

ABSTRACTS

MARIO MARTI, *Il trilinguismo delle lettere «italiane»*

This article retraces the period that marked the appearance of the first examples of the vernacular and subsequently of its literature. The latter did not remain isolated but continued to find expression in Latin and in the various local vernaculars, which later on, with the codification of a national language, became dialects. There emerges from this study a general picture of how Italian literature has evolved and how, in its various forms, it has provided the nation with a cultural identity.

ARNALDO DI BENEDETTO, *Manzoni politico*

The author traces the political itinerary of Alessandro Manzoni through his most clearly 'engaged' writings: from his early short poem *Il trionfo della Libertà*, in which strong criticism is expressed even of the new government imposed by Napoleon from Milan, to the unfinished historical essay *Dell'indipendenza italiana*. The recurring theme running through these writings is Italian independence – or at least in some cases, that of Lombardy. Manzoni shared the new nationalist ideology that established itself in Europe with the advent of the French Revolution. He reached a centralist and anti federalist conception of the desired new Italian State. He dedicated particular attention to the spread of a single language, common to all Italians.

MONICA MARCHI, *Emulare Boccaccio senza la cornice*

In his notes to the *Biblioteca dell'eloquenza italiana di Monsignore Giusto Fontanini* (1753), the Venetian scholar Apostolo Zeno states that he has in his possession the codex of the *Novelle* written by an anonymous Sienese writer from the mid 15th century and that he believes it to be the work of Gentile Sermini, to this day an elusive figure. Actually, the two sources containing this work bear no name, and they provide numerous clues that would confirm the writer's desire to remain anonymous. The Sienese writer's collection was written during the shift from the communal society of the 14th century to the courtly Renaissance. It has profuse ties with the *Decameron*, the latter being seen as the model to transgress; in fact, direct and indirect references are often made to Boccaccio's work but in a way that completely undermines it in terms of form and content. Lastly, there are several innovations in this collection of *novellas* that make it the precursor to a long line of works in prose of the 15th and 16th centuries.

NICOLÒ VALENZANO, *Le regole della conversazione del gentiluomo nella moralistica del Cinquecento*

The gentleman was a key figure in the social and cultural life of the 16th century and was the subject around which there developed and spread a precise code of conversation. This was not merely a petty, meticulous set of rules to follow in a wide variety of situations; in fact, many different authors put forth explanations to justify why such norms were so important and outlined the general principles that should dictate verbal exchange. This article focuses on the main speech 'flaws', which

are useful for defining such 'virtues' of conversation as affability, urbanity and veracity. From this approach, the idea of disciplined discourse falls within the context of courtesy, and more generally, within that of relational ethics; in short, we are dealing with good and bad manners in conversation. This question clearly played a central role in the interactions between gentlemen in the overall framework of cultural, economic and power relations that characterized 16th-century society.

ANGELA ALBANESE, *Un trattato cinquecentesco sulla memoria: L'Arte del Ricordare di G.B. Della Porta*

This article has two main objectives. The first is to document the similarities between Della Porta's *Arte del Ricordare* and the writings he devoted to alchemy, physiognomy, natural magic and theatre. The second aim is to provide an interpretation of this treatise on mnemonics with a variation on the age-old theme of *ut pictura poësis*. For Della Porta, words take on an ekphrastic role, whereby it is the task of the word to make one actually see what it is describing. The article will examine how Della Porta drew from the repertoire of figurative arts (at times even unscrupulously), transferring entire passages from Alberti's *De pictura* into his work and recognizing the 'mnemonic' value of the paintings of Michelangelo and Titian.

STEFANO CARRAI, *Una lettera inedita e sconosciuta di Italo Svevo*

This article publishes for the first time a previously overlooked letter written by Svevo at a very young age, and in it the writer from Trieste refers to an unknown short story of his entitled *Catina*. Svevo sent this letter to the editors of the Florentine literary review *La Nuova Antologia* on 20 March 1886, proposing his short story for publication, but his request was later turned down.

MARIO CHIESA, *Annotazioni montaliane*

This article presents some possible interpretations of various passages in *Ossi di seppia* and *Bufera*. In the last poem of the *Ossi* section, '*banchine*' stands for 'bench, a seat made of wood or stone.' In the first edition of *Scirocco*, line 12 contained the variant *luci – ombre* and this was preserved in all of the subsequent versions, except for in the second edition, which uses *luci-ombre*. It was in fact this latter variant that was tacitly adopted in the critical edition. Following an examination of the stylistic tones created by the use of the long dash (preceded and followed by a space) in the first three collections, mention will be made of how the variant has over time inspired different interpretations of the passage. The lines "il Dio che colora / di fuoco i gigli del fosso" in *Ballata scritta in una clinica* could be an allusion to those 'lilies of the field' so splendidly clothed by God, who will provide even more abundantly for humans (Matthew, 6.28-30; see also Luke 12.27-28). If it were indeed a biblical reference, it would not be the only one present in the poem. Lastly, the "bel sori-ano" in the first stanza of the second part of *Iride* could be a reference to the poet himself.