

ABSTRACTS

VINCENZO VITALE, «*Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda*»: appunti sugli Argonauti di Dante

This article seeks to address the question of why Dante likens *Paradise* to the quest of the Argonauts, even though Jason is the hero who deceives Hypsipyle and Medea with false, underhanded rhetoric. After analysing the role played by the figure of Jason in *Fiore* and in *Inferno*, the article goes on to consider the relationship between Dante's Argonauts and the version that emerged in the Trojan cycle of the late Antiquities, in which Jason's expedition was viewed as an antecedent to the Trojan War. The influence of this tradition on Dante seems to be supported by a passage from the fifth epistle, in which Dante considers the Argonauts' quest as representing the historical premise for universal monarchy. Some textual clues seem to support the theory that Dante's vision of the Argonauts was taken at least to some extent from Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae*. One possible solution to the question at hand is then proposed, based on the view that Dante's *Paradise* represented a means through which the author could promote an ideal Christian monarchy, just as the quest of the Argonauts had favoured the advent of Augustus' universal Empire.

ARNALDO DI BENEDETTO, «*Il vecchio Croce*». Su Ezra Pound e Benedetto Croce

Even Ezra Pound can offer some insight into the positive reception encountered by Benedetto Croce outside of Italy during his lifetime. In 1921 the American poet cited him in an article, praising his interest in the writer's *art*; yet at the same time Pound underlined how Croce at the end of his essay on Balzac countered a critic who preferred the French novelist to Manzoni by instead deeming the latter to be artistically superior. According to Pound, it was too simple a case to argue the inferiority of Balzac, and that instead Croce should have sought to stand the writer from Milan up against the great Flaubert. Pound's writings include more citations from the Neapolitan philosopher and further assessments of him. Despite what Pound considered to be an unjustified detachment from Fascism on Croce's part, the latter still seemed to him to be less 'old' than the majority of Italian writers at the time. Pound went so far as to hope that Croce would reconsider his views on Mussolini. Another important fact to remember is the actual meeting between Croce and Pound in 1929 in Verona at the home of the philosopher Vittorio Enzo Alfieri.

CLAUDIA VILLA, *Appunti danteschi: cronache "curiali" fra DVE e Monarchia*

The adjective *curiale* ('courtly') evokes the socio-political context examined in John of Garland's *Commentarius*, a wordbook specifically designed to assist those operating at court. In DVE, Dante denies the existence of an Italian court prepared to embrace the vernacular and serve as a model; on the contrary, the Angevin text from 1313 reveals that the Neapolitan court had a political interest in the vernacular, contrasting it to the 'barbarian' language used by the German emperors. In a letter to Moroello Malaspina (ep. IV), Dante writes of his experience at court (most likely in Pisa under the emperor Henry VII of Luxembourg), referring to his "meditationes assiduas, quibus tam celestia quam terrestria intuebar" as providing the framework for the issues dealt with in the *Monarchia*, specifically with regard to the passages dedicated to the *palea Constantini*.

PAOLO PELLEGRINI, *Sacchetti o Corio? Nota a Trecentonovelle LIX*

This article examines an annotation to novella LIX of Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle*. In the recently published critical edition edited by Michelangelo Zaccarello, the note is attributed in part to Sacchetti himself and would attest to the validity of witness G (Oxford, Wadham College, A.21.24), which, considered to be the base version of the work, transmits it in a shorter version with respect to other manuscripts. However, it emerges that the actual source is Bernardino Corio's *Historia di Milano*; the note, as already proposed by Michele Barbi, should thus be attributed to Vincenzo Borghini, whose personal library was home to Corio's work.

FEDERICO DI SANTO, *Tasso, "Rocoldo di Prochese" e i Gesta francorum*

This article provides a solution to a long-standing philological question regarding Tasso, i.e. the identification of an unknown chronicle by the so-called "Rocoldo conte di Prochese", referred to by Tasso in three letters as one of the historical sources for his epic poem. Following a brief survey of the main chronicles dedicated to the First Crusade, which may be of use to Tasso scholars even beyond the question at hand, the focus is drawn to a simple misspelling of the name of the Norman count Rotrou du Perche in the *editio princeps* of Guglielmo di Tiro's *Historia*, thereby revealing the true identity of the historical figure masked behind Tasso's 'Rocoldo'. Tracking down the chronicle written by the count proved to be a much greater challenge, however, one that will be dealt with in a later study that is more historiographical than literary in nature. This article provides a brief summary of just some of the findings of the research, including the strong likelihood that the chronicle written by "Rocoldo"/Rotrou is in fact the *Gesta Francorum*, the most important chronicle of the First Crusade heretofore believed to be anonymous.

LUIGI MATT, *Don Ferrante e la peste: una nuova fonte*

It is widely agreed that Manzoni based the speech in which Don Ferrante demonstrates that the plague is neither an accident nor a substance (and thus does not exist) on an excerpt from a letter written by Claudio Achillini to

Agostino Mascardi regarding the 1630 plague of Milan. The two texts, however, clearly diverge in their endings; while Achillini provides no explanation regarding the origin of the plague, simply denoting it to be the inscrutable will of God, Don Ferrante identifies its cause as stemming from an unfavourable alignment of the stars, thus rendering any attempt to prevent the spread of the disease utterly useless. Here, Manzoni undoubtedly borrowed from a passage from one of Emmanuele Orchi's *Prediche quaresimali* [Lent sermons]. The similarities between the two (particularly in *Fermo e Lucia*) are too strong to be considered a mere coincidence.