

**Guido Bonsaver, Alessandro Carlucci, and Matthew Reza, eds.
Italy and the USA: Cultural Change through Language and
Narrative**

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la tradizione classica e volgare introducendovi una prospettiva di genere che conferma la complessa natura metamorfica del modello ermeneutico proposto dalla scrittura femminile (44). Proprio nell'ottica di una tale operazione ideologica, Gomez e Galli Stampino analizzano il debito intertestuale dell'*Amore innamorato et impazzato* anche nei confronti delle *Metamorfosi* di Ovidio, della *Psychomachia* di Prudenzio, della *Genealogia deorum gentilium* di Boccaccio, della *Divina commedia* di Dante, ed infine della breve *Allegoria della Gerusalemme liberata* di Torquato Tasso (1576). Quest'ultima opera, con le sue istanze marcatamente religiose e contemplative, rappresenta il modello principale dell'allegoria che accompagna ogni canto del poema; la Marinella declina tale modello in chiave filogina ed autopromozionale, al fine di affermare la propria reputazione di autrice ed intellettuale in un clima culturale, quello seicentesco, sempre più diffidente nei confronti delle donne scrittrici (16). L'operazione della Marinella dovette riscuotere un certo successo se, come ipotizzato nella sezione "Afterlife" (45–47), il suo poema poté esercitare una qualche influenza sull'*Adone* di Marino.

Ispirate dal coraggio della stessa Marinella nell'operare una continua metamorfosi di idee e modelli letterari (xviii), Gomez e Galli Stampino hanno realizzato una traduzione fedele, per quanto possibile, allo stile dell'autrice ed accessibile al lettore contemporaneo di madrelingua inglese. Ne risulta una prosa fluida e di piacevole lettura, contraddistinta da chiarezza sintattica e coerenza lessicale: requisiti quanto mai indispensabili in un'edizione monolingue. Il carattere didascalico delle note e l'uniformità grafica delle pagine, in cui ogni ottava è numerata e ben distinta dalla seguente, hanno il merito di rendere fruibile ad un ampio pubblico di lettori un'opera poco studiata dalla critica contemporanea, apportando un contributo significativo alla comprensione dell'*opera omnia* della Marinella.

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Guido Bonsaver, Alessandro Carlucci, and Matthew Reza, eds. *Italy and the USA: Cultural Change through Language and Narrative. Italian Perspectives*, vol. 44. Cambridge: Legenda, 2019. Pp. 282. ISBN 9781781888759.

Italy and the USA makes an invaluable contribution to the field of Cultural History. It examines how reciprocal contact between Italy and the USA in the twentieth century has influenced society (e.g., language, literature, and film) at both an

individual and social level. A cross-disciplinary volume comprised of fifteen chapters arranged into four sections, the editors point out that their “approach is not to group the chapters by discipline, but rather to order them chronologically and according to scope, to better allow a dialogue between topics, and provide a clearer picture of the processes of cultural contact that have been taking place” (6). Thus, because the breadth of the book varies greatly and successfully maps a vast area of study, it is foreseeable that it will appeal to academics from a wide range of disciplines.

The first section, “Historical Contexts and Channels of Contact,” is composed of five chapters authored by Matthew Reza, Virginia Pulcini, Giancarlo Schirru, Giorgio Bertellini, and Teresa Fiore. In Chapter One, “Italian Storytelling Memories: Personal Recollections of Fairy and Folk Tales in the USA,” Reza examines the extent to which Italian *oral* fairy and folk tales survived or disappeared in the wake of mass migration to the USA around the early 1900s. He relies on various recorded formats (e.g., autobiographies and interviews) in order to shed light on the fate of Italian tales in the lives of first, second, and third generation Italian Americans. Reza concludes that the first parent generation recounts the tales they carry with them from their communities in Italy. However, the second generation engages with new materials that stray from the original tales. Amongst third generation participants, fairy tales from Italy contribute minimally to their identity formation: “They are no longer the bearers of a tradition but learn about it with a more objective focus through cataloguing tales as part of a university assignment” (27). Reza notes that English is the preferred language through which tales are passed down from one generation to the next.

The second section, “From the Late Nineteenth Century to the Second World War,” consists of three chapters by Luca Cottini, Guido Bonsaver, and Manuela Di Franco. In Chapter Eight, “US Culture and Fascist Italy: The Case of *Omnibus* (1937–1939),” Di Franco delves into the illustrated magazine *Omnibus*, founded in 1937, in order to illuminate the Fascist regime’s ambivalent attitude towards the United States, a position that fluctuated between admiration and disapproval. More specifically, she explores the Fascist regime’s complex view of the USA in relation to the people of Italy’s affinity for American culture. Between 1937 and 1939, the magazine published articles, advertisements, and photos related to the USA. In particular, readers were attracted to Hollywood (stars and cinema) while fascist propaganda “condemned US civilization variously as decadent, dominated by machines, or characterized by a lack of history” (127). Thus, while on the one hand the magazine glorified Hollywood, on the other hand it

often ridiculed the USA. Nonetheless, *Omnibus's* frequent references to American culture reflect the extent to which it derived inspiration from the USA, which ultimately influenced post-war culture in Italy.

The third section, "From the Second World War to the Twenty-First Century," is comprised of three chapters by Charles L. Leavitt IV, Rachel E. Love, and Federico Faloppa. In Chapter Nine, "The Forbidden City: Tombolo Between American Occupation and Italian Imagination," Leavitt re-examines the importance of Tombolo in Italian cultural history. He engages closely with Silvio Micheli's *Paradiso maligno* (1948) in order to vividly portray the effect of Tombolo on the Italian imagination. A pine forest and military encampment to which Italian prostitutes (*segnorine*) flocked for US dollars, "Tombolo began to figure as a symbol for all of the depredations of the post-war period" (145). The prostitutes who frequented Tombolo largely catered to African-American soldiers, and as such, "the prostitution and black marketeering in Tombolo were framed in overtly racial and often racist terms" (144). Italian society's infatuation with Tombolo is reflected in the many references to it in post-WWII literature and other cultural discourse. However, despite the public's interest in Tombolo, political authorities in Italy sought to censure it and cast it from consciousness. Leavitt highlights the US racial regime's insidious presence in Italy during US occupation. He frames Tombolo as a "contact zone" "for the competing racial regimes of Jim Crow and Fascism, and for the resistance against those regimes" (148).

The fourth section, "Long-Term Influences and Effects," wraps up the volume with chapters by Mattia Lento, Laura Pinnavaia, Massimo Fanfani, and Alessandro Carlucci. In Chapter Twelve, "'Little Italy' on the Move: The Birth and Transatlantic Relocation of a Cultural Myth," Lento examines the origins of *Little Italy* and its multifaceted relationship to US cinema. Thereafter, he explores the "transatlantic relocation of the term" in the 'Italian' district of Zurich, focusing on its representation in the 1957 film *Bäckerei Zürcher* (202). Lento concludes that the term *Little Italy* had a more positive connotation in Zurich because of the "economic, cultural, and political contribution that Italian migrants made to Swiss society in the past" (210). He points out that his chapter is not exhaustive, but rather it offers a novel transnational perspective to the field of Italian Diaspora Studies.

This multidisciplinary volume offers a wide range of unique perspectives on cultural contact and the subsequent historical change it has sparked in Italy, the USA, and beyond. The book's strength lies in the motley topics it explores, as it provides an all-encompassing view to readers new to this area of study. Yet,

specialists will also draw inspiration from such a rich and well-balanced resource, both broad and specific in scope. In sum, the volume astutely incorporates an array of diverse voices that intertwine and diverge as, collectively, they expand the horizons of the field of Cultural History.

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Olivia Holmes and Dana E. Stewart. *Reconsidering Boccaccio. Medieval Contexts and Global Intertexts*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. Pp. 444. ISBN: 9781487501785.

The fifteen essays that constitute this volume are based on the papers delivered at the “Boccaccio at 700: Medieval Contexts and Global Intertexts” conference, hosted by Binghamton University’s Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in 2013. The Editors’ Introduction states that one of the goals of this volume is to showcase Boccaccio’s exceptional social, geographic, and intellectual range “not only as a creative writer, but also as a Florentine ambassador, politician, scribe, glossator, mythographer, biographer, geographer, and priest” (3). The book explores how Boccaccio’s literary and epistolary output, among which *De mulieribus claris* features prominently, both benefitted from a complex system of social, legal, economic, and literary networks, and in turn influenced and transformed them. The volume employs a wide range of methodologies and critical approaches (political, socio-cultural, ethical, and legal) in exploring Boccaccio’s versatility as a cultural mediator.

The volume is divided into five sections based on the type of contexts elucidating Boccaccio’s works and their legacy. The first part, “Material Contexts,” opens with an essay by K. P. Clarke, who examines Boccaccio’s illustrated catchwords in the MS Hamilton 90 autograph of the *Decameron*, arguing that they should be seen not as simply decorative, but rather as “expertly managing the reader’s encounter with the text” (30). Rhiannon Daniels continues the material and codicological emphasis by analysing the content, form, and function of Boccaccio’s dedications, which complicate the distinction between Boccaccio’s fictional and biographical worlds.

In Part Two, “Social Contexts: Friendship,” Jason Houston examines Boccaccio’s rhetorical treatment of his friends Niccolò Acciaiuoli and Zanobi da