical self-portrait, showing the role played by her representations of mythical and literary figures of unhappy female lovers, and how she rewrote the

concept of love itself. In the final chapter, Troy Tower reads the choice of Stampa's pseudonym, Anassilla, inspired by the Latin name of the river Piave, from an ecocritical perspective, emphasizing its interconnections with the environment, with her beloved, with her status as poet and lover, and with poetry.

All the chapters include close readings of different aspects of Stampa's *Rime*, giving a picture of the author and her writings that is certainly more complex and open to different levels of reading than it used to be. The book is, therefore, a stimulating read for scholars and students interested in Italian Renaissance literature and culture and in women writers.

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The Refracted Muse: Literature and Optics in Early Modern Spain.

Enrique García Santo-Tomás.

Trans. Vincent Barletta. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017. xvi + 308 pp. \$45.

Vincent Barletta's exemplary translation of Enrique García Santo-Tomás's 2015 *La musa refractada* bridges two troublesome gaps in early modern European studies. García Santo-Tomás's monograph considers the interplay between Spain's literary production during the seventeenth century and significant scientific discourses, discoveries, and controversies of that period; discerning the connections between treatises and texts requires an interdisciplinary familiarity with both, which few scholars command. In turn, Barletta makes this ambitious, fascinating book accessible to scholars and students who may be less likely to add critical work available only in Spanish to their own bibliographies.

The Refracted Muse's focus (no pun intended) is the impact of the science of optics and of the lens-based technologies its early modern advances made possible, including those utilized in eyeglasses, spyglasses, and, of course, telescopes. Due to Galileo's vigorous efforts, the latter circulated swiftly throughout European political and intellectual circles. Such magnifying devices became gifts exchanged among the wealthy and powerful, even as they allowed scientists and natural philosophers to observe the cosmos more closely than ever before, sometimes contradicting existing beliefs concerning, for example, the moon's surface or the orbits of planets. While ground lenses in telescopes enabled examination of the heavens, in spyglasses and eyeglasses they also provided new perspectives at closer range. At all distances, innovations in optics rendered visible the previously unseen and imperceptible; long accepted and confidently taught theories were discovered to rest on optical illusions deceiving the naked eye. These inventions also offered new metaphors of vision and sight to writers of the Spanish Baroque, a period preoccupied with the convergences and oppositions of appearances and truth.