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**Luca Carlo Rossi. 'Studi su Benvenuto da Imola.' Florence: SISMEL
– Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2018.**

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the episode of the Terrace of Pride, in part, as “Dante’s call for our prayers for his forgiveness” (224). Thus, here is emphasized the second element of the chapter’s title: the value of “prayer”. Dante emphasizes, as Montemaggi argues, this value on multiple occasions within the poem, one of which is the case of the Roman Emperor Trajan who was saved by the prayers of Pope Gregory the Great. By showing how the “realization of divinity is possible through Gregory’s prayers” for Trajan (200), Montemaggi legitimately (and provocatively) wonders if the same may be applied to Virgil: whether, in other words, the journey is potentially transformative for Virgil, too, and whether Dante, upon Virgilio’s departure, might be asking to us readers to pray for the Latin poet to save him. Montemaggi, however, only argues that Virgil “might be” saved (208). Among the many hints at Virgil’s possible salvation, the scholar notes Virgil’s “sorriso” (along with that of Statius, who is saved) at the end of *Purg.* 28 as a clue that Virgil “mov[es] in harmony with Dante and with the love which moves the sun and the other stars” (215). Even if it recalls the experience of the beheaded Orpheus, the scholar argues that the comparison between the Pilgrim and the legendary Greek poet is meant to evoke presence and life rather than loss and death; it is also meant to recall the first martyr of Florence, St. Minias, instead of Bertran de Born.

Therefore, Montemaggi’s study highlights the idea that Dante “invites us [readers] to see that recognition of the truthfulness of the *Commedia* coincides with the realization in the human encounter of our inherent divinity” (239). To drive home his concept of encounter, the *Epilogue* summarizes the arguments of the book and celebrates particular encounters with colleagues, students, and friends that have shaped his own work. He focuses on the value of prayer, on Dante’s ability to “nourish and enrich our own ability to pray” (243), and on the value of joy (both in reading and in scholarship) and desire. He then reaffirms the truthfulness of Dante’s text and the value of justice by analyzing the episode of Geryon (251–253) and his “faccia [...] d’uom giusto” (*Inf.* 17.10). Like Geryon, the *Comedy* is a truthful fiction, and “it is in *our* lives that any truthfulness the *Commedia* might have will primarily be found” (253). In other words, according to Montemaggi, we readers of the *Comedy* are invited to choose the same path of purification and self-recognition in God that Dante himself undertook: the reader is indeed the actual protagonist of the Poet’s “poema sacro / al quale ha posto mano e cielo e terra” (*Par.* 25.1–2).

Lorenzo Dell’Oso, *University of Notre Dame*

Luca Carlo Rossi.

Studi su Benvenuto da Imola.

Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2018. VIII + 337 pp. €48.

This book by Luca Carlo Rossi is part of SISMEL’s series “*Traditio et renovatio*,” whose goal is the conservation and circulation of studies on medieval subjects, while

being receptive of the modalities in which these traditions have evolved in subsequent centuries. This project on Benvenuto da Imola is no different: it is a collection of studies by the renowned scholar Luca Carlo Rossi who has extensively studied the 14th-century thinker, writer, and commentator, Benvenuto Rambaldi. As Rossi immediately declares in the foreword, *Studi su Benvenuto da Imola* presents a chronological anthology of previous essays, with corrections and updated scholarship, enhanced by a brand-new paper dedicated to future directions in the field.

Often, publications of this kind, although stimulating in the depth of a single study, lack in coherence and unity, absent of a connective narrative and missing the opportunity of giving such a character a fairer portrait. Luckily, this is not what happens in this book: although, as said before, the different chapters are nothing more than diverse essays, Rossi works toward merging all of these studies into a coherent and therefore effective homogeneity, enriching each single chapter by means of connections and references throughout the book.

What stands out from reading *Studi su Benvenuto da Imola* is a different way of talking about an author: a monograph that tries to describe Benvenuto's works not with a straightforward path but by means of shedding light on different aspects of his personality and his works. Across the six chapters that form this book, Rossi ambitiously collects his studies on this important 14th-century scholar, highlighting not only his personal achievements, but also his role in the cultural milieu of the Trecento.

Therefore, the first chapter, dedicated to Benvenuto da Imola as a reader of Lucan, is an excellent starting point, because it immediately demonstrates a more complex scholar than his better-known career as commentator of Dante's *Commedia* has historically permitted. Benvenuto worked on a broader number of texts, and he surely showed great interest and knowledge that goes beyond the commentary on the Florentine poet's masterpiece. For instance, what surely did not pass unnoticed by Benvenuto is Lucan's production—despite the difficulties of placing his works in too narrow genres. This is evident in MS. 653 of the University Library of Padua, a codex that possibly features Benvenuto's commentary on Lucan's *Pharsalia*, although not in its entirety. Rossi's analysis is a philological one, making use of other manuscripts—both recognized as Benvenuto's or not—in order to establish his authorship. He then studies the kind of secondary work that Benvenuto undertook on Lucan's text. This is a very comprehensive analysis, that through examples and a thorough study of the sources gives an interesting perspective on Benvenuto's method. Furthermore, Rossi openly discusses all the problems and issues still unresolved on the subject. This chapter concludes with a short report of a debate that happened at the conference in Ancona in 1989—where a shorter version of this paper was presented—and then reproduces the *Accessus* and an extract from Benvenuto's own commentary on Lucan's *Pharsalia*. In this way, Rossi provides the direct source of what he has just articulated in this first chapter. This is not an *unicum* of the chapter itself, however; it is in fact the opposite, because each chapter, except for the last, is enriched by at least one Appendix, mostly presenting Benvenuto's text or texts analyzed in the essays. In this way, the reader can immediately browse the sections directly to which Rossi is referring and thus participate in the dialogue.

While the second chapter gives a general yet well-documented overview of Benvenuto's successful commentary on Valerius Maximus, the third chapter connects a systematic philological analysis with an historical one. In chapter three, Rossi discusses the prefaces of the three works in which Benvenuto strongly associates his name with the d'Este family. These consist of the two commentaries (on Dante and on Valerius Maximus) and the *Libellus Augustalis*. It is with these three works that Benvenuto ties himself to Niccolò II d'Este, the most preeminent patron in this phase of his career.

The next two chapters then focus on the two greatest writers of Benvenuto's age: Boccaccio and Petrarch, with whom Benvenuto had first-hand communication. Benvenuto's commentary on Petrarch's *Bucolicum carmen* becomes an experiment, a way of dealing with a writing style that was very different from Dante's and from Benvenuto's own interests. This explains Benvenuto's approach to this kind of commentary, as both a movement towards Virgil and the classical poets, and by comparison with Dante Alighieri.

In conclusion, this book is a very useful resource for readers seeking a comprehensive study on Benvenuto da Imola. His famous commentary on the *Commedia* is not the specific analysis of any of the essays, yet it is constantly and necessarily referred to in the papers. The result of Rossi's careful analysis of Benvenuto's fortune is the description of a complex and rich figure, and his relationship with other scholars and writers of his time, especially Petrarch and Boccaccio. Luca Carlo Rossi, whose studies have greatly enhanced modern scholarship on Italian literature, gives an important overview of the studies on Benvenuto, many the fruit of his own writings, and then contributes a necessary update to the state of the field on this writer. The outcome is a book that is strongly tailored to scholars of the entire Trecento, but that could be appreciated also by other specialists thanks to rigorous study and vibrant research.

Mario Sassi, *University of Pennsylvania*

Ottimo Commento alla 'Commedia.'

Giovanni Battista Boccardo, Massimiliano Corrado, and Vittorio Celotto, eds.

Chiose sopra la 'Comedia.'

Ciro Perna, ed.

Edizione Nazionale dei Commenti Danteschi, 16. Rome: Salerno, 2018. 3+1 vols. 2800 pp. €290.

Twenty years ago, a group of Italian philologists led by Enrico Malato and Andrea Mazzucchi began a project of crucial importance for modern Dante studies: the complete edition of the ancient commentaries of the *Commedia* ('Edizione Nazionale dei Commenti Danteschi'). Since 2001, philological editions of many texts devoted to explaining Dante's poem have been published, such as the 'Commenti'