

After this thorough introduction, the book finally deals with the edition of the manuscript and its sixty-two *cantari* – with additional ones divided into two appendixes. Each *cantare* has extensive notes, with an introductory explanation of the day, the general structure of the *cantare*, and, more importantly, the direct or indirect comparison with the source (mostly the *LA*). When needed, the editors also include the critical apparatus.

As the editors affirm, the study of Guidini's *cantari* is relevant because they testify to an essential evolution of the genre and how it included stories with a religious end goal. In the late Middle Ages, preaching took many forms, usually from preachers intending to rival the lay literature of storytellers and poets. It started thus to expand into less orthodox genres so as to have a larger and more diverse audience. With Guidini, however, we see a more ambitious plan to present these legends in a verse form destined to have even greater success in the next century. The edition of this manuscript is an excellent tool for medieval literature scholars because it provides them with unique and, thus, significant texts of reception in the multifaceted world of medieval hagiographies. It also serves historians of Italian languages thanks to the significant interaction between the Sienese and Florentine of the manuscript and a thorough analysis by the editors.

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Albertino Mussato.

De lite inter Naturam et Fortunam.

Bianca Facchini, ed. and trans.

Florence: SISMEL-Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2021. 372 pp. €76.00.

This is a most welcome contribution for all scholars of Latin medieval literature and philosophy. Bianca Facchini provides us with the first critical edition of Albertino Mussato's (1261–1329) *De lite inter naturam et fortunam*, along with an Italian translation and a generous introduction. Mussato's *De lite* is a dialogue between Nature and Fortune, in which they discuss their respective spheres of influence. The composition dates to the most mature phase of Mussato's lifetime. In the introduction, Facchini provides compelling arguments dating it to the year 1326, that is, a little earlier than suggested by previous scholars. The text, as it has been handed down to us, comprises five parts. It begins with a prologue (§ 1–2), followed by a description of the oneiric narrative framework of the work (§ 3–6). The central and most extensive part features the conversation between Nature and Fortune (§ 7–240). This is followed by the apparition of Christ (§ 241–249), who brings the work to completion by revealing the real nature of fate and free will (§ 250–268). Only the central part is developed in dialogic form, the others being laid out in monologic prose. The *De lite* belongs to the literary genre known as *altercatio* (or *lis*), which was very successful in the Latin Middle Ages. As a dialogue fictitiously taking place

in the author's dreams, however, the work may also be included in the widespread genre of medieval *somnia* or *visiones*. It is important to remember that Mussato composed the text while in exile, in Chioggia. As a bitter reflection on the fickleness of Fortune, therefore, the *De lite* also has well-known antecedents in the works of Cicero and Boethius, to mention only the most notable examples.

In their conversation, Nature and Fortune discuss several topics which were canonical in the medieval literature on fortune, such as celestial influence or fortuitous events. In general, Aristotle provides the main conceptual and terminological framework of Mussato's account. Within this framework, however, Mussato also addresses themes that were not among the most frequently discussed in *de fortuna* writings. For instance, he provides a lengthy discussion on friendship (§ 91-98), which Nature claims (on the basis of the *communi dividundo* principle) to be composed of three elements: *honestum*, *utile* and *delectabile*. The two interlocutors strongly disagree on the terms of this tripartition, which provides the author with a pretext to dwell upon the nature of true friendship. In contrast to what Fortune suggests, Nature argues that friendship solely based on honesty and virtue does exist in this world. Nature mentions a few exemplary cases (Pylades and Orestes, Poly-nices and Tydeus, among others) and adds that examples can also be found in our days – one can hear Mussato's voice speaking here. Another topic extensively discussed by the author is nobility (§ 147-163). Following in the footsteps of Aristotle and Boethius, Mussato claims that nobility does not result only from lineage, but also (and even more so) from intellectual and moral virtue. Also in this case, one is tempted to read Mussato's account as a reference to his own biographic trajectory. Born into a low-class family, he managed to achieve the highest position in the political and cultural landscape of his city, as he himself recalls in the dialogue (§ 139).

The *De lite* is also interesting because of the various sources employed by the author. Writing at a time when Latin Europe had just recovered and made available a considerable portion of the Greco-Roman and Arabic literary heritage, Mussato shows himself to be familiar with a wide array of ancient and late antique authors. Empedocles, Aesop, Boethius, Avicenna are but a few of the names that come up in the dialogue. A discussion of Mussato's debt to classical sources is provided in Facchini's introduction (pp. 37-48), while a detailed list of all authors cited (both directly and indirectly) is supplied in an appendix. As mentioned already, Aristotle takes the lion's share among these authorities. His writings on ethics and natural philosophy provide the backbone of Mussato's arguments; both Nature and Fortune make frequent reference to them throughout the dialogue. Mussato relies on the Latin translations made by medieval masters in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (the *Physics* by James of Venice, the *Magna Moralia* by Bartholomew of Messina, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, *Politics* and *Rhetoric* by William of Moerbeke). As Facchini points out (p. 40), it is uncertain whether Mussato had full and direct access to all of them, but he did show himself to be substantially familiar with their content. He also relies on the doctrine transmitted by the pseudo-Aristotelian *Liber de bona fortuna* (§§ 24-25 and 39-43), a medieval Latin compilation of the chapters on good fortune from the *Magna Moralia* (1206b 30-1207b 19) and *Eudemian Ethics* (1246b 37-1248b 11), which was used for the first time by Thomas Aquinas

in his *Summa contra gentiles* (III, 92). In this sense, Mussato's *De lite* offers a window into the encyclopedia of knowledge of early fourteenth-century Europe.

Facchini's philological work, too, deserves to be praised. The edition of the text is based on the two extant manuscript witnesses of the work (Sevilla, *Bibliotheca Capitular y Colombina*, MS 5. I. 5; Padua, *Biblioteca Civica*, MS B. P. 2531), which the author describes and accurately collates in the introduction (pp. 62–79). Thanks to this work, Facchini was able to conclude that the two witnesses are related to one another, as they share a number of errors. Specifically, she provides evidence showing that the Sevilla manuscript (C) was the antigraph of the Paduan one (P) (p. 75). As C is the principal witness of the text, the edition is based primarily on this codex. Both manuscripts feature glossae by different hands, which Facchini meticulously describes and compares with one another (pp. 83–94). Finally, both the Italian translation and the accompanying notes contribute to making the text clear and digestible to scholars and students alike.

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Katherine Powlesland.

Narrative Strategies for Participation in Dante's Divine Comedy.

Cambridge: Legenda, 2022. 174 pp. \$115.00.

In recent years, studies on Dante's reception have witnessed a proliferation of contributions, focusing on the most diverse experiences of reading, appropriation and rewriting across the centuries. At the center of any examination of this kind is the reader of the selected text and their personal experience of it through direct or mediated understanding, involvement and participation. In particular, the *Commedia* continues to draw the attention of many readers that engage in conversation with it in different ways and ultimately with personal, varied and unique responses. Katherine Powlesland's monograph, whose title *Narrative Strategies for Participation in Dante's Divine Comedy* is self-explanatory, enters the field of Reception Studies by proposing a narratological analysis of some devices at play in Dante's poem. Throughout her book, the author addresses how the *Commedia* invites active engagement from its readers, who are frequently asked to participate in its virtual reality through specific mechanisms of narration. By drawing from narratology, cognitive neuroscience and video game critical theory, Powlesland sets out a new model for reader participation in printed artefacts that she terms 'first-person participation' and proposes that the *Commedia* explicitly encourages this complementary mode of reading, in interplay with the canonical others.

Powlesland's monograph consists of an introduction and five main chapters with extensive endnotes. The book is well-informed and cohesive, and it frequently engages its reader by presenting a series of reasoned and solid arguments that are either in dialogue or in contrast with scholarship on narratological approaches to