Reading and Meaning:

The Reception of Boccaccio's *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus claris* to 1520

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The candidate confirms that the work submitted is her own and that appropriate credit has been given where reference has been made to the work of others

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Abstract

Much of the twentieth-century research carried out on the reception of Boccaccio in medieval and Renaissance Italy has focused on the *Decameron* to the exclusion of all other works. This thesis puts existing research into context by considering two additional works by Boccaccio alongside the *Decameron*, and by using an innovative methodology to analyse the evidence for reception in Italy before 1520. The *Teseida* and *De mulieribus* differ sufficiently from the *Decameron* in terms of their influences, style, and date of composition to offer a broader view of Boccaccio's *fortuna*.

The thesis is divided into two parts, each reflecting a different methodological approach, the theoretical implications of which are discussed in some detail in the introduction. Part I analyses critical responses found in a wide range of sources, such as poetry, letters, and biographies. The discussion opens with a consideration of the authorial image which Boccaccio projected in his literary works and letters (Chapter 1), followed by an evaluation of the responses of Boccaccio's acquaintances (Chapter 2), and of the responses of those that had no personal contact with Boccaccio (Chapter 3), to this projected authorial persona. In Part II I uncover responses to Boccaccio made by a wider section of the reading public, using the evidence for reception inherent in the physical structure and presentation of books. Chapter 4 acts as an introduction to the second part of the thesis, defining and outlining the significance of the three categories of evidence used: materiality, paratexts, and traces of reading. Chapter 5 complements the first chapter by evaluating how the presentation of Boccaccio's autograph manuscripts reflects his intended readership. In Chapters 6-8 I proceed to discuss the reception of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*, focusing on the physical structure and presentation of a sample of manuscripts and printed books containing these texts. The final conclusion draws together Parts I and II, illustrating the complementary nature of the evidence discussed in each part of the thesis.

My research challenges commonly held views about the reception of the *Decameron*, and offers new insights into the *fortuna* of the *Teseida* and *De mulieribus* in a period marked by changing, and often conflicting, cultural and intellectual concerns, and as manuscript culture gave way to print. The Appendices list the locations of manuscripts I have viewed, provide bibliographic descriptions of the editions of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* printed before 1520, and offer transcriptions of paratexts from editions of each work.

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Note on Transcription

Where I quote from or provide transcriptions of texts found in editions printed before 1520 I have applied conservative editorial principles. I have modernized the punctuation and some spellings: I have changed ampersands to *et*, distinguished between *u* and *v*, and added accents, apostrophes, italicization, and capitalization where relevant. Words which run together in the original have been separated in accordance with modern usage. I have left traces of reading transcribed from manuscripts and printed books largely unedited in order to best illustrate the nature of readers' interactions.

Abbreviations

WORKS BY BOCCACCIO

Dec.	*Decameron*

CATALOGUES OF PRINTED BOOKS

BMC	*Catalogue of Books Printed in the Fifteenth Century Now in the British Museum*, 9 vols (London: British Museum, 1909-49)
EDIT16	*Le edizioni italiane del XVI secolo: censimento nazionale* (Rome: Istituto centrale per il catalogo unico, 1985-)
GW	*Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke* (Leipzig: Hiersemann, 1925-)
IGI	*Indice generale degli incunaboli delle biblioteche d'Italia*, 6 vols (Rome: Libreria dello Stato, 1943-81)
Index Aureliensis	*Index Aureliensis: catalogus librorum sedecimo saeculo impressorum* (Aureliae Aquensis [Baden-Baden]: Koerner, 1962-)
ISTC	*The Illustrated Incunable Short-Title Catalogue on CD-ROM* (Reading: Primary Source Media in association with the British Library, 1997)
STC	*Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in Italy and of Italian Books Printed in other Countries from 1465 to 1600 Now in the British Museum* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1958)
STC supp.	*Short-title Catalogue of Books Printed in Italy and of Italian Books Printed in other Countries from 1465 to 1600 Now in the British Museum: Supplement* (London: British Library, 1986)

JOURNALS

GSLI	*Giornale storico della letteratura italiana*
IMU	*Italia medioevale e umanistica*
SFI	*Studi di filologia italiana*
StB	*Studi sul Boccaccio*

OTHER REFERENCE WORKS

DBI	*Dizionario biografico degli italiani* (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1960-)

KEY TO TABLES

BD	Border decoration
BSI	Blank spaces for initials
CCT	Coloured capitals in the text
CI	Coloured initials
CM	Chancery minuscule
CPT	Coloured paragraph marks in the text
DI	Decorated initials
DT	Decorated title-page
GB	Gothic bookhand
HB	Humanistic bookhand
HI	Historiated initials
I	Illustration
II	Illuminated initials
M	*Mercantesca*
R	Rubrication
SGB	Semi-gothic bookhand

INTRODUCTION

Boccaccio exercised some considerable cultural influence in medieval and Renaissance Europe through both his Latin texts, such as *De casibus virorum illustrium*, *De mulieribus claris*, and the *Genealogia deorum gentilium*, and his vernacular works, including the *Teseida delle nozze d'Emilia* and *Decameron*.[1] Twentieth-century research on the reception of Boccaccio in Italy, however, has been strongly influenced by the modern fascination with the *Decameron*, which has dominated critical interest in the author to the virtual exclusion of his so-called 'minor works'.

Christina Roaf, Paolo Trovato, and Brian Richardson have all studied the role of editors of the *Decameron* in the sixteenth century, while Mirella Ferrari has concentrated on the history of illustrated editions of the *Decameron*, with only a brief discussion of the reception of Boccaccio's minor works in print in Italy and beyond.[2] Vittore Branca, perhaps more than any other scholar in the last century, has made significant and extensive contributions to the history of the reception of the *Decameron*, and for these reasons it is worth beginning with a summary of some of his main arguments. Branca's initial work on the *Decameron* concerned critical responses made before the Reformation, but his subsequent studies focused on manuscripts with the ultimate aim of reconstructing the textual tradition of the *Decameron*.[3] On the basis of codicological analysis, Branca formulated his well-known and compelling thesis that,

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[1] On Boccaccio's influence in Europe see *Boccaccio in Europe: Proceedings of the Boccaccio Conference, Louvain, December 1975,* ed. by Gilbert Tournoy (Louvain: Louvain University Press, 1977) and Herbert G. Wright, *Boccaccio in England from Chaucer to Tennyson* (London: Athlone Press, 1957).

[2] Christina Roaf, 'The Presentation of the *Decameron* in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century with Special Reference to the Work of Francesco Sansovino', in *The Languages of Literature in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Peter Hainsworth and others (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 109-21; Paolo Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza corretto: la stampa e le revisioni editoriali dei testi letterari italiani (1470-1550)* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1991); Brian Richardson, 'Editing the *Decameron* in the Sixteenth Century', *Italian Studies*, 45 (1990), 13-31; Mirella Ferrari, 'Dal Boccaccio illustrato al Boccaccio censurato', in *Boccaccio in Europe*, ed. by Tournoy, pp. 111-33.

[3] Vittore Branca, *Linee di una storia della critica al 'Decameron' con bibliografia boccaccesca* (Milan: Società Anonima Editrice Dante Alighieri, 1939); Branca, 'Per il testo del *Decameron*: la prima diffusione del *Decameron*', *SFI*, 8 (1950), 29-143 (rev. and repr. in Branca, *Tradizione delle opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, 2 vols (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1991), II, 147-210); Branca, 'Per il testo del *Decameron*: testimonianze della tradizione volgata', *SFI*, 11 (1953), 163-243; Branca, 'Copisti per passione, tradizione caratterizzante, tradizione di memoria', in *Studi e problemi di critica testuale: convegno di studi di filologia italiana nel centenario della commissione per i testi di lingua, 7-9 aprile 1960* (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1961), pp. 69-83; Branca, 'Per la storia del testo del *Decameron*', in *Lessico critico decameroniano*, ed. by Renzo Bragantini and Pier Massimo Forni (Turin: Bollati Boringhieri, 1995), pp. 419-38.

from its initial publication up until the beginning of the fifteenth century, the *Decameron* had been enthusiastically received by the Tuscan middle classes, and in particular by merchants, who had not only read the work, but also taken to copying it themselves. Branca argues that the copyists of *Decameron* manuscripts cannot be found among the lists of well-known, professional scribes from the same period and that they should be thought of as 'copisti per passione', amateur scribes, mainly merchants by profession, labouring over transcription for their own pleasure.[4] Similarly, Branca proposes that evidence of ownership reveals a large number of families that 'appartengono [...] quasi sempre agli ambienti borghesi, mercantili e finanziari'.[5]

Traces of reading, left behind in the margins and on the blank leaves of manuscripts, recording financial transactions, and modifications or additions to the text, are also used as evidence of mercantile interest.[6] Paratextual elements are enlisted to support his thesis when Branca claims that the additional stories often included in the same manuscript as the *Decameron* are symptomatic of mercantile taste.[7] Branca also notes that script can be given as evidence for the copyist and reader, and he adds that the presentation of these 'mercantile' manuscripts shares several features in common with each other: 'una tradizione umile e borghese questa, che informa anche la modestia della veste esteriore di questi esemplari: quasi sempre cartacei, con legature correnti e senza alcun ornamento vistoso, con le maiuscole iniziali appena segnate di qualche semplice fregio'.[8] In the context of the eventual desire to piece together the textual tradition of the *Decameron*, Branca's overall conclusion to these codicological studies is that the manuscript tradition does not stem from an authoritative centre of diffusion, but develops in an unusually episodic manner.[9]

Christian Bec's analysis of fifteenth-century Florentine wills, inventories, and library catalogues has provided some context for Branca's research, revealing which literary and non-literary works were read by merchants, and thereby indicating that merchant interest was not confined to the *Decameron* alone.[10] He demonstrates that at

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[4] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 194-96; Branca, 'Copisti per passione', pp. 71-72; Branca, 'Per la storia del testo', p. 421.
[5] Branca, 'Copisti per passione', p. 71. For a list of owners see also *Tradizione*, II, 195; 'Per la storia del testo', p. 420.
[6] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 195; 'Copisti per passione', pp. 71, 74-75; 'Per la storia del testo', pp. 420-21.
[7] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, p. 198; 'Copisti per passione', p. 72; 'Per la storia del testo', p. 422.
[8] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 196, 199; 'Copisti per passione', p. 72; 'Per la storia del testo', p. 421.
[9] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 201.
[10] See Christian Bec, *Les Marchands écrivains: affaires et humanisme à Florence (1375-1434)* (Paris: Mouton, 1967); Bec, 'Sur la lecture de Boccace à Florence au Quattrocento', *StB*, 9 (1975-76), 247-60; Bec, 'I mercanti scrittori', in *Letteratura italiana. Produzione e consumo*,

the beginning of the fifteenth-century, copies of Dante's works were more likely to be found in a merchant library than those of Boccaccio, and that the *Corbaccio* and *Filocolo* were also successful among merchants in Florence.[11] More recently, Marco Cursi has criticized Branca on methodological grounds and carried out his own study of manuscripts of the *Decameron*, based largely on palaeographical evidence and focusing on manuscript production rather than its reception.[12] Cursi's conclusions challenge Branca's thesis that the *Decameron* was mainly of interest to merchant readers, and lead him to argue that many manuscripts were in fact copied by 'copisti a prezzo'.

This thesis aims to complement and provide a context for the research on the *Decameron* which has already been carried out. I discuss responses to two other works by Boccaccio that differ from the *Decameron* and each other in terms of style, subject-matter, and inspiration, and therefore offer a broader view of the *certaldese*'s reception. The *Teseida*, like the *Decameron*, is written in the vernacular, but was composed approximately a decade earlier and is a mix of both medieval chivalric and classical elements,[13] while *De mulieribus claris* was composed in Latin in the wake of Boccaccio's move towards humanism in later life, and as such might appeal to scholarly readers, although it is expressly dedicated to a woman and apparently champions the exploits of women. Alongside a consideration of the *Teseida* and *De mulieribus*, I evaluate the *fortuna* of the *Decameron* using an innovative methodology that continues to challenge Branca's conclusions.

A common method of evaluating Boccaccio's reception, employed by Branca and other scholars before him, is to consider written judgements on the author and his works that were made in literary texts, and other textual sources such as letters and sermons.[14] In the first part of the thesis I follow this tradition and assess critical responses to Boccaccio, drawing on as many different types of sources as possible and offering a more detailed survey of the author's *fortuna* than has been previously attempted. Despite the well known judgement that Boccaccio passed on the *Decameron* in the letter to Mainardo Cavalcanti (*Ep.* XXII), there has been little previous research on the significance of other comments Boccaccio made about himself and his works in

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dir. by Alberto Asor Rosa, 9 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1983), II, 269-97; Bec, *Les Livres des Florentins (1413-1608)* (Florence: Olschki, 1984), pp. 19-51.

[11] Bec, *Les Marchands écrivains*, pp. 394-98.

[12] Marco Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione del *Decameron* fra tre e quattrocento: note paleografiche e codicologiche', *Nuova rivista di letteratura italiana*, 1 (1998), 463-551.

[13] On Boccaccio's influences in the *Teseida* and the role this work plays in the context of romance epic see Jane E. Everson, *The Italian Romance Epic in the Age of Humanism: The Matter of Italy and the World of Rome* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

[14] Some of these studies are discussed briefly in the introduction to Part I.

his letters, or of the presentation of Boccaccio's authorial image in his literary works in the context of his reception. Chapter 1, therefore, begins with a consideration of the manner in which Boccaccio chose to project an image of himself and his works, focusing on the content of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*, as well as on letters written by the author. Chapter 2 considers responses to the full range of Boccaccio's texts and the image instituted by the author, beginning with his acquaintances, while Chapter 3 evaluates responses made to Boccaccio by those that that had no personal contact with him.

Whilst the evidence for Boccaccio's *fortuna* presented in Part I is designed to be as comprehensive as possible and represent a range of readers characterized by varying social, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds, a survey of critical responses naturally privileges those with a certain degree of education, for whom it is desirable, and possible, to compose literary works and letters containing their responses to Boccaccio. As Jane E. Everson observes:

> there frequently is, or may be, a gap, a divergence, even a conflict between the types and forms of culture that are officially approved and promoted and the types and forms that are in fact, unofficially, most widely enjoyed and absorbed by those same makers and promoters of culture.[15]

Thus, only a partial view of the author's impact on his readership is achieved using critical responses. In order to begin to rectify this problem, in the second part of the thesis I consider the physical structure and presentation of books containing Boccaccio's texts as reflections of reader response which are broadly independent of any desire, or ability, on behalf of the reader to register a formal judgement.

The role of materiality and paratextual responses in reception theory has only recently been recognized as significant. Advocates of reader-response theories and *rezeptionsästhetik* reinstated the relationship between the author and the text which had been demolished by New Criticism, but nevertheless ignored the material object which conveys the text. With particular reference to the reader-response theoretician Hans Robert Jauss, Roger Chartier argues that:

> the space between text and object, which is precisely the space in which meaning is constructed, has too often been forgotten, not only by the traditional sort of literary history which thinks of the work as an abstract text whose typographic forms are without importance, but also by the 'aesthetic of reception', that [...] postulates a pure

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[15] *The Italian Romance Epic*, p. 112.

> and unmediated relationship between the 'signals' emitted by the text [...] and the 'horizon of expectation' of the public to which those signals are addressed.[16]

In the 1980s D. F. McKenzie called for a new definition of bibliography, whose classic descriptions could no longer accommodate developments taking place under the general heading 'history of the book'.[17] McKenzie's proposal to define bibliography as the study of the sociology of texts takes into account diverse branches of the discipline that concern the composition, design, and transmission of texts, their distribution, collection, and classification, and their meaning for and regeneration by readers. At the heart of the 'sociology of texts' is the physical form of the book, whose materiality mediates between and influences both authorial meaning and the readings or misreadings of those that receive the text. Robert Darnton discusses five different ways in which it is possible to construct a social history of reading.[18] Two of the methods he describes for reaching an understanding of how or why people read inform Part II of my thesis. These are the use of marginal notes in books and the physical form of the book. Darnton comments: 'by studying books as physical objects, bibliographers have demonstrated that the typographical disposition of a text can to a considerable extent determine its meaning and the way it was read' (p. 159). Although here Darnton is referring to the layout of printed books, there is no reason to suppose that the form of the manuscript book should not have an equal effect upon the meaning accessed by its reader.

There have been several isolated attempts at using materiality as a measure of reader response in Italian studies. For example, Franca Petrucci Nardelli conducted a brief study of the manuscripts of the *Amorosa visione*, 'profondamente convinta dell'intima connessione esistente fra testo contenuto e libro contenente, fra trasmissione di un'opera e aspetto materiale dei suoi testimoni', and Craig Kallendorf has studied the presentation of editions printed in the Veneto in order to

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[16] Roger Chartier, *The Order of Books: Readers, Authors, and Libraries in Europe between the Fourteenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, trans. by Lydia G. Cochrane (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994), p. 10. For an overview of critical theory relating to reception, including the work of Jauss, see Robert C. Holub, *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1984) and *Readers and Reading*, ed. by Andrew Bennett (New York: Longman, 1995).

[17] D. F. McKenzie, *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). For further evaluations of methods of approaching book history see Thomas R. Adams and Nicolas Barker, 'A New Model for the Study of the Book', in *A Potencie of Life: Books in Society, The Clark Lectures 1986-1987*, ed. by Nicolas Barker (London: British Library, 1993), pp. 5-43 and Cathy N. Davidson, 'Toward a History of Books and Readers', in *Reading in America*, ed. by Cathy N. Davidson (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 1-26.

[18] Roger Darnton, 'History of Reading', in *New Perpectives on Historical Writing*, ed. by Peter Burke (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991), pp. 140-67.

analyse Virgil's reception.[19] The value of documenting annotated books has been recognized in relation to Petrarch, but a similar exercise has not been carried out previously for Boccaccio.[20]

Part II of the thesis builds on this small collection of previous studies and presents a detailed and systematic evaluation of the physical structure and presentation of books containing the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*. The methodology in this part of the thesis combines a study of features more common to bibliographical analyses, such as script, with features such as layout and decoration, which have been commonly overlooked. Similarly, I have defined categories of traces of reading and paratexts in order to discuss features that have been neglected by previous scholars. Chapter 4 acts as an introduction to this methodology, which describes how I have selected and manipulated my source material, and provides definitions of the terminology employed. Chapters 5-8 focus on the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* and evaluate the significance of elements of the material object, such as size, layout, script or type, and decoration, in relation to the social, cultural, and economic status of the reader. Paratexts, such as prefaces, tables of contents, and foliation added by the producer of the book, provide valuable insights into editorial practices and marketing, which can influence and inform reception, although it is not my concern to consider the linguistic dimensions of editorial work. Traces of reading, such as marginalia, are considered as a rare and valuable visible record of the reader's interaction with the text.

The critical, material, and paratextual responses included in this thesis were all made before 1520. This time-frame has enabled me to trace evidence for the reception of Boccaccio across both manuscripts and printed books, thus avoiding the tendency to define studies in book history or reception in terms of one or other of these media. Sandra Hindman writes that: 'for scholars of all disciplines the time is long overdue to recognize the inherent nature of manuscripts and imprints as books, as coexisting products of and participants in the same social, cultural, and aesthetic

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[19] Franca Petrucci Nardelli, 'Per una storia del libro manoscritto volgare: i codici dell'*Amorosa visione*', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 6 (1988), 501-16 (p. 501); Craig Kallendorf, *Virgil and the Myth of Venice: Books and Readers in the Italian Renaissance* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).

[20] See Giuseppe Frasso, 'Per un censimento di incunaboli e cinquecentine postillate dei *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* e dei *Triumphi*. I. London: British Library', *Aevum*, 56 (1982), 253-62 and subsequent articles in the same journal: 57 (1983), 289-97; 58 (1984), 301-16; 317-30; 59 (1985), 361-70; 63 (1989), 336-60; 64 (1990), 285-306.

context'.[21] The division between manuscript and print culture creates an artificial historical barrier in the process of book production and dissemination at the end of the fifteenth century. Despite the undoubtedly revolutionary impact of the new technology, manuscripts continued to be in demand and produced for some sections of the reading public into the sixteenth century, and there was considerable cross-fertilization between the two media. Incunabula were heavily influenced by the presentation of manuscripts, and conversely some scribes began to use printed exemplars. By including both manuscripts and printed books in Part II, I am building on research carried out by scholars such as Branca and Cursi, who have considered manuscript evidence in isolation from printed evidence, and I am able to evaluate the impact of production technology on the reading process, which adds a valuable dimension to the issue of materiality.

Limiting my research to the period before 1520 has allowed me to analyse a significant number of printed editions, but has necessarily restricted my focus to the reception of Boccaccio prior to the publication of Pietro Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua* in 1525. The *Prose* is arguably the clearest sign of a new stage in the reception of Boccaccio, which is founded on his linguistic merits, and although many factors which led to the development of Boccaccio as a linguistic model are strongly visible in the period leading up to 1525, the full implications of Bembo's role in Boccaccio's *fortuna* after 1520 are outside the bounds of this research.

While the evaluation of critical evidence is a long-established practice, whose benefits and drawbacks are largely familiar to philologists and historians, there are some important points relating to the use of material and paratextual responses as evidence for reception which need to be clarified and discussed at some length before proceeding further. Part II of the thesis is based on a fundamental distinction between the text as an abstract work, which exists only in the mind of the author, and what I term the text-object.[22] This is the container which acts as a medium for the text once it has left the mind of its creator and has been confined within the physical limits of a book, whether manuscript or printed. Clearly, the text cannot act on a public of its own accord, but is dependent on a producer for its presentation as a text-object. The creator of the text and the producer of the text-object might be one and

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[21] Sandra Hindman and James Douglas Farquhar, *Pen to Press: Illustrated Manuscripts and Printed Books in the First Century of Printing* (College Park: Art Department, University of Maryland, 1977), p. 5.

[22] To my knowledge, no terminology has been agreed on to describe the physical forms which carry texts, hence McKenzie uses descriptions such as 'the material signs which constitute a text' (p. 16).

the same person, or be different individuals, and both could be termed an 'author'. Thus, it is necessary firstly to define more precisely what is meant by an 'author' in relation to both manuscripts and printed editions, and secondly, to outline common methods for the production and dissemination of texts in order to understand fully the reciprocal relationship between the author (of the text and/or text-object), text-object, and reader. As part of this discussion I will outline in more detail the contents of Chapters 5-8.

Harold Love distinguishes three main categories of manuscripts, defined by their relationship to an author. The author of the text and the author of the text-object are the same person in the authorial holograph. In the case of the manuscript copy made by a specialist scribe there is a clear distinction between the author of the text and the subsequent author of the text-object, while in the manuscript copy made by an individual who wished to possess the text, the figures of reader and text-object author merge.[23] Richardson also divides those directly or indirectly involved in printed book production into three broad categories related to authors. The first category includes publishers who financed printing but who did not own or operate presses. Publishers might include civic and ecclesiastical authorities, as well as authors and editors. Printer-publishers constitute the second category. These are printers who owned a press and could contribute to the financing of most of their printing activities, although they might also have derived income and capital from other sources. In the third category are printers working solely or predominantly on commission from others.[24] Some printers also engaged editors who could author some aspects of the text and its presentation. Richardson comments that:

> editors may have had an advisory role, helping with decisions about which works to print, but their two main functions were to provide a correct copy of the text to be printed and to assist readers in understanding and consulting the text by providing indexes, commentaries and other supplementary material. (p. 151)

The origins of the process of reception must begin with the author of the text, but little reference has been made to the relationship between Boccaccio and his readers, despite the fact that much of the work on Boccaccio's reception has focused on the period in which the author was still alive. Based on Boccaccio's letter to Cavalcanti (*Ep.* XXII) and Petrarch's response to the *Decameron* (*Sen.*, XVII. 3), Branca has

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[23] Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 46.
[24] Brian Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 34-35.

suggested that Boccaccio encouraged a 'literary' appreciation of the *Decameron* in the 1370s.[25] This implies that Boccaccio may have been discontent with the manner in which his text had been disseminated previously, although Branca does not follow up the implication. The possibility that Boccaccio was concerned with the type of readership that had access to the *Decameron*, and that he might have taken steps to influence readers, either negatively or positively, is also hinted at by Armando Petrucci. Petrucci argues that the autograph manuscript of the *Decameron* (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek der Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS Hamilton 90) shows Boccaccio's plan 'for promoting vernacular literature to the dignity of the university/scholastic desk-book', although 'Boccaccio's proposal [...] had practically no followers after his death'.[26] On the basis of the presentation of the *Decameron* autograph, Manlio Pastore Stocchi also concludes that Boccaccio intended a culturally and socially qualified and selected diffusion for this work, similar to the diffusion appropriate for prestigious texts.[27]

As well as the autograph of the *Decameron*, a significant number of other manuscripts have survived for which it has been argued that Boccaccio acted as rubricator and illuminator, as well as scribe.[28] In these cases, Boccaccio was in a position to exercise direct control over material and presentational features such as the size and style of the script adopted, and the layout of the text.[29] Provided that Boccaccio proposed a reader for his manuscripts, in other words, if he copied his works with publication in mind, it is possible to use the material and paratextual elements of his exemplars as indications of his intended readership. Therefore, in order to place greater emphasis on the initiator of the process of diffusion and reception, and to consider further the relationship with his readers that Boccaccio himself postulated, my analysis of materiality and paratextual responses in the second part of the thesis begins

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[25] Branca, 'Per la storia del testo', p. 423.
[26] Armando Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare* in Medieval Italy', in Armando Petrucci, *Writers and Readers in Medieval Italy: Studies in the History of Written Culture*, trans. by Charles M. Radding (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), pp. 169-235 (pp. 190-92).
[27] Manlio Pastore Stocchi, 'Su alcuni autografi del Boccaccio', *StB*, 10 (1977), 123-43.
[28] For bibliographical descriptions of the autographs see Evi Ianni, 'Elenco dei manoscritti autografi di Giovanni Boccaccio', *Modern Language Notes*, 86 (1971), 99-113 and Ginetta Auzzas, 'Elenco e bibliografia dei codici autografi', *StB*, 7 (1973), 1-20. On Boccaccio as an illustrator see Vittore Branca, P. Watson, and V. Kirkham, 'Boccaccio visualizzato', *StB*, 15 (1985-86), 85-188; M. G. Ciardi Dupré dal Poggetto, 'Boccaccio "visualizzato" dal Boccaccio: corpus dei disegni e cod. Parigino It. 482', *StB*, 22 (1994), 197-225; *Boccaccio visualizzato: narrare per parole e per immagini fra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. by Vittore Branca, 3 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1999) II, 8-11.
[29] In some cases, certain features such as decoration and binding may have been carried out by additional 'authors', such as rubricators, illuminators or binders.

with a consideration of Boccaccio's autograph manuscripts (Chapter 5). This complements the focus on Boccaccio and his authorial image presented in the first chapter. Chapters 6, 7, and 8, which deal respectively with the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*, trace the reception process through from the originator of the text to its subsequent consumers, comparing the similarities and differences between those whom Boccaccio desired or intended to read his works, and those that *actually* read his texts.

The author of the text-object, whether autograph, manuscript copy, or printed edition, does not create in a vacuum. A variety of social and physical factors can significantly influence the author and therefore the appearance of the text-object. Of primary importance in this process is the reader, who may be a real or hypothetical individual, or represent a 'type' of reading public. The publication process plays a key role in determining how the intended reader affects the preparation of the text. When Boccaccio decided to publish his texts in the fourteenth-century he could not rely on official channels. Establishments which dealt with the dissemination of texts did exist, but were concerned largely with Latin scholarly and religious manuscripts: these were monastic scriptoria, booksellers who might organize the copying of an exemplar, its illumination and binding, and universities operating the *pecia* system.[30] According to Robert K. Root there is no evidence that professional booksellers or any other establishment played a direct role in the publication of literary manuscripts, either in Latin or the vernacular, in Europe in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The only contact between an author such as Boccaccio and a bookseller would be indirect: once a manuscript had been published there would be nothing to prevent the bookseller from

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[30] See Albinia de la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes in Florence', in *Miniatura fiorentina del Rinascimento 1440-1525: un primo censimento*, ed. by Annarosa Garzelli, 2 vols (Florence: Giunta, 1985), I, 395-476, in particular pp. 404, 406-08, which concerns humanist book production in the fifteenth century, but nevertheless gives a comprehensive illustration of the role of the bookseller. See also M. B. Parkes, 'Produzione e commercio dei libri manoscritti', in *Produzione e commercio della carta e del libro secc. XIII - XVIII: atti della ventitreesima settimana di studi, 15-20 aprile 1991*, ed. by Simonetta Cavaciocchi (Florence: Le Monnier, 1992), pp. 331-42 for general information on scribes, booksellers and university-controlled production of books. For information on the *pecia* system see G. Pollard, 'The *Pecia* System in the Medieval Universities', in *Medieval Scribes, Manuscripts and Libraries: Essays Presented to N. R. Ker*, ed. by M. B. Parkes and Andrew G. Watson (London: Scolar Press, 1978), pp. 145-61; R. Steele, 'The pecia', *The Library*, 4th ser., 11 (1931), 230-34; Guy Fink-Errera, 'La produzione dei libri di testo nelle università medievali', in *Libri e lettori nel Medioevo: guida storica e critica*, ed. by Guglielmo Cavallo (Rome: Laterza, 1989), pp. 131-65; Jean Destrez, *La pecia dans les manuscrits universitaires du XIII^e et du XIV^e siècle* (Paris: Vautrain, 1935); *La production du livre universitaire au Moyen Age: exemplar et pecia. Actes du symposium tenu au Collegio San Bonaventura de Grottaferrata en mai 1983,* ed. by Louis J. Bataillon, Bertrand G. Guyot, and Richard H. Rouse (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1991).

obtaining a copy and transcribing it for a customer.[31] It would therefore be the responsibility of the author to publish a work either by making a fair copy personally, or by finding the necessary scribes, illuminators, and binders to undertake the task.

Once the author had transcribed a fair copy of a text, or employed a scribe to do so, he or she could choose to disseminate the work either formally or informally. As Leonardo Bruni noted, Boccaccio was disdainful of patronage, although he was happy to dedicate works to friends without thought of any pecuniary reward.[32] These dedications did not only benefit the honour of the recipient. As Karl Julius Holzknecht has pointed out, dedication was a way of ensuring that the book was read, at least initially, by an appropriate recipient, who, the author hoped, would act favourably towards the work.[33] In this sense the dedicatee plays a crucial role in the publication process, passing their copy of the work onto other, probably like-minded, friends, and thereby beginning the process of diffusion in a direction favoured by the author. For example, in the dedication to Mainardo Cavalcanti in *De casibus*, Boccaccio explicitly asks Mainardo to correct the work if necessary, and then if he finds it suitable, to pass it on to friends they have in common, and then out into the public realm.[34] Not only will dedication help to diffuse a work in the appropriate direction, but in effect the dedicatee becomes a sponsor of the work. It is no longer only the author who, obviously biased, vouches for the worth of a work, but another more objective, but credible person. Thus, in the dedication to King Hugo IV of Cyprus in the *Genealogia*, Boccaccio asks the King to use his status to defend the work if he hears it being criticized.[35]

The dedicatory copy of a work was often presented formally to the dedicatee, or a work could be presented formally to a patron, with or without a dedication. The autograph of the *Teseida* (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Acq. e doni 325) contains a dedication to Fiammetta and an illumination taken to represent Boccaccio presenting his finished work to the dedicatee, although in this case both the presentation and the dedication to Fiammetta must be thought of as a purely literary

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[31] Robert K. Root, 'Publication before Printing', *Modern Language Association of America*, 28 (1913), 417-31 (pp. 426-27).
[32] For further comments by Bruni about Boccaccio see section 3.4.
[33] Karl Julius Holzknecht, *Literary Patronage in the Middle Ages* (New York: Octagon Books, 1966), p. 125.
[34] Giovanni Boccaccio, *De casibus virorum illustrium*, ed. by Pier Giorgio Ricci and Vittorio Zaccaria, in *Tutte le opere di Giovanni Boccaccio*, ed. by Vittore Branca, 12 vols (Milan: Mondadori, 1983), IX, 6.
[35] Giovanni Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante e difesa della poesia*, ed. by Carlo Muscetta (Rome: Edizioni dell'Ateneo, 1963), p. 378.

device.[36] A presentation copy is likely to have been of a higher quality than exemplars published by less formal means, although the degree of quality might vary depending on the status of the dedicatee or patron, and whether or not a reward was expected as a result of the presentation. Thus the autograph containing *De mulieribus*, which was dedicated to a countess in order to ingratiate the author, would probably have been copied with extreme care.[37] The attention spent on the presentation would be designed to flatter the recipient, but also imbue the text with a greater apparent status, making it more likely that the dedicatee would want to be associated with the text, thus ensuring its circulation and a greater protection from potential critics. It is therefore dangerous to make general assumptions about intended readership from a presentation copy which has been prepared for a very specific reader in a particularly careful manner.[38]

Informal publication would occur either when the author gave or sent a work to a friend or acquaintance, without dedication or presentation. The impetus to publish might wholly be on the side of the author, or there might be a request from a friend or acquaintance that the author release a piece of work into the public arena. Ernest H. Wilkins discusses various ways by which Petrarch's Italian lyrics circulated, and includes a category of poems which Petrarch sent out on his own initiative or to satisfy requests.[39] Once a work left an author's hands the recipient might choose to continue the work's circulation, in exactly the same way as a patron or dedicatee might. There is plenty of evidence that works were passed between friends. For example, in Boccaccio's epistle to Zanobi da Strada (VI) he refers to a manuscript belonging to Zanobi from which he has made a copy. The influence which a friend or acquaintance might exert over the presentation of a work is probably significantly less than that exerted by a patron. Attention paid to the presentation is more likely to be representative of the type of reader embodied by the recipient in mind, rather than aimed specifically at one reader who required a particularly expensive and ornate presentation. Thus it is less dangerous to generalize from this type of manuscript about the type of intended reader.

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[36] On the literary nature of Fiammetta see Giuseppe Billanovich, *Restauri boccacceschi* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1947), pp. 88-101 and Vittore Branca, *Giovanni Boccaccio. Profilo biografico*, rev. edn (Florence: Sansoni, 1997), pp. 27-28. The presentation of the autograph of the *Teseida* is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

[37] For further discussion of the dedication to Andrea Acciauioli see section 1.3.

[38] Pastore Stocchi also refers to this danger in relation to the autograph of the *Decameron* (p. 141).

[39] Ernest H. Wilkins, 'On the Circulation of Petrarch's Italian Lyrics during his Lifetime', *Modern Philology*, 46 (1948), 1-6 (p. 2).

Thus far publication has been discussed in the context of the single edition: the author bestowing a manuscript upon a patron or friend, who may continue the circulation by passing on the manuscript to serve as an exemplar for others, or having further copies made. In this case the author's exemplar may be seen by a very restricted number of people, perhaps only one, before additional copies are made. Although not as many readers could have immediate access to a newly published text at any one time as with a modern print run of thousands of books, scribal publication has the advantage that as long as there is interest in a work it can be 'republished' by copying it again. Copying could be done by the reader, but also by the author, who might contribute to the circulation process at a later stage by making additional copies of a manuscript, probably on demand once word about the work spread. As a reader, Boccaccio made copies of manuscripts of Petrarch's works while he was staying with him. These works were likely to have been published already, but Boccaccio had not been able to obtain copies.[40] Therefore, it must be remembered that even with scribal publication the modern scholar cannot expect always to deal with one exemplar prepared by the author.

This must have implications for the text and for the physical presentation of a manuscript. If an author makes more than one copy of an individual work, especially if the copies are made over a relatively large space of time, there is the possibility that either successive manuscripts will differ from the first through factors unconsciously affecting the author, such as natural scribal error resulting from lack of concentration, or there will be the temptation consciously to alter passages in the text, or the presentation of the text. With reference to the *Teseida* Giuseppe Vandelli comments:

> [è] probabile che il Boccaccio stesso, date le sue abitudini di calligrafo, eseguisse e divulgasse altri esemplari dell'opera di suo pugno, il che non esclude che ne permettesse od ordinasse trascrizioni anche per mano altrui; e poterono essere del solo testo, quale si ha in più codici, o anche via via del testo accompagnato da note che a lui paresse utile trarre dall'autografo e far conoscere.[41]

Consciously altering the text, perhaps years after it had been first published, was a temptation which was actively encouraged by the scribal medium. Love writes:

> Freed from the print-publishing author's obligation to produce a finalized text suitable for large-scale replication, the scribal author-publisher is able both to polish texts indefinitely and to personalize them to suit the tastes of particular recipients. This practice denies the sharp distinctions which can be drawn for print-published texts between drafts, the 'authorized' first-edition text, and revisions which are fully reflected on and well spaced in time. It also militates against our identifying any particular text

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[40] See *Ep.* X.

[41] Giuseppe Vandelli, 'Un autografo della *Teseide*', *SFI*, 2 (1929), 5-76 (p. 68).

> as the embodiment of a 'final intention', for while the process of revision may in some instances be one of honing and perfecting, it may equally be one of change for change's sake or of an ongoing adaptation to the expectations of readers. (p. 53) [42]

Another reason why scribal publishing does not always concern the single exemplar prepared by the author is because it may not be a continuous process. In other words, the work may not have been published as a whole, but issued in instalments. Dante published the *Commedia* in small groups of *canti* over several years,[43] and there is also evidence which suggests that individual stories from the *Decameron* circulated before its publication as a whole.[44] There are both advantages and disadvantages for the author who publishes continuously. On the one hand, if the work is issued in small sections readers might be more disposed towards making their own copies of the work, which will then go into circulation faster. According to Padoan, Dante chose to publish the first seven *canti* of the *Commedia* quickly in the hope that the announcement of a new work would revoke his sentence of exile.[45] On the other hand, continuous publishing makes it difficult for both author and reader to view the work as a coherent whole. The author might not be able to revise the work in its entirety, and in Dante's case would not even live to see the work fully published.[46] Readers might not want or be able to obtain copies of each instalment, leaving an incomplete work. From the perspective of the historian, this method of publishing cannot fail to have implications, for it might mean that there is no single archetype from which the manuscript tradition has grown.

For those who wished to own a copy of one of Boccaccio's works once it had been published, there were several methods available. Many readers chose to copy their own texts because it was cheaper and more convenient to do so, and in these instances

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[42] Branca, 'Copisti per passione', pp. 69-70. On Boccaccio's tendency to continuously rewrite his texts see also Pier Giorgio Ricci, 'Le fasi redazionali del *De mulieribus claris*', in Ricci, *Studi sulla vita e le opere del Boccaccio* (Milan: Ricciardi, 1985), pp. 125-35 (p. 128); Vittore Branca and Pier Giorgio Ricci, *Un autografo del 'Decameron' (Codice Hamiltoniano 90)* (Padua: Cedam, 1962), pp. 44-46.

[43] See Giorgio Padoan, 'Appunti sulla genesi e la pubblicazione della *Divina Commedia*', *Lettere italiane*, 29 (1977), 401-15 and Gianfranco Folena, 'La tradizione delle opere di Dante Alighieri', in *Atti del congresso internazionale di studi danteschi* (Florence: Sansoni, 1965), pp. 1-78 (pp. 40-42).

[44] Giorgio Padoan, 'Sulla genesi e la pubblicazione del *Decameron*', in *Il Boccaccio, le Muse, il Parnaso e l'Arno*, ed. by Giorgio Padoan (Florence: Olschki, 1978), pp. 93-121.

[45] Padoan, 'Appunti sulla genesi', p. 411.

[46] John Ahern has devoted an article to the importance of the metaphor of binding in the *Paradiso* which demonstrates how Dante wanted his work to be bound, both for hermeneutical and practical reasons: 'Binding the Book: Hermeneutics and Manuscript Production in *Paradiso* 33', *Modern Language Association of America*, 97 (1982), 800-09.

the relationship between the reader and the text-object is fairly straightforward.[47] Those that could afford to, however, could take advantage of the services offered by professional scribes. The wealthy book-buyer could either directly employ a copyist, who was typically trained as a notary or private tutor, or might be a member of the religious or a humanist in the fifteenth century, or liaise with a *cartolaio*.[48] Many stationers had sprung up in the fifteenth century, particularly in Florence, as the production of literary texts became commercialized.[49] Traditionally, the *cartolaio* sold writing supplies, such as stocks of parchment and paper, both unprepared and prepared for writing, and the materials for binding manuscripts, which was carried out by the shop.[50] Many also took commissions from purchasers for new manuscripts. The stationer might provide the exemplar and the materials, and then delegate the work to scribes, rubricators, and illuminators, who probably worked from home. Eventually, the manuscript would be bound by the shop.[51] In this bespoke business, the purchaser had control over every aspect of the manuscript's presentation, from the size of the leaves to the number of ornamental initials used, and the book reflects an individual owner's culture and economic status, as well as the value that was placed upon the text.

Some *cartolai* also sold second-hand and ready-made books. Manuscripts that were already made up tended to be those that were greatly in demand and were sure to sell, since a book represented a considerable investment. In the 1420s, the books stocked by the Florentine *cartolaio* Giovanni di Michele Baldini included school books, texts used by notaries, and some liturgical and devotional books, as well as the *Teseida* and *Filostrato* among a small selection of vernacular fiction.[52] In these cases a book could not reflect the individual taste of the reader, but rather the perceived taste of the type of reader thought most likely to buy it, although many of the ready-made books sold by stationers would in fact have been undecorated and unbound, ready to be completed to order after the purchase.[53]

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[47] De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', p. 398 and Parkes, 'Produzione e commercio', p. 333.
[48] De la Mare describes the typical social background of professional scribes on pp. 417-18 of 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes'.
[49] Ibid., p. 398. For the book trade in Rome see Paolo Cherubini, 'Note sul commercio librario a Roma nel '400', *Studi romani*, 33 (1985), 212-21.
[50] See A. C. de la Mare, 'Bartolomeo Scala's Dealings with Booksellers, Scribes, and Illuminators, 1459-63: The Book-Trade', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 39 (1976), 239-45.
[51] De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', pp. 404, 418.
[52] Albinia de la Mare, 'The Shop of a Florentine *Cartolaio* in 1426', in *Studi offerti a Roberto Ridolfi*, ed. by Berta Maracchi Biagiarelli and Dennis E. Rhodes (Florence: Olschki, 1973), pp. 237-48 (p. 239).
[53] De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', p. 336.

An individual who wished to purchase a printed book in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century also had several choices of outlet. Printers and publishers sometimes sold books directly from their shops and houses, or distributed them to booksellers. The *cartolai* who had organized manuscript production also sold new and second-hand printed books. In addition, itinerant sellers peddled short works alongside other goods and large fairs traded in books.[54] The relationship between the producer and purchaser of printed books is therefore significantly different from the bespoke service usually offered to the purchasers of manuscripts, and there is less opportunity for the reader to influence directly the presentation of the text-object. Even in cases where a publisher was also the reader of the text, the demands of the wider reading public had to be considered, since printing was driven by financial concerns. Despite the high cost of individual manuscripts in relation to single copies of printed editions, financing an edition was a significant investment and publishers were compelled to market and sell their books as efficiently and speedily as possible.[55] For these reasons, readers exercised a fundamental influence over the printed text-object, although the target audience was multiplied in size in comparison with the manuscript public, and was therefore less clearly defined. Printed books were also distributed all over Italy and beyond, and therefore the characteristics of the target market were further diffused. However, like the ready-made manuscripts bought from the *cartolaio*, printed books were generally sold unbound, and in the initial period at least, only with rubrication and blank spaces for initials, or entirely undecorated. Individual taste is therefore reflected in the binding and hand-finishing even of printed books. Commenting on editions printed by Peter Schöffer, Lotte Hellinga writes that: 'organizing the flourishing and painting by hand would produce an additional advantage in giving much scope for flexibility and variation of price levels'.[56]

Although I have outlined how the reader might influence the producer of the text-object, and therefore the presentation of the text-object, it is not possible, or advisable, to read everything in the text-object as a straightforward or pure reflection of the status of the reader or of the text. Naturally, there are other factors which affect the relationship between these elements in the reception process, some of which can also be

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[54] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 35-37.
[55] On the relative costs of manuscripts and printed books, see ibid., pp. 112-18.
[56] Lotte Hellinga, 'Peter Schoeffer and the Book-Trade in Mainz: Evidence for the Organization', in *Bookbindings and other Bibliophily: Essays in Honour of Anthony Hobson*, ed. by Dennis E. Rhodes (Verona: Edizioni Valdonega, 1994), pp. 131-83 (p. 162).

useful indicators of reception; for example, the technical ability of the scribe or printer, his or her financial circumstances, and the extent to which he or she was influenced by preceding book models. The availability of materials and restrictions placed on them can give misleading information in a study on reception. A temporary shortage of parchment might leave a scribe no option but to use paper, which came in a series of predetermined sheet sizes, or a printer might only own one set of type founts. These factors must therefore always be borne in mind during the following discussion.

Despite this lengthy consideration of the reciprocal relationship between the author, text-object, and reader, the second part of the thesis should not be considered more important than the first. The differing methodologies selected for Parts I and II have been chosen carefully for the complementary and potentially contrasting evidence for reception which each is in a position to uncover. Critical responses are particularly valuable because they can provide evidence of explicit judgements passed on Boccaccio, and although they often represent the views of the cultural élite, this means that they can offer significant insights into dominant cultural trends in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Evidence from material and paratextual responses is less easy to interpret because of its implicit nature, but it has the potential to reveal how many different sections of the reading public approached Boccaccio. Considered in tandem, the conclusions from both the first and second part of the thesis offer a more comprehensive survey of Boccaccio's *fortuna* than has been achieved previously.

PART I

CRITICAL RESPONSES TO BOCCACCIO

The aim of the first part of this thesis is to provide a detailed study of Boccaccio's critical reception in Italy, which will complement the studies previously carried out that have focused only on the *Decameron.* In the twentieth century, these have included Ciro Trabalza's chapter on 'L'arte del *Decameron* secondo la critica' in his *Studi sul Boccaccio* (Città di Castello: Lapi, 1906), followed by Vittore Branca's monograph *Linee di una storia della critica al 'Decameron'* in 1939, and Alberto Chiari's study on 'La fortuna del Boccaccio' ten years later, which despite the title concerns only the *Decameron.*[1] Whilst these studies undoubtedly provide valuable insights into Boccaccio's success as a vernacular author, the conclusions reached cannot necessarily be unproblematically applied to Boccaccio as an author of Latin works, or even of the remaining texts written in the vernacular.

In order to contextualize previous research and offer new evidence for the 'minor' works, this chapter considers the presentation of Boccaccio as an author as a whole, unlimited by constraints relating to the style or language of his texts.[2] Against this background, particular emphasis is given to the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*, which between them are sufficiently different in language, style, and content to provide a more balanced view of Boccaccio's overall *fortuna.* A wide range of critical responses found in a variety of sources, such as prose, poetry, commentaries, letters, and sermons are evaluated here. Although paratexts relating specifically to the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* are discussed in detail in Chapters 6-8, I have given some consideration to paratextual responses found in other works by Boccaccio in Chapter 3. These written references to Boccaccio or his works are distinguished from indicators of reception such as statistics, which relate to the number of texts produced and to their geographical and social distribution. Similarly, imitations or translations of Boccaccio's works are not considered on their own merits, but only where they contribute to a wider discussion of the critical responses.

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[1] Chiari's study is found in *Questioni e correnti di storia letteraria*, ed. by Umberto Bosco and others (Milan: Marzorati, 1949), pp. 275-348.

[2] Achille Tartaro has written a critical history of Boccaccio which also considers his entire output (*Boccaccio* (Palermo: Palumbo, 1981)). However, since Tartaro's study extends to the twentieth century, the evidence presented for Boccaccio's Renaissance reception is necessarily limited. Much of Tartaro's information is derived from biographies of Boccaccio, but he fails to define clearly the nature of the source or take into consideration the wide range of other responses available.

Unlike previous critical histories, Chapter 1 begins with an analysis of the way in which Boccaccio elected to present himself to his reading public, friends, and acquaintances, using the texts of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*, and his letters as evidence. Chapter 2 considers how Boccaccio's acquaintances responded to the authorial persona presented in the full range of Boccaccio's texts and also to their own experience of the man himself, while Chapter 3 charts responses made by those who had no contact with Boccaccio while he was alive, or who wrote after his death. Rather than impose an artificial order based on a predefined geographical or cultural structure, each chapter is further divided using themes suggested by the responses themselves. This means that, although I have continued to draw connections and parallels, responses in Chapters 1 and 2 tend to be focused around individuals, while groups of individual responses are considered in Chapter 3. The chronological order which governs each chapter is also disrupted on occasion in order to present thematically coherent responses. This will enable the reader to see how responses guided by different criteria developed at the same time. The discussion in these chapters is concluded at the end of Chapter 3, in order to highlight general trends in the critical reception before proceeding to an analysis of material and paratextual responses in the second part of the thesis.

CHAPTER 1

Boccaccio and his Authorial Image

The root of the process by which Boccaccio's work and his authorial persona are received must naturally lie with the author himself and the manner in which he chooses to present his image to the public. The documents which witness how Boccaccio desired others to receive his character and literary compositions, and how he viewed himself and his works, consist not only of isolated letters, such as his frequently cited comment on the *Decameron* written to Mainardo Cavalcanti, but also of the literary texts themselves. Considering both literary works and the full range of extant letters written by Boccaccio illustrates how the author chose to present himself in both a fictional and non-fictional context.

My analysis of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* is restricted to the passages in which Boccaccio speaks explicitly about his literary aims and objectives through an authorial persona. In the *Teseida* these occur in the dedication, the invocation to the Muses, the gods, and his lover at the beginning of Book I, the Author's address to his book at the end of Book XII, and his address to the Muses and their reply in the final sonnets. The *Decameron* contains a proem, an extended 'intervention' by the Author at the beginning of Day IV, and a conclusion, while *De mulieribus* opens with a dedication and proem, and ends with a conclusion by the Author.

The way in which Boccaccio presents himself in a fictional context is closely related to the genre of the text, and his literary persona alters over time as he matured as an author and came under different influences. The *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* are barometers of these changes, as each represents a different period in Boccaccio's life, in the journey from the youthful writer of romance to the serious scholar of the classical world.

1.1 *TESEIDA*

The composition of the *Teseida* coincides with the period around 1340 when Boccaccio left his beloved Naples and returned to Florence.[1] The combination of various literary styles and themes evident in this work reflects an important stage in Boccaccio's poetic development as he moved from one cultural centre to another. Petrarch was already an

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[1] Alberto Limentani dates the work '1339-1341?' in the introduction to his edition of the *Teseida*, p. 231.

influence on Boccaccio, although the two poets did not meet in person for another ten years.[2] For the subject matter of the *Teseida*, however, Boccaccio was inspired by Dante and Statius, although neither is mentioned explicitly. Boccaccio reveals that his stimulus was Dante's comment at the end of Book II, chapter II of *De vulgari eloquentia*: 'arma vero nullum latium adhuc invenio poetasse' [but I find no Italian up to now who has written any poetry on deeds of arms], but he does so only at the end of the *Teseida* with his observation that he is the first to 'cantare | di Marte [...] | nel volgar lazio' (XII. 84).[3] On to the theme of arms Boccaccio also grafted a love story, creating an ambitious blend of romance and classical epic.[4] The dual themes of love and war are reflected in Boccaccio's invocation to both Mars and Venus, and her son Cupid, at the beginning of the book (I. 3), which prefigures the central episode where the two heroes, Arcita and Palemone, pray to Mars and Venus respectively before they compete to win the love of Emilia (VII. 24-69).[5] Boccaccio is equally coy about the classical source from which he drew most inspiration. Although it has been demonstrated that much of the material is derived from Statius's *Thebaid*, Boccaccio refers only to 'una antichissima istoria' (p. 246) in the dedication and to 'una istoria antica' (I. 2).[6]

The *Teseida* is dedicated to a fictional reader, Fiammetta, who is employed by Boccaccio to justify his decisions.[7] Firstly, the Author is keen to defend and explain his use of the vernacular. Since it was uncommon for females to be able to read Latin, Boccaccio explains that he has adapted an ancient story for Fiammetta 'in latino volgare e per rima, acciò che più dilettasse' (p. 246). The term 'latino volgare' is deliberately employed, recalling Dante's use of the word 'latium' in his defence of the 'vulgare illustre', in order to make the vital distinction between the *Teseida* and other vernacular

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[2] See Martin L. McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation in the Italian Renaissance: The Theory and Practice of Literary Imitation in Italy from Dante to Bembo* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p. 51; E. H. Wilkins, 'Boccaccio's Early Tributes to Petrarch', *Speculum*, 38 (1963), 79-87. On the meeting between Boccaccio and Petrarch, see Branca, *Profilo biografico*, pp. 84-85.
[3] Dante Alighieri, *De vulgari eloquentia*, ed. by Claudio Marazzini and Concetto Del Popolo (Milan: Mondadori, 1990), p. 80.
[4] Modern critics have generally seen Boccaccio's attempt to graft a romance onto the epic tradition as unsuccessful. See, for example, Pietro Boitani, 'An Essay on Boccaccio's *Teseida*', in *Chaucer and Boccaccio*, ed. by Pietro Boitani (Oxford: Society for the Study of Modern Languages and Literature, 1977), pp. 1-60 (pp. 10-11); Winthrop Wetherbee, 'History and Romance in Boccaccio's *Teseida*', *StB*, 20 (1991-1992), 173-84 (pp. 175-79).
[5] The importance of this episode is highlighted by the long gloss added by Boccaccio. This is reproduced in Appendix II of David Anderson's, 'Boccaccio's Glosses on Statius', *StB*, 22 (1994), 3-134.
[6] For example, David Anderson demonstrates that Statius's *Thebaid* was the primary source in his monograph *Before the Knight's Tale: Imitation of Classical Epic in Boccaccio's 'Teseida'* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988).
[7] See Introduction, n. 36.

texts of an inferior literary quality. The worthiness of the characters adopted from the ancient text is demonstrated by their nobility: 'nobili giovani furono e di real sangue discesi', and the subject matter is deemed appropriate because it speaks of love: 'bella sì per la materia della quale parla, che è d'amore' (p. 246). In the courtly love tradition nobility was an important theme, and a female audience judged appropriate. However, Boccaccio is careful to distinguish Fiammetta 'per intelletto' from the majority of female readers, whom he describes as 'poco intelligenti'. For this reason he has not 'cessata né storia né favola né chiuso parlare in altra guisa' (p. 247), and the implication beyond the fiction of Fiammetta is that the *Teseida* has been written for men and the minority of women educated in and appreciative of a variety of literary styles.

The dedication and Author's addresses in the *Teseida* allow Boccaccio to situate and authorize his text within the framework of the *dolce stil novo* tradition. Fiammetta is not a disinterested recipient of the *Teseida*, but the 'crudel donna' who has spurned the Author's love, causing him to suffer greatly. As the vulnerable lover, dependent on a woman described as 'più tosto celestiale che umana', Boccaccio writes himself into the courtly love tradition, undoubtedly following the example of Dante and Beatrice. The opening line of the dedication in the *Teseida* immediately signals the influence of both courtly love and Dante. The implicit reference to Francesca da Rimini's lament in *Inferno* V. 121-23 warns readers against the sin of lust, for which Paolo and Francesca were confined to the second circle of Hell, and at the same time provides an example of chivalrous love, in the guise of Lancelot and Guinevere, whose story Paolo and Francesca were reading. The classical epic tradition upon which Boccaccio was drawing is also highlighted in Francesca's reference to Dante's 'dottore', Virgil.[8] The *Teseida* also closes with a reference to the same episode in the *Commedia*. As a courtly lover, Boccaccio must strive to earn recognition from his lady, which he does by writing the *Teseida*. When he has finished writing, Boccaccio instructs the Muses to deliver the book to Fiammetta. Moved by the amorous subject matter, she sighs 'ahi, quante d'amor forze in costor foro!', echoing Dante's expression when he recognizes Francesca in *Inferno* V. 112-14. Like Francesca, Fiammetta is moved to love through reading, thus fulfilling Boccaccio's aim, although Boccaccio has carefully removed any reference to transgression in his text.

Casting himself in the role of courtly lover, Boccaccio pre-empts the experience of the hero-lovers in the *Teseida*. Indeed, the Author explicitly identifies himself with

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[8] Boccaccio glosses 'e ciò sa 'l tuo dottore' (*Inf.* V. 123) with examples from Virgil's *Aeneid* in his *Esposizioni* (Dante Alighieri, *La divina commedia. Inferno*, ed. by Natalino Sapegno (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1991), p. 64).

the plot, explaining to Fiammetta that through the story 'potrete [...] e qual fosse innanzi e quale sia stata poi la vita mia che più non mi voleste per vostro, discernere' (p. 247). Presenting the ensuing narrative as a reflection of personal experience makes the *Teseida* appear more accessible and perhaps more appealing to readers. The *Teseida* was a romance designed to be enjoyed, as well as a serious piece of literature aimed at educated readers. This work is unique in Boccaccio's *oeuvre* by virtue of the commentary which the author himself wrote and appended to it, illustrating that he was clearly conscious of his literary responsibility as the first author of arms in the vernacular, and anxious to gain authorization. The commentary is also an admission that in reality not all readers would have been as familiar with 'chiuso parlare' as Boccaccio might have liked.[9]

1.2 *DECAMERON*

The *Decameron* was composed approximately a decade after the *Teseida*, but the comments made by the author-narrator share some of the characteristics presented in the earlier work.[10] Love is still an important theme for which women provide the ideal audience. Although the *Decameron* is not formally dedicated to an individual woman, Boccaccio claims in the proem that it is written for amorous women who are unable to find respite from their love in the outdoor pursuits enjoyed by men, and the *novelle* that Boccaccio recounts to distract them concern 'piacevoli e aspri casi d'amore e altri fortunati avvenimenti' (p. 5).[11] However, differences in the style and subject matter of the *Decameron* mean that it is no longer appropriate for the Author to be governed by the conventions of courtly love. Instead, Boccaccio introduces himself as a more mature character. He is strongly marked by the experience of an 'altissimo e nobile amore' (p. 3), perhaps an allusion to his love for Fiammetta, and hence he is able to empathize with his readers, but the pain caused by this love has passed, leaving only the 'sento dilettevole' (p. 4).

Boccaccio is not concerned with using his fictional audience to defend the *Decameron* in the same manner as the *Teseida*. The idle ladies are precisely those

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[9] The significance of the commentary is considered in greater detail in section 5.2.
[10] According to Branca, the *Decameron* was composed between 1349 and 1351 (*Tradizione*, II, 147-62). On the meeting between Boccaccio and Petrarch, see Branca, *Profilo biografico*, pp. 84-85.
[11] According to Victoria Kirkham, the topos of 'idle women' can be traced back to Ovid's *Heroides*. See her 'Boccaccio's Dedication to Women in Love', in *The Sign of Reason in Boccaccio's Fiction*, ed. by Victoria Kirkham (Florence: Olschki, 1993), pp. 117-29 (pp. 120-21).

'donne poco intelligenti' from whom he took great pains to distinguish Fiammetta. On account of these readers, whom he describes as 'semplici giovinette', Boccaccio comments in the conclusion that 'sciocchezza sarebbe stata l'andar cercando e faticandosi in trovar cose molte esquisite, e gran cura porre di molto misuratamente parlare' (p. 962). Not having been 'né a Atene né a Bologna o a Parigi [...] a studiare', they are in need of more explanation and detail ('più distesamente parlar') than 'quegli che hanno negli studii gl'ingegni assottigliati' (p. 963). Thus, Boccaccio explains that he has chosen to write 'novellette [...] in istilo umilissimo e rimesso' (p. 345). Without any other measure against which to evaluate these apparently modest comments, the intended audience for the *Decameron* and how Boccaccio himself viewed the work remain ambiguous.

The situation is complicated because a large proportion of the narrator's comments in the *Decameron* is taken up with defending the work against criticisms that have already been made (introduction to Day IV) and against criticisms that might be made (conclusion). In defending himself from these Boccaccio does little to clarify his moral position; there is certainly no recantation, often found in courtly love poetry and particularly characteristic of Petrarch. Neither is it clear whether this is evidence that the initial diffusion of individual *novelle* attracted critics, or whether the introduction and defence against criticism was simply a rhetorical device. At best, Boccaccio's defensive stance serves only to acknowledge the potentially controversial nature of the subject matter and the language of the *Decameron*, despite Boccaccio's statement in the proem that he wished to provide 'utile consiglio' as well as 'diletto' (p. 5).[12]

The love poets Guido Cavalcanti, Dante, and Cino da Pistoia are invoked to defend Boccaccio against the criticism of writing about love in old age, but Boccaccio did not deem the *Decameron* a suitable context for introducing classical precedents: 'e se non fosse che uscir serebbe del modo usato del ragionare, io producerei le istorie in mezzo, e quelle tutte piene mostrerei d'antichi uomini e valorosi, ne' loro più maturi anni sommamente avere studiato di compiacere alle donne' (p. 350). In keeping with the fiction of an unlettered audience Boccaccio presents direct experience as his main source and inspiration. In the introduction to Day I Boccaccio presents himself as an observer of the Black Death, which he says he would not believe 'se dagli occhi di molti

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[12] Padoan interprets the criticisms Boccaccio recounts at the beginning of Day IV as evidence for the independent circulation of *novelle* belonging to Days I-III in 'Sulla genesi', p. 98. The issue of Boccaccio's morality continues to concern modern critics. See, for example, R. Hastings, 'To Teach or Not to Teach: The Moral Dimension of the *Decameron* Reconsidered', *Italian Studies*, 44 (1989), 19-40, which contains a summary of critical perspectives in the twentieth century (pp. 19-24).

e *da' miei* non fosse stato veduto' [my italics] (p. 11). Similarly, in the conclusion Boccaccio presents himself as an observer and recorder:

> se alcuna cosa in alcuna n'è, la qualità delle novelle l'hanno richesta, le quali se con ragionevole occhio da intendente persona fian riguardate, assai aperto sarà conosciuto, se io quelle della lor forma trar non avessi voluto, altramenti raccontar non poterlo (pp. 959-60).

1.3 *DE MULIERIBUS CLARIS*

De mulieribus represents the mature phase of Boccaccio's literary career. He began work on it in 1361 in a period in which he had dedicated himself to writing mainly scholarly encyclopedic and biographical works in Latin under the influence of Petrarch's humanistic ideals.[13] At the time Boccaccio was composing the first draft of *De mulieribus*, Leonzio Pilato was lecturing in Greek at the Florentine Studio through Boccaccio's agency. Boccaccio had also accommodated Leonzio in his own home and received private lessons, attaining a greater proficiency in the language than Petrarch.[14] Under the influence of his mentor and friend Boccaccio felt compelled to disown symbolically the epistles imitating Dante's style which he had written in his youth by erasing his name from them. Likewise, he removed his name from the vernacular translations he had made of Livy and Valerius Maximus in line with Petrarch's belief that the classics should only be read in the original.[15]

Reflecting these changes in Boccaccio's inspiration, the Author's comments present *De mulieribus* in a very different manner from either the *Teseida* or *Decameron.* Love is no longer the main theme, but the desire to honour the glory of famous pagan women of Greco-Roman antiquity (preface, p. 8). It is therefore entirely appropriate that Boccaccio names Petrarch and ancient compilers of the lives of famous men as his inspiration (preface, p. 8).[16] While Boccaccio did not wish to bring up examples from ancient history to support his case for writing of love in the *Decameron*, *De mulieribus* is the appropriate forum for a brief description of unvirtuous famous men from history, to justify the inclusion of some less than virtuous famous women (preface, p. 10).

Rather than presenting himself as a lover drawing on his own experience of love, Boccaccio explicitly describes himself as a scholar ('hom[o] scolastic[us]', p. 4).

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[13] On dating see Ricci, 'Le fasi redazionali' and Vittorio Zaccaria, 'Le fasi redazionali del *De mulieribus claris*', *StB*, 1 (1963), 253-332.
[14] Branca, *Profilo biografico*, pp. 114-16.
[15] McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, p. 53.
[16] According to Virginia Brown, the classical texts which Boccaccio knew were the anonymous *De viris illustribus*, wrongly ascribed to Pliny, and *De viris illustribus* begun by Jerome (Giovanni Boccaccio, *Famous Women*, p. 481, n. a (preface)).

Like the two previous works, *De mulieribus* is dedicated to a woman, but unlike Fiammetta or the idle ladies Andrea Acciaiuoli is not a fictional construct.[17] Dedicating a book to an illustrious patron could provide tangible benefits for an author, from financial reward to increased fame. However, Boccaccio was generally disdainful of patronage. He refused a papal secretaryship and insisted that the *Genealogia* was dedicated to King Hugo because the King was interested in his work and desired it, not because he expected any financial reward.[18] Other works were dedicated to friends, often at their request.[19] The impetus for the dedication to Andrea clearly came from Boccaccio, however, since he describes how he considered who would be best for the work. Pier Giorgio Ricci suggests that Boccaccio added the dedication to facilitate the request for financial support he was planning to make to Andrea's brother, Niccolò.[20] Boccaccio was also well aware of the support his reputation could receive from the dedication. He asks Andrea to publish the work, which would then be 'ab insultibus malignantium tutus' [safe from malicious criticism] (pp. 6-7).[21]

Andrea was not the inspiration for *De mulieribus*, either historically or fictionally. An appropriate dedicatee, because women are the subject of the book, Andrea is presented with a *fait accompli*, which Boccaccio advises her to read.[22] Unlike the lovestruck Author of the *Teseida*, or even the Author of the *Decameron* accused of being overly preoccupied with ladies, the Author of *De mulieribus* assumes an authoritative and strictly non-amorous role in relation to Andrea. However, there are some similarities between the works. As in the *Decameron*, the Author advises that the work offers both pleasure and moral guidance: 'aliquando legas suadeo; suis quippe suffragiis tuis blandietur ociis, dum feminea virtute et historiarum lepiditate letaberis. Nec incassum, arbitror, agitabitur lectio si, facinorum preteritarum mulierum emula, egregium animum tuum concitabis in melius' [I urge you to read it occasionally: its counsels will sweeten your leisure, and you will find delight in the virtues of your sex

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[17] She was the Countess of Altavilla and a member of Queen Giovanna's court at Naples.
[18] On the refusal of the secretaryship see Holzknecht, p. 184. For Boccaccio's comments in the *Genealogia* see Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante e difesa*, pp. 374-80.
[19] The *Buccolicum carmen* was dedicated to Donato degli Albanzani, the *Ameto* to Niccolò di Bartolo del Buono, and *De casibus virorum illustrium* to Mainardo Cavalcanti.
[20] Ricci, 'Le fasi redazionali', p. 131.
[21] Niccolò Acciaiuoli and Boccaccio had studied together under Giovanni Mazzuoli da Strada in Florence, before serving their mercantile apprenticeships in Naples. Acciaiuoli subsequently entered the service of King Robert, and ever desirous of returning to Naples, Boccaccio hoped that Acciaiuoli's influence would secure him a position at the court (Branca, *Profilo biografico*, pp. 23, 101-02).
[22] Boccaccio continued to revise *De mulieribus* after it was dedicated to Andrea, therefore he dedicates to her 'quod hactenus a me [...] scriptum est' [what has been written by me up until now] (p. 4).

and in the charm of the stories. Nor will the perusal have been in vain, I believe, if it spurs your noble spirit to emulation of the deeds of women in the past] (pp. 4-5). Possible criticisms about the virtue of the subject matter and the manner in which Boccaccio has dealt with it are also raised in the proem and conclusion. However, the tone does not carry the playfulness so evident in the *Decameron* and there is little ambiguity surrounding Boccaccio's exhortations to virtue. The conclusion offers an apology as much as a defence of his decisions, illustrating the confidence Boccaccio had placed in his work, to the extent that readers are enjoined to censor or adapt the offending passages themselves: 'minus debite scripta augentes minuentesque corrigant et emendent, ut potius alicuius in bonum vigeat opus' [let them correct and emend the inappropriate passages by addition or deletion] (pp. 474-75). This suggests that Boccaccio placed his readers on the same footing as himself and had faith in their judgement. As educated readers, they would have been well versed in the practice of annotating and glossing texts.

On the surface, Boccaccio proposes that *De mulieribus* will appeal to both women and men: 'existimans harum facinora non minus mulieribus quam viris etiam placitura' [it is my belief that the accomplishments of these ladies will please women no less than men] (pp. 11-13), although there are few other suggestions that Boccaccio had women in mind. As I have already mentioned, Boccaccio exhorts Andrea to read his book and, as in the *Decameron*, uses the lack of education in his female readership ('ut [...] hystoriarum ignare sint' [since they are unacquainted with history], pp. 12-13) to justify the length of his biographies. However, like Fiammetta, Boccaccio distinguishes Andrea from most women, considering her name to reflect the very *male* qualities which she exhibits in such quantity (dedication, p. 4). This reflects the practical observation that only a small minority of women, and probably only those of noble birth, would have received an education comparable with men, which would have enabled them to read a text in Latin. Female readers do not appear to have been Boccaccio's first concern, for he opens the dedication claiming that he initially wrote more for his friends' pleasure than for the benefit of the broader public, which implies a literary circle composed of men, since to my knowledge there is no extant evidence that Boccaccio circulated his works to women apart from Andrea.

1.4 BOCCACCIO'S LETTERS

Boccaccio frequently belittles his abilities and status as an author within his literary works, where affected modesty is part of the traditional rhetoric used in dedications. For

example, in the *Teseida* Boccaccio asks Fiammetta to keep 'il presente picciolo libretto, poco presento alla vostra grandezza ma grande alla mia picciolezza' (p. 248). In the dedication to women in love in the *Decameron* Boccaccio frequently plays down his ability, referring to it as 'quel poco' and 'non molto' (p. 4), while *De mulieribus* is consistently referred to as 'libellus' [little book] (pp. 2, 4) or 'opusculum' [little work] (pp. 2, 10, 474).[23] Letters written by Boccaccio do not contain many references to his own status, but comments that are made are often marked by a strong sense of his limitations as an author. Boccaccio's friend and correspondent, Francesco Nelli, gave Boccaccio the nickname 'di vetro', suggesting that he was known for his sensitivity towards criticism, but it is less easy in the context of his private correspondence to evaluate how much modesty was feigned, and how much it is a true reflection of his self-image.[24]

Many of the comments Boccaccio makes about himself were written towards the end of his life, when advancing age may have brought genuine feelings of weariness and frustration that he had not achieved all that he wished. In a letter written to Iacopo Pizzinga only four years before his death, Boccaccio presents himself as an author that has failed to find fame:

> Non absque erubescentia mentis frontisque in id veniam, ut tibi aperiam paucis ignaviam meam. Ingenti, fateor, animo in stratum iam iter intravi, trahente me perpetuandi nominis desiderio et fiducia ducis incliti preceptoris mei [...]. Sane, dum hinc inde me nunc domesticis nunc publicis occupari permicto curis et elevatos inspicio vertices celum fere superantes, cepi tepescere et sensim cecidere animi atque defecere vires, et spe posita contingendi, vilis factus atque desperans, et abeuntibus quos itineris sumpseram ostensores, iam canus substiti, et quod michi plorabile malum est, nec retro gradum flectere audeo nec ad superiora conscendere queo: et sic, ni nova desuper infundatur gratia, inglorius nomen una cum cadavere commendabo sepulcro. (*Ep*. XIX, pp. 670-72)
>
> [Not without blushing of the mind and of the face will I come, to disclose to you my worthlessness with a few words. I confess that I entered with great spirit onto the road that was already paved, with the desire of perpetuating my name and with trust in my distinguished teacher as guide drawing me on [...]. Certainly, while from time to time I allow myself to be occupied sometimes with private and sometimes with public matters, and [while] I look at the peaks raised up almost rising above the sky, I begin to grow lukewarm and gradually my spirits have fallen away and my strength has failed, and, with hope of reaching [the sky] having been set aside, I have become worthless and hopeless and, in the light of the departure of those whom I had adopted as showers of the way, I have become now grey-haired, and, a matter which is lamentable evil to me, I neither have the courage to turn my step back, nor can I climb up to higher things: and

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[23] Dante uses the term 'libello' in the *Vita nuova* (I. 1; XII. 17; XXV. 9; XXVIII. 2) and *Convivio* (II. ii. 2). 'Libellus' is also a commonplace in classical writers. See for example, Ovid, *Amores*, I, preface; II. xvii. 33; III. xii. 7.

[24] *Ep*. XIII from Boccaccio to Francesco Nelli (p. 596).

> so, unless new grace be poured upon me from above, I, ingloriously, shall entrust my name together with my corpse to the tomb.]

Boccaccio suggests that he had not begun his career with such feelings of cynicism, and the youthful enthusiasm he describes is consistent with a comment he made to Zanobi da Strada nearly twenty years earlier in 1353:

> Iuvat meminisse illius egregii verbi Senece nostri: "Qui notus nimis omnibus, | ignotus moritur sibi". Michi pauper vivo, dives autem et splendidus aliis viverem; et plus cum aliquibus meis libellis parvulis voluptatis sentio quam cum magno diademate sentiant reges tui. (*Ep.* IX, p. 564)
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> [It is pleasing to recall that notable statement of our Seneca: 'He who is excessively well known to everyone dies unknown to himself'. I live unto myself a poor man, but would I were living unto others as a rich and distinguished person; and I derive more pleasure in the company of some of my little books than would your kings derive with their great crowns].

Although Boccaccio uses the diminuitive 'libellus' to describe his works, there is no accompanying sense of bitterness.

The letter to Iacopo Pizzinga also reveals that one of Boccaccio's principal motivators was his teacher. Petrarch is probably the teacher Boccaccio had in mind, since he frequently refers to Petrarch in letters to other correspondents as 'inclitus preceptor meus' [my illustrious teacher] (*Ep.* XVIII, p. 654; *Ep.* XIX, pp. 666, 682; *Ep.* XXIII, p. 720; *Ep.* XXIV, p. 724). I have already noted that Petrarch was a significant influence on Boccaccio's approach to literary scholarship, and his influence may also have extended to Boccaccio's self-image. Groups of intellectuals, including Boccaccio, saw themselves as disciples of Petrarch, and Petrarch's work must have been a constant measure for Boccaccio. The fame that Petrarch achieved within his own lifetime may well have contributed to the disaffection Boccaccio felt for his own *fortuna*. When addressing Petrarch in person Boccaccio is explicitly subordinate; in 1367 Boccaccio wrote that his name would only be known to future generations because of his correspondence with Petrarch, although people would be astonished that a man of Petrarch's status had written to a man so 'inerti ignavoque' [unskilful and worthless] (*Ep.* XV, p. 640). Boccaccio compares his reputation unfavourably to that of Petrarch again in a letter to Pietro da Monteforte in 1372: 'multa mea vitia occultat et contegit fame mee tenuitas, ubi etiam nevum minimum illius [Petrarcae] splendida gloria accusaret' (*Ep.* XX, p. 686) [I have many faults, but because of my obscurity no one knows of them; but, the glorious fame of Petrarch would draw attention to and find fault with even his most insignificant blemish]. Boccaccio then goes on to defend Petrarch's

suggestion, made in a letter some years earlier, that Boccaccio had decided to burn his early vernacular poems rather than be judged second best to Petrarch.[25] Boccaccio writes to Pietro: 'queso non adeo severe dictum putes: in me dictum est, non in alios' [I do not want you to judge the remark too severely: it was said against me and not against others] (p. 686). Since Boccaccio did not actually burn his early poems, the claim illustrates that, in some instances at least, Boccaccio preferred to cultivate the image of a devoted disciple rather than promote his own authorial status.

The disparaging comments Boccaccio makes about the *Genealogia* in the same letter to Pietro da Monteforte seem to be born of affected modesty rather than real sentiment or a desire to present himself as inferior to Petrarch. Boccaccio describes how Pietro has dedicated himself to raising Boccaccio's profile, and in particular praising the *Genealogia*, bringing them both to the attention of distinguished and erudite men ('insignes eruditosque viros' (p. 677)). Pietro was a cultured man and professor of law in the Neapolitan *Studio* and evidently wanted to encourage other scholars to read the *Genealogia*, viewing it as a work which necessitated careful reading and study, because he took the time to make corrections in his copy. He even suggested that the work was deposited in the library of San Domenico Maggiore, the most important theological school in Naples (p. 680). Boccaccio feels obliged to counteract what might be seen as self promotion by commenting that of course the *Genealogia* will seem ridiculous to Pietro ['ridiculus'] (p. 676). He also makes the (improbable) statement that he would not have been able to compose the work if he had not had Pietro's assistance and praise. Pietro was only able to make a copy of the *Genealogia* because Ugo da Sanseverino, another wealthy and powerful man,[26] was so keen to read it that he could not wait for it to be circulated officially. Clearly Boccaccio's Latin works were greatly in demand, since it is unlikely that someone would be so keen to read a work if they had no previous experience of the author's talent. In order for the manuscript to reach Pietro, Ugo must have passed on his copy, which he is only likely to have done if he judged it worthy to be read by others, or if he had been requested to do so, indicating that demand for the *Genealogia* was widespread. The amount of effort Boccaccio says he exerted in the composition of the *Genealogia* and his defence of its apparently un-Christian content also reveal the importance the work holds for the author.

In a letter to Niccolò Orsini, written in 1371, Boccaccio again presents himself in a negative fashion as old, penniless, and destined to be forgotten: 'sane, dum me

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[25] The letter in question is *Sen.* V. 2 addressed to Boccaccio (1364-66). Petrarch's comments will be discussed in greater detail in section 2.1.
[26] Boccaccio, *Epistole*, p. 822, n. 11.

ipsum, substantiolas tenues meas et umbreculam nominis et semisopitam status mei favillulam intueor [...] ipsam fortunam meam rideo, que meliores annos meos circumegit ludibrio famamque nebula velavit stigia' [certainly, when I regard myself, my meagre wealth, the obscurity of the name, and the semi-spent spark of my position, I laugh at my own fortune, which surrounded my best years with mockery and covered my fame with dark cloud] (*Ep.* XVIII, p. 654). It is tempting to interpret this comment as evidence that Boccaccio regretted writing works as a younger man which attracted derision and mockery. There has been much controversy over whether Boccaccio rejected the *Decameron* as frivolous entertainment towards the end of his life on the basis of one of the few, and certainly the most famous, pieces of explicit evidence that exists for Boccaccio's attitude towards his own work. In a letter to Mainardo Cavalcanti in 1373, Boccaccio responds to Mainardo's admission that he has not read the *Decameron*: 'te libellos meos non legisse, quod quasi magnum fateris crimen, cum rideam, non miror; non enim tanti sunt ut, aliis pretermissis, magna cum solertia legi debeant' [I am not surprised, though I am amused, that you have not read my little books, something which you confess as if it were a great crime; for they are not of such importance that, neglecting other things, they should be read with great care] (p. 704). Taken literally these comments indicate that Boccaccio did not assign great importance to the *Decameron* as a work of scholarly erudition. Branca comments 'il *Decameron* appare in queste righe non come un testo di letteratura, ma come un libro di divertimento'.[27] Mainardo was not a man of great culture, but even if he considered the *Decameron* only as a piece of entertaining literature he did not perceive it to be so exciting that he could not wait to read it.[28] Taking into account Boccaccio's 'excuses' for Mainardo that there was not enough time for a young soldier to read during the summer months, especially when he has a new wife, the work had probably been in circulation for some twenty years by 1373, so Mainardo's enthusiasm can hardly be compared to that of Ugo da Sanseverino or Pietro da Montefeltro.

Boccaccio says he is happy for Mainardo to read the *Decameron* when he has the time, but it is a different matter where women are concerned: 'sane, quod inclitas mulieres tuas domesticas nugas meas legere permiseris non laudo, quin imo queso per fidem tuam ne feceris' [certainly, I do not praise that you allow the illustrious women of your house to read my trifles, in fact, on the contrary, I beg you not to do this on your honour] (p. 704). He then goes on to detail the bad things contained within the

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[27] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 176.

[28] For biographical information on Cavalcanti see L. Miglio, 'Cavalcanti (de Cavalcantibus) Mainardo (Maghinardo)', in *DBI*, XXII (1979), 639-40.

Decameron and the negative impression women will gain of him if they read these things. The preservation of an autograph of the *Decameron*, copied by Boccaccio in the 1370s, counterbalances the view that Boccaccio did not wish to concern himself with this work in his old age. The elegance of the autograph's presentation also implies that Boccaccio did not deem it a mere 'libellus', and only a year before his death Boccaccio was keen to obtain a copy of the letter in which Petrarch had commented on the *Decameron* and provided a translation for the final *novella*.[29] Indeed, many critics now interpret the comments in the letter as rhetorical modesty which should not be taken at face value. For example, Tartaro comments: 'la vivace palinodia del *Decameron* che leggiamo nella tarda lettera a Mainardo Cavalcanti sembra essere più uno scherzo che una convinta sconfessione del capolavoro'.[30]

Despite Mainardo's relaxed attitude towards the *Decameron*, he apparently regarded Boccaccio highly as an author and was probably familiar with other works, since Boccaccio refers to him as a 'patron[us]' [patron] and describes an expensive gift he received from Mainardo: 'misisti pridie aureum vasculum et nummos aureos in vasculo' [on the previous day you sent a small gold vessel and gold coins in the small vessel] (p. 706). There are also other suggestions that Boccaccio was popular enough among his contemporaries for them to offer patronage. In the letter to Niccolò Orsini cited above, Boccaccio reveals that he was offered accommodation from Niccolò himself, Ugo da Sanseverino, and the King of Majorca in his old age, although he turned down all three. Orsini was a powerful military man and politician, but also an orator and cultivator of Cicero. He patronized poets, and may have been a poet himself.[31] Giacomo III of Majorca was the third husband of Queen Giovanna, to whom Boccaccio had considered dedicating *De mulieribus*, and whose biography he nevertheless included in his work. Inherent in Boccaccio's warning against the dangers of women reading the *Decameron* is the suggestion that there was great enthusiasm for the text among female sections of the reading public at least, which led to Branca to comment: 'v'è in queste righe chiaro il segno della popolarità ormai enorme del testo'.[32]

Critics have seized on Boccaccio's possible recantation of the *Decameron*, but he was also embarrassed about his youthful compositions written in Latin. Towards the end of his life Boccaccio wrote a letter to Fra Martino da Signa explaining at great

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[29] For a description of the manuscript and further discussion concerning its presentation see Chapter 5. See *Ep.* XXIV to Petrarch's son-in-law, Francesco da Brossano, written shortly after Petrarch's death (p. 734).
[30] Tartaro, pp. 12-13.
[31] Boccaccio, *Epistole*, p. 821, n. 1.
[32] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 176.

length the allegorical meaning behind the *Buccolicum carmen*.[33] The first two eclogues were composed in the early 1340s and were Boccaccio's first attempt at writing poetry in Latin. He writes to Fra Martino: 'de primis duabus eglogis seu earum titulis vel collocutoribus nolo cures: nullius enim momenti sunt, et fere iuveniles lascivias meas in cortice pandunt' [I do not wish you to attend to the first two eclogues, or rather to their titles or to those speaking, for they are of no importance, and entirely disclose my youthful licentiousness in their exterior] (p. 712). However, because of the great lengths to which he goes to clarify the meaning of the text, it is clear that Boccaccio was not ashamed of the whole work. The letter does not contain any references to Fra Martino's thoughts on Boccaccio or his works, but he had presumably requested the explanation, and Ginetta Auzzas suggests that he intended to write a commentary on the eclogues.[34] As an Augustinian in the Florentine monastery of Santo Spirito, Fra Martino represents a very different audience from Mainardo Cavalcanti or Niccolò Orsini. The friar was certainly familiar with Boccaccio's other Latin works at least after 1475, because he was heir to Boccaccio's library after his death.[35]

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[33] *Ep.* XXIII to Fra Martino was written in 1372-74.
[34] Boccaccio, *Epistole*, p. 712.
[35] The relevant passage from the will is reproduced in A. Mazza, 'L'inventario della "parva libraria" di Santo Spirito e la biblioteca del Boccaccio', *IMU*, 9 (1966), 1-74 (p. 3). The vernacular works do not seem to have been included in the library housed at Santo Spirito (pp. 4-5).

CHAPTER 2

Boccaccio and his Acquaintances

The previous chapter discussed the manner in which Boccaccio chose to project an image of himself as an author, using his literary works and letters as evidence. This chapter shall consider how various acquaintances of Boccaccio perceived his authorial status and responded to his literary achievements.

2.1 PETRARCH

I have already noted that Petrarch had a great influence on Boccaccio's literary and cultural development and undoubtedly contributed to the manner in which Boccaccio considered his authorial status. Petrarch was also a great friend and, after Francesco Nelli's death in 1363, Boccaccio became Petrarch's most frequent correspondent. Thirty-two extant letters written in Latin prose and one Latin *epistola metrica* are addressed to Boccaccio, although Petrarch makes relatively few comments about his friend's abilities and works in them.[1] Those comments that are documented in letters are often ambiguous and must have done little to bolster Boccaccio's self-confidence.

The letter concerning Petrarch's comments on the *Decameron*, which Boccaccio was keen to obtain from Francesco da Brossano, contains the only specific reference to an individual original composition by Boccaccio and is famous for its offhand attitude and apparent rudeness, rather than for its admiration and respect (*Sen.* XVII. 3, 1372-73). Petrarch is unable to remember how or where the *Decameron* came to him, implying that he did not deliberately seek it out. He admits to not having read it fully, and in excusing himself implies that it is a work of inferior literary quality, 'ad vulgus et soluta scriptus' [written for the common herd and in prose].[2] When he does read it, it is not with the care and concentration that Pietro da Monteforte accorded the *Genealogia*, rather he enjoys leafing through it. Boccaccio's age is used as an excuse for the passages Petrarch deems too obscene, but he is impressed by Boccaccio's ability to defend himself. Petrarch also notes that there are serious parts, but the implied approval

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[1] Ernest H. Wilkins, 'A Survey of the Correspondence between Petrarch and Boccaccio', *IMU*, 6 (1963), 179-84 (p. 179).

[2] *Librorum Francisci Petrarche impressorum annotatio* (Venice: Simone da Lovere, 1501), fol. 13iii^{v}; translations are taken from the following edition: Francis Petrarch, *Letters of Old Age: Rerum senilium libri I-XVIII*, trans. by Aldo S. Bernardo, Saul Levin, and Reta A. Bernardo, 2 vols (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), II, 655.

is undercut when he says they did not absorb him enough to be able to make a definitive judgement. Although he only read the beginning and the end with care, he compliments Boccaccio for these parts, and after the wealth of criticism, praises the final story about Griselda with some enthusiasm: 'ita mihi placuit meque detinuit, ut inter tot curas que pene mei ipsius immemorem me fecere, illam memorie mandare voluerim' (fol. 13iiii[r]) [it has so pleased me and engrossed me that, among so many cares, it nearly made me forget myself and want to commit it to memory] (p. 655). Even this recognition is meted out on Petrarch's own terms. He translates the *novella* into Latin, once again undermining Boccaccio's status as the author of the *Decameron*. Glending Olson has attempted to rectify the view long held among critics that Petrarch had simply failed to understand the nature of the *Decameron*. Olson argues that Petrarch followed cues left by Boccaccio in the text and judged the *Decameron* as entertaining and non-didactic within the appropriate framework for this type of literature.[3] However, it remains that Petrarch himself was only interested in serious, didactic literature, preferably written in Latin, and in this respect had little time for the *Decameron*. Exactly how Boccaccio reacted to the letter must have been related to his own feelings for the work in the 1370s, which, as we have already seen, are difficult to interpret. However, any comments, either negative or positive, from his trusted mentor must have made a significant impression.

The letter in which Petrarch discusses the alleged burning of Boccaccio's poetry, and the nature of his relationship, in literary terms, with Boccaccio is also ambiguously complimentary (*Sen.* V. 2, 1364-66). Petrarch is not concerned with judging the poems himself, perhaps because he had never seen or heard them, but with debating whether Boccaccio was moved by humility or pride. He claims that out of love for his friend Boccaccio should have taken delight in seeing Petrarch take first place: 'solent enim veri amantes sponte sua sibi preferre quos diligunt, et vinci optare, et ex hoc eximiam voluptatem percipere si vincantur' (fol. 3vii[r]) [for true lovers always gladly prefer to themselves those whom they love; they wish to be surpassed by them and feel the greatest pleasure if they are] (I, 161). Perhaps for this reason Boccaccio did not deny that he wished to be judged inferior in his letter to Pietro da Monteforte. The conclusion at which Petrarch arrives is one which accords Boccaccio a certain status as an author. He judges that Boccaccio elected to burn his beautiful inventions ['pulchras inventiones'] rather than subject them to the judgement of a worthless and arrogant age

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[3] Glending Olson, 'Petrarch's View of the *Decameron*', *Modern Language Notes*, 91 (1976), 69-79.

that understands nothing and corrupts everything ['etate inutili ac superba, nihil intelligenti, omnia corrumpenti'] (fol. 3vii[r]). However, Petrarch also succeeds in deflecting attention away from Boccaccio towards the theme of the ignorance of critics, and ultimately towards himself, admitting that he too was inspired to compose vernacular works that were misunderstood. He then undermines the sense of shared misfortune, referring to his conversion from these works he describes as brief and youthful ['brevibus'; 'iuvenilibus'] to serious, Latin literature: 'substiti mittamque consilium aliud ut spero rectius atque altius arripui (fol. 3vii[r])' [I halted and changed my mind, taking another pathway that I hope will be straighter and higher] (I, 162-63). Although Boccaccio was also writing major works in Latin in this period, Petrarch does not see fit to mention this fact.

Boccaccio's lack of faith in his career choice seems to have been genuine enough when he learned that a certain Pietro da Siena had had a vision of Christ in which he was commanded, among other things, to forbid Boccaccio to cultivate poetry. Petrarch wrote to Boccaccio, apparently with the intention of persuading him to continue writing, but his encouragement is far from overwhelming (*Sen.* I. 5, 1362). He hypothesizes how many great works would have been lost if a number of *auctores* such as Lactantius or Augustine had stopped writing. However, rather than explicitly encouraging Boccaccio to continue with his studies the discussion moves to a general defence of poetry, in which Petrarch lists classical authors who studied well into their dotage with great effect. Petrarch appears to name these poets because they constitute the most powerful counter-argument to Pietro da Siena's prophecy, rather than because he thought to compare them with Boccaccio. At the conclusion of the defence of the value of poetry Petrarch returns to Boccaccio's case, but rather than adding a final note of dissuasion, he seems overcome by the allure of the offer of Boccaccio's books, which he will not need if he rejects his studies.

There are other occasions, however, where Petrarch seems to be more sensitive towards to his friend and seeks to offer him encouragement. In 1355 Petrarch wrote to thank Boccaccio for transcribing a manuscript containing Varro and Cicero (*Fam.* XVIII. 4). His pleasure at Boccaccio's scribal endeavours moves him to compare Boccaccio with the Latin authors: 'accessit ad libri gratiam quod manu tua scriptus erat, que res sub oculis meis inter illos duos tantos heroas lingue latine te medium fecit' [the book's charm was enhanced by being in your hand, and this in my opinion made you

worthy of a place among those two giants of the Latin tongue].[4] He then goes on to reassure Boccaccio about his abilities as an author, whilst at the same time suggesting that critics had been unkind:

> 'nec te peniteat calamo trivisse labellum', ut ait ille. Etsi enim tu alios mireris, quos studiorum mater omnium tulit antiquitas, idque iure tuo facias, cuius sit proprium et mirari que vulgus despicit et despicere que miratur, venient tamen qui te forsitan mirentur, nempe quem iam hinc mirari incipit invida et claris semper ingeniis ingrata presentia. (p. 281)
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> ['do not repent of having wearied your lips on the reed pipe', in the poet's words. For while you may admire those whom antiquity, mother of all culture, produced, and rightfully so since you properly admire what the multitude despises and despise what it admires, there are yet to come those who will perhaps admire you. The present age has already begun to do so, though ever envious of and unfriendly to outstanding talents.] (p. 49)

Later in the same year in *Fam.* XVIII. 15, Petrarch defends his use of the term 'poet' for Boccaccio, at which Boccaccio had evidently protested:

> an forte quia nondum peneia fronde redimitus sis, poeta esse non potes? an [sic] si laurus nulla usquam esset, Muse omnes conticescerent, nec ad umbram pinas aut fagi texere carmen altisonum fas esset? (p. 302)
>
> [perhaps the reason you cannot be a poet is that your brow has yet to be adorned by the Penean frond? But if no laurel tree existed in the world, would all the Muses be silent, would one not be allowed to weave a sublime song in the shade of a pine or of a beech?] (p. 68)

Of course, both Petrarch and Boccaccio were well aware that Petrarch himself had already been crowned with the laurel.

2.2 COLUCCIO SALUTATI

Coluccio Salutati was born in 1331 in Tuscany, but spent his childhood in Bologna, where he studied rhetoric with Pietro da Moglio and trained as a notary. In 1374 he was appointed notary in Florence, and a year later was elected chancellor of the city, a position which he held until his death in 1406. Salutati composed many literary works in Latin, and a great quantity of Latin epistles addressed to his friends and acquaintances, including both Petrarch and Boccaccio.[5] Under the influence of Petrarch

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[4] Francesco Petrarca, *Le familiari*, ed. by Vittorio Rossi, 4 vols (Florence: Sansoni, 1937), III, 281; translations are taken from the following edition: Francesco Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters: Rerum familiarium libri*, trans. by Aldo S. Bernardo, 3 vols (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985), II, 49.

[5] The epistles are collected together in *Epistolario di Coluccio Salutati,* ed. by F. Novati, 4 vols (Rome: Forzani, 1891-1911).

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Salutati became a follower and proponent of classical humanism. He contributed to the search for manuscripts containing new classical works or texts of a higher quality than those in current use, and arranged for Manuel Chrysoloras to teach Greek in Florence.[6] Salutati may have met Boccaccio in Florence shortly after 1352.[7] There are three extant letters addressed to Boccaccio which contain evidence of their friendship, their mutual love of poetry, and of Salutati's respect for Boccaccio's literary talents.[8] The manner in which Salutati greets Boccaccio alludes to his role as both friend and author. For example, in 1367, Salutati writes: 'facundissimo viro domino Iohanni Boccaccii de Certaldo egregio cultori Pyeridum sibique karissimo amico et optimo' [to the very eloquent master Giovanni Boccaccio, distinguished cultivator of the Muses and his very dear and excellent friend] (*Ep.* XVIIII, I, 48). It is clear that Salutati sets great store by this correspondence. He describes his excitement at receiving an unexpected letter from Boccaccio (*Ep.* XVIIII, I, 48) and complains when he does not hear from him (*Ep.* XII, I, 85). The two authors are able to indulge their mutual interests through the exchange of classical manuscripts, but no specific mention is made of Boccaccio's works, even when Salutati forwards a copy of the first eclogue of his own *Bucolicum carmen* and asks Boccaccio to pass judgement upon it (*Ep.* VIIII, I, 157).

No mention is made of Boccaccio's works or his status as an author in Salutati's correspondence to others during Boccaccio's lifetime. However, on two occasions he refers to his friendship for the author. Writing to Petrarch in 1368 Salutati comments that he has cherished Boccaccio devotedly and loved him deeply (*Ep.* IIII, I, 62). In a letter to Benvenuto da Imola composed in March 1375 Salutati is concerned with what will happen to Petrarch's works in the wake of his death (*Ep.* XVIII, I). Boccaccio is mentioned for the part he will play in rescuing the *Africa* from potential flames, and is referred to simply as 'Boccaccium nostrum' [our Boccaccio] (p. 200).[9] Petrarch had referred to Boccaccio in the same way in a letter written in 1366-67 to their mutual friend, Donato Albanzani (*Sen.* V. 4). This seems to be the only named reference to Boccaccio in Petrarch's letters to other correspondents.[10]

Three days after Boccaccio's death on 21 December 1375, Salutati wrote a letter to Petrarch's son-in-law, Francesco da Brossano, announcing the news (*Ep.* XXV, I). Here Salutati is far more explicit about Boccaccio's merits as an author than he had

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[6] See Berthold L. Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio Salutati* (Padua: Antenore, 1963).
[7] Ibid., p. 41.
[8] XVIIII (1367), pp. 48-49; XII (1369), pp. 85-88; VIIII (1372), pp. 156-57 in Novati, I.
[9] Benvenuto da Imola was also acquainted with Boccaccio; see below (2.3).
[10] Based on the letters translated by Aldo S. Bernardo and others (see Petrarca, *Letters on Familiar Matters* and *Letters of Old Age*).

been whilst Boccaccio was alive. Tradition requires that exaggerated language be used to describe the dead, although the eulogy also contains a genuine sense of personal loss: 'hei michi! iocundissime mi Boccaci, qui solus colendus, amandus et admirandus michi remanseras, consilium in dubiis et solatium in adversis, leticia prosperitatis et socius in humanis, quo me vertam, tue mortis dolore turbatus?' [Woe is me! O my most amusing Boccaccio, you who had remained the only person worthy to be cultivated, loved, and admired by me, my counsel in uncertainty and comfort in adversity, joy in success and companion in the concerns of men, whither shall I turn, distraught by the pain of your death?] (p. 226).[11] The letter also reveals that as Petrarch was a constant source of reference for Boccaccio in life, so he was also unable to escape his influence after death. In commending Boccaccio for the eloquence with which he spoke of Petrarch, Salutati manages to insert praise for Petrarch into Boccaccio's eulogy. Towards the end of the letter the sentiments become stronger, and the effects of Boccaccio's death more wide-ranging, as Salutati claims that not only he, but the whole of Florence will be devastated by the loss:

> heu michi, Iohannes mi dulcissime, quo abiit divinum illud ingenium et celestis omnino facundia, quibus patria tua velut inexhausto iubare resplendebat? heu michi, qualis nobis et ceteris, qui avide te colebant, postquam es tam infauste subtractus, est status vite futurus? (p. 227)
>
> [Woe is me! My sweet Giovanni, where has that divine genius and quite heavenly eloquence gone, with which your native town shone with, so to speak, inexhaustible radiance? Woe is me! What sort of condition of life is there going to be for us and others who cultivated you avidly, after you have been so unluckily taken away?]

At the height of this praise, Boccaccio is joined by Petrarch, and not only Florence, but Italy will mourn: 'heu michi, inclita Florentia, que nuper emula celi duobus luminibus, qualia modernis obicere non potest antiquitas, relucebas, postquam eclypsis eterna illud decus extinxit, altis mersa tenebris, talibus filiis orbata lugebis!' [Woe is me! Famous Florence, who, as rival of the heavens was recently afire with two lights of a kind with which antiquity cannot reproach moderns; You, engulfed in profound darkness and bereft of such sons, will mourn, now that an eclipse without end has extinguished that glory!] (p. 227). It is probable that Salutati intended to compare Petrarch and Boccaccio to the sun and the moon, and although he does not specify which poet should be associated with which heavenly body, it seems likely that he saw Boccaccio as the moon and Petrarch as the brighter sun.

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[11] Salutati continued to lament the passing of his friend in 1376, without adding any new comments about his poetic abilities: *Ep.* I (I, 229-41); *Ep.* II (I, 241-43); *Ep.* III (I, 243-45).

It is clear that Salutati's eulogy refers to Boccaccio only as a Latin author when he lists Boccaccio's output as the *Buccolicum carmen*, *Genealogia*, *De casibus*, *De mulieribus*, and *De montibus*. In 1375 Salutati did not find Boccaccio's use of Latin or the subject matter of his texts incompatible with the demands of humanism. In fact, the *Genealogia* and *Buccolicum carmen* are considered even greater than works of ancient literature. Of the former, Salutati comments: 'De genealogia deorum, quem multo labore et stilo prorsus divino composuit, ut omnes etiam priscos viros huius rei indagine superarit' [*De genealogia deorum*, which he composed with much work and an absolutely divine style, so that he has even surpassed all ancient men with investigation of this matter] (p. 226). Praising the *Buccolicum carmen*, Salutati writes: 'pascua cantabit atque pecudes, que sexdecim eclogis adeo eleganter celebravit, ut facile possimus eas [...] veterum equare laboribus vel preferre' [he sang of pastures and sheep, which he so elegantly celebrated with sixteen eclogues, so that we can easily equate them or prefer them to the labours of the ancients] (p. 226). Furthermore, a significant connection is established between Boccaccio and Virgil, as Salutati's praise for Boccaccio's *Eclogues* implicitly references the text of Virgil's epitaph.[12]

Salutati had a personal interest in both the *Buccolicum carmen* and the *Genealogia*. I have noted above that he composed his own eclogues, and he also owned a manuscript of the *Genealogia*, from which he frequently quoted in *De laboribus Herculis*.[13] In 1405, Salutati demonstrated an intimate knowledge of the *Genealogia* in a letter to Giorgio di Facino Stella of Genoa.[14] In addition, Salutati owned a copy of *De mulieribus* and *De montibus*, and may have obtained a manuscript of *De casibus*.[15] Of these works, Salutati writes that Boccaccio described illustrious men 'stilo luculento [sic]' [with brilliant style], he managed to single out stories of women from the great sea of history, 'obscurissimum ac difficillimum opus' [a very obscure and extremely difficult work], and collected information pertaining to the whole world into one book (*De montibus*) (*Ep.* XXV, I, 226). By listing only the Latin works Salutati chose to emphasize Boccaccio's 'humanist' qualities, thereby moulding Boccaccio to fit his own

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[12] Virgil's biographers report that the inscription on Virgil's tomb read: 'Mantua me genuit, Calabri rapuere, tenet nunc | Parthenope; *cecini pascua rura duces*' [my italics]. See *Vitae Vergilianae*, ed. by Iacobus Brummer (Leipzig: Teubneri, 1912).

[13] Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio*, p. 219.

[14] *Ep.* XVIII (IV, 120-21).

[15] According to Ullman, Salutati's copy of *De montibus* is now lost (p. 209). The *De mulieribus* copied for Salutati is described in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 278-80. Salutati's attempts to find a copy of *De casibus* are recorded in *Ep.* XII (1378) (I, 292). In *Ep.* IIII, written in 1390, Salutati comments that he has never used any of the material about illustrious men written by Pliny, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, (IV, 266).

requirements for what constituted appropriate behaviour in an author. Perhaps because the recipient of the letter, Giorgio di Facino Stella, who was chancellor of Genoa, was not a humanist of the same calibre as Salutati, he chose not to mention other activities that would have appealed to humanists, such as Boccaccio's contribution to the study of Greek, or his transcription of classical manuscripts.

Twenty years after Salutati wrote his letter to Francesco da Brossano commemorating Boccaccio as an author beyond reproach from antiquity, there is evidence that the followers of the humanistic studies cultivated so passionately by Boccaccio and Petrarch had begun to turn their backs on the founders of their tradition. Although Salutati continued to regard Boccaccio and Petrarch highly, he is no longer able to place them on a level with classical authors in a letter to Bartolomeo Oliari written in 1395: 'qui tamen quantum ab illis priscis differant facultate dicendi nullum arbitror qui recte iudicare valeat ignorare' [however, I consider that no one who is able to judge correctly is unaware how greatly they differ in their capacity for speaking from those men of earlier times] (*Ep.* VIIII, III, 84).

2.3 BENVENUTO DA IMOLA

There is no extant correspondence between Benvenuto da Imola and Boccaccio, but Benvenuto recalls how he heard Boccaccio give public lectures on Dante in the church of Santo Stefano di Badia.[16] Therefore, unlike Boccaccio's relationship with Petrarch and Salutati, the connection between Boccaccio and Benvenuto rests on their shared love for a vernacular author. Dante continued to exert an influence on Boccaccio, even after his seminal meeting with Petrarch in 1350. Boccaccio composed a life of Dante between 1351 and 1355, entitled the *Trattatello in laude di Dante*, and although he revised it a decade later under the influence of Petrarch, he did not abandon his allegiance to Dante entirely.[17] Boccaccio read his commentary on the *Commedia* to the Florentine public in 1373 and 1374 until he was forced to abandon the undertaking due to ill health. Boccaccio's readings sanctioned Benvenuto's own contribution to the *fortuna* of the *Commedia*, the *Comentum super Dantis Aldigherij Comoediam*, which he

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[16] Benvenutus de Rambaldus de Imola, *Comentum super Dantis Aldigherij Comoediam*, ed. by Jacopo Philippo Lacaita, 5 vols (Florence: Barbèra, 1887), V, 145.
[17] For dating see Pier Giorgio Ricci, 'Le tre redazioni del *Trattatello in laude di Dante*', in Ricci, *Studi sulla vita*, pp. 67-83. On Petrarch's relationship to Dante and revisions to the *Trattatello*, see Carlo Paolazzi, 'Petrarca, Boccaccio e il *Trattatello in laude di Dante*', *Studi danteschi*, 55 (1983), 165-249 and McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 53-58.

began to write in late 1373 or early 1374.[18] It is likely that Benvenuto used notes that he had made during the public lectures and drew upon ensuing discussions, and the *Trattatello* provided another major source.[19]

Almost without exception, explicit references to Boccaccio in the text of the *Comentum* recognize the author as a source of information. For example, Benvenuto writes 'narrabat mihi Boccacius de Certaldo' [Boccaccio of Certaldo used to tell me] (I, 461), and 'sicut honeste scribit Boccaccius' [as Boccaccio writes creditably] (III, 392). These explicit attributions privilege Boccaccio above other commentary sources upon which Benvenuto drew, for as Zygmunt Barański notes:

> ciò che rende l'entusiasmo dell'imolese per Boccaccio particolarmente notevole è il fatto che egli ha in genere pochissima stima per gli altri *lectores* del poeta, i quali sono raggruppati in un blocco anonimo e spesso trattati con un certo disprezzo.[20]

In some instances Boccaccio is named without an accompanying epithet,[21] but elsewhere descriptions of his literary qualities and personality abound. He is described four times as 'venerabil[is] praecepto[r] meu[s]' [my venerable teacher], twice as 'placidissimus' [very gentle], and once as 'curiosus inquisitor omnium delectabilium historiarum' [diligent investigator of all delightful accounts], 'bonu[s]' [good], 'vir suavis eloquentiae' [a man of sweet eloquence], 'suavissimus' [very sweet], and 'humillimus' [very humble].[22] More specifically, Boccaccio's writing is also praised: 'honeste scribit' [he writes creditably], 'pulcre scribit' [he writes beautifully], 'jocunditer scribit' [he writes delightfully], 'elegantissime describit' [he describes very elegantly].[23] It appears that Benvenuto is happy to acknowledge his debt to Boccaccio, whom he regarded with great admiration both as an author and as a friend or acquaintance, but says nothing regarding his specific abilities as a vernacular or Latin author. Barański warns that Benvenuto's remarks 'hanno l'aria di formule encomiastiche' and therefore do not automatically imply that Benvenuto was a passive

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[18] Carlo Paolazzi, 'Le letture dantesche di Benvenuto da Imola a Bologna e a Ferrara e le redazioni del suo *Comentum*', *IMU*, 22 (1979), 319-66 (p. 322). For dating see Zygmunt G. Barański, 'Boccaccio, Benvenuto e il sogno della madre di Dante incinta', in Barański, *'Chiosar con altro testo': leggere Dante nel Trecento* (Florence: Cadmo, 2001), pp. 99-116 (p. 101).
[19] Maria Luisa Uberti, 'Benvenuto da Imola dantista, allievo del Boccaccio', *StB*, 12 (1980), 275-319 (pp. 302-03).
[20] Barański, p. 102.
[21] For example, see Benvenutus, I, 79 and III, 376. Boccaccio is referred to twice as a Florentine poet: I, 227 and III, 312, and once as 'modernus poeta': I, 509.
[22] Benvenutus, I, 79; V, 145; V, 164; V, 301; III, 265; III, 169; III, 392; III, 171; I, 124; I, 35; III, 341.
[23] Benvenutus, III, 392; III, 265; III, 389; III, 536.

imitator of Boccaccio: rather, he was prepared to provide his own interpretation where necessary.[24] This critical independence need not imply that Benvenuto was ungenuine in his affection for Boccaccio.

As well as general references to Boccaccio's literary abilities, Benvenuto also names several of Boccaccio's works as his sources. The *Trattatello* is mentioned with greatest frequency, as the 'libell[us] de vita et moribus Dantis' [little book about the life and character of Dante].[25] *De montibus* is named twice as 'lib[er] de fluminibus' [the book about rivers] and 'lib[er] de Montibus et Fluminibus' [book about mountains and rivers].[26] *De casibus* is acknowledged with an accompanying comment on the quantity and quality of material contained within: 'sed si velis copiosam materiam, vide luculentissimum speculum quo poteris clarius et plenius speculari, scilicet librum de Casibus virorum illustrium, quem eleganter edidit Boccaccius de Certaldo' [but if you want plentiful material, see the very splendid mirror, in which you will be able to examine more clearly and fully, namely the book about the misfortunes of illustrious men, which Boccaccio of Certaldo published elegantly] (III, 341). In this context, the use of the term 'libellus' for the *Trattatello* and 'liber' for the Latin works does not appear to correspond to the language used or carry a negative value judgement, since *De mulieribus* is also referred to as a 'libellu[s]' and Benvenuto drew heavily upon the *Trattatello* for the *Comentum* (V, 164). Use of the terms is likely to be governed by the more prosaic consideration of physical size. In Antiquity a distinction between the two terms was made on a material basis: 'liber' could be used to refer to a scroll and 'libellus' denoted a book written in pages, while Silvia Rizzo notes that the term 'libellus' was often used by humanists to denote 'operette di breve estensione'.[27]

The *Decameron* is also described as a 'liber' when it is cited as an example: 'ut pulcerrime scribit vir placidissimus Boccatius de Certaldo sermone materno in libro suo, qui dicitur Decameron' [as the very gentle man, Boccaccio of Certaldo, writes very beautifully in the maternal tongue in his book, which is called the *Decameron*] (III, 169). This is the first instance of explicit praise for the *Decameron* by a contemporary in contact with Boccaccio, and is a very different response from Petrarch's ambiguous comments and Salutati's silence. However, despite his awareness of and reliance on Boccaccio as an author who wrote in a range of languages and styles, when Benvenuto

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[24] Barański, p. 103.
[25] Benvenutus, I, 339; I, 515; IV, 221-22.
[26] Benvenutus, I, 124; I, 514.
[27] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1879); Silvia Rizzo, *Il lessico filologico degli umanisti* (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1973), p. 8.

presents a more formal laudation of Boccaccio it highlights his strong interest in Latin literature, and, like the eulogy written by his friend Salutati,[28] ignores Boccaccio's vernacular output:

> hic siquidem Johannes Boccacius, verius bucca aurea, venerabilis praeceptor meus, diligentissimus cultor et familiarissimus nostri autoris, ibi pulcra opera edidit; praecipue edidit unum librum magnum et utilem ad intelligentiam poetarum 'de Genealogiis Deorum'; librum magnum et utilem 'de casibus virorum illustrium'; libellum 'de mulieribus claris'; librum 'de fluminibus'; et librum 'Bucolicorum' etc. (V, 164)

> [Indeed since this Giovanni Boccaccio, or rather golden mouth,[29] my venerable teacher, a most diligent cultivator and very intimate friend of our author [Dante], issued beautiful works there [in Certaldo]: in particular he issued a large and useful book on the interpretation of the poets *De genealogiis deorum*, a large and useful book *De casibus virorum illustrium*, a little book *De mulieribus claris*, a book *De fluminibus*, and a book *Bucolicorum* etc.][30]

Benvenuto ran a private school in Bologna where he lectured on Latin authors, both ancient and modern, and he dedicated the end of his life, among other things, to writing commentaries on classical authors such as Virgil and Seneca.[31] Unlike Salutati, Benvenuto chooses to recount a journey that Boccaccio made to the monastery of Montecassino, where he found 'varia volumina antiquorum' [various books of the ancients] (V, 302). This inevitably reinforces the image of Boccaccio as a Latin scholar and 'humanist', although Benvenuto's primary aim is to comment on the neglect accorded books in monastic libraries, rather than play up Boccaccio's diligence as a collector of manuscripts.

2.4 THE FIRST BIOGRAPHIES OF BOCCACCIO

Petrarch resurrected the classical vogue for collections of biographical accounts with his work *De viris illustribus*, closely followed by Boccaccio, with *De mulieribus*, and similarly, *De casibus*. Boccaccio was also among the first to provide an extended account of a single poet, with his *Trattatello in laude di Dante*.[32] He was preceded only

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[28] Benvenuto and Salutati met through Pietro da Moglio. Benvenuto may also have met Petrarch in 1364: L. Paoletti, 'Benvenuto da Imola', in *DBI*, VIII (1966), 691-94 (p. 692).
[29] Cf. Matteo Palmieri's reference to Chrysostom in section 3.5.
[30] Once again, it is unclear whether 'magnus' should refer to the physical size of the book or its perceived status.
[31] Paoletti, pp. 692-93.
[32] John Larner's article 'Traditions of Literary Biography in Boccaccio's *Life of Dante*', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester*, 72 (1990), 107-17 sets the *Trattatello* in the context of contemporary biographical writing.

by Giovanni Villani's short biography of Dante in the *Cronica*, begun in the 1330s.[33] Giovanni's nephew, Filippo, continued work on the *Cronica* and also composed his own history of Florence and its illustrious citizens, entitled *De origine civitatis Florentie et de eiusdem famosis civibus*, remarkable in this context for containing the first biography of Boccaccio, composed less than a decade after the author's death, *c.* 1381. A second redaction was written some time after, between 1395 and 1397, from which an anonymous translation into the vernacular was made in the fifteenth century suggesting that there was considerable demand for the biography.[34]

Some twenty years younger than Boccaccio, Villani may have been a direct acquaintance of the *certaldese*. Aldo Massèra comments that Villani compiled his biography 'da ricordi personali, da schiarimenti ottenuti direttamente in qualche conversazione con il Boccaccio o con i suoi più intimi famigliari' (p. 336). The biographer was certainly in contact with Salutati, to whom he sent the first redaction of *De origine* for comment and corrections.[35] Like Benvenuto, Villani shared Boccaccio's passion for Dante and was engaged to lecture on the *Commedia* in Florence at the end of the fourteenth century.[36] Boccaccio's Life of Dante may have inspired Villani to open his biography with an account of Boccaccio's literary ancestry, since in the *Trattatello* Boccaccio states he is concerned with four aspects of Dante's life, one of which is his ancestry (*Trattatello*, p. 439). In the *Trattatello* this had the function of demonstrating that Dante came from an illustrious past, implicitly bestowing upon him credibility as both man and author. Villani elected to maintain the focus on Boccaccio's literary status and create an association with Dante and Petrarch as his literary forebears. This is also a reminder that the biography does not stand alone, but is an integral part of a work designed to highlight continuity of excellence in Florence.

At the point where Villani provides information on the circumstances of Boccaccio's birth, the two redactions diverge. Initially, Villani relates that Boccaccio was an illegitimate child born in Certaldo.[37] The second redaction, however, contains a more elaborate version of events, describing how Boccaccio's father made business

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[33] Larner, pp. 116-17.

[34] On the dating of the two redactions see Aldo Franc. Massèra, 'Le più antiche biografie del Boccaccio', *Zeitschrift für Romanische Philologie*, 27 (1903), 298-338 (pp. 303-08). Massèra includes an edition of each redaction and the translation in this article (pp. 309-15, 317-20). The second redaction and the translation are also published in *Le vite di Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio scritte fino al secolo decimosesto*, ed. by Angelo Solerti (Milan: Vallardi, [1904-05]), pp. 671-76. Unless specified otherwise, I have quoted from the second redaction published by Solerti, who collated a greater number of manuscripts.

[35] See Massèra, p. 336.

[36] See the biographical details supplied in ibid., pp. 299-301.

[37] His father is described as 'naturalis' (ibid., p. 309).

trips to Paris, fell in love with a Parisian lady and married her, whence was born Boccaccio. Villani indicates that this version of events was relayed by those that cultivated Boccaccio's works ('ut cultores operum Iohannis volunt', p. 672). The additional information was probably provided by Salutati and drawn from the account that Idalogos gives of his French origins in *Filocolo*, V. 8, which was commonly read as autobiographical material. By offering a fictionalized account of his birth in the *Filocolo*, Boccaccio may have been following the example of his friend, Niccolò Acciaiuoli, who elevated his own illegitimate origins with the fictitious story of his family's Trojan ancestry.[38] The revised account in Villani's biography authorizes and romanticizes Boccaccio's past and effectively divorces him from his mercantile origins, which had aligned him with the mercantile epic of the *Decameron* rather than the noble *Genealogia*, for which Salutati would rather he was remembered.

Boccaccio's 'inconvenient' relationship with the merchant trade is not completely glossed over by Villani. In both redactions he relates how Boccaccio was forced to abandon his grammatical education under Giovanni da Strada, in other words, his tuition in Latin which would prepare him for a career in letters, and attend a school which taught commercial mathematics (an 'abbaco'), in order to follow in his father's mercantile footsteps.[39] Boccaccio is presented as an uncomplaining pawn in his father's career plans for him, perhaps in order to avoid presenting members of the family in a negative light while close relatives were still alive and a potential audience for *De origine*. However, in order to bridge the gap between his inauspicious beginnings and subsequent career, and to validate his literary preparation in the eyes of contemporary humanists, Villani narrates how a visit to Virgil's burial place in Naples inspired a transformation in Boccaccio from uncomplaining merchant's apprentice to dedicated poet.[40] The dramatic change has a miraculous element: it is willed by heaven ('inclinati[o] coeli', p. 673), convincing even Boccaccio's father that his son is destined for letters. Thus harmony is maintained within the family and Villani follows the model

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[38] Branca, *Profilo biografico*, p. 27.

[39] For further details on the *abbaco*, see Paul F. Grendler, *Schooling in Renaissance Italy: Literacy and Learning, 1300-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), pp. 306-19; Robert Black, *Humanism and Education in Medieval and Renaissance Italy: Tradition and Innovation in Latin Schools from the Twelfth to the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 29.

[40] Villani may have drawn on Boccaccio's account of his visit to Virgil's tomb in 1339 (*Ep.* II), or taken his inspiration from the explicits of Boccaccio's early letters (*Ep.* I-IV). For example, *Ep.* I ends: 'Data sub monte Falerno apud busta Maronis Virgilii [...]' (p. 508). Boccaccio also mentions Virgil's burial place in the *Filocolo*, IV. 14.

of the *Trattatello* in which two miraculous dreams confer divine approval.[41] Boccaccio's incomplete education is rectified by the dedication with which he tackles his new vocation, which Villani is careful to mention even extended to learning Greek, a considerable achievement at the end of the fourteenth century.

Villani's predisposition to humanistic studies is also revealed when he lists only Boccaccio's Latin works by name. The longest description and most praise are reserved for the *Genealogia*:

> Et tandem quicquid longissimo studio potuit invenire, in unum compegit volumen, quod *de Genealogia Deorum* voluit nuncupari; in quo veterum poetarum fabulae, miro ordine, elegante stilo, quicquid moraliter per allegoriam sentirent digestae sunt: opus sane amoenum utile et peropportunum volentibus poetarum integumenta cognoscere, et sine quo difficile fuerit vel poetas intelligere, vel vacare poeticae disciplinae. Mysteria siquidem poetarum, sensusque allegoricos, quos hystoriae fictio, vel fabulosa editio occulebat, mirabili acumine ingenii in medium, et quasi ad manum perduxit. (p. 674)
>
> [And finally everything that he could find with his very extended study, he joined together in one book, which he wanted to be called *De genealogia deorum*; in which the stories of the ancient poets are arranged, with extraordinary order and elegant style, everything they morally understood through allegory: a work certainly delightful, useful, and most opportune for those who wish to understand concealing devices of poets, and without which it would be difficult to be free to comprehend either poets or the poetic discipline. Indeed, with remarkable sharpness of intellect, he has brought into the open and, so to speak, to hand, the mysteries of the poets and the allegorical meanings which the invention of the past or the presentation of it in elaborate story concealed.]

Changes made to the second redaction reveal that humanistic taste, and therefore attitudes towards the style of Boccaccio's Latin, had begun to change in the last decade of the fourteenth century. In the first redaction the style and subject matter of *De mulieribus* are confidently described as surpassing the work of classical authors: 'tanta facundia et gravitate refulsit [Boccaccio], ut priscorum altissima ingenia ea in re [*de clarissimis mulieribus*] dicatur merito superasse' [he [Boccaccio] has glittered with such eloquence and weight, that he is deservedly said to have surpassed in that work [*De mulieribus*] the most profound intellects among the ancients].[42] In the second redaction the claim for supremacy is less assertively expressed: 'tanta facundia, verborum elegantia et gravitate refulsit, ut priscorum altissima ingenia eo in tractatu non solum aequasse dici possit, sed forsan et merito superasse' [he has glittered with such eloquence, elegance of speech, and weight, that he can be said not only to equal, but

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[41] Dante's mother has a premonitory dream before his birth and Dante appears to his son after his sleep to inform him of the whereabouts of the final thirteen *canti* of the *Paradiso*.
[42] Massèra, p. 312.

perhaps also deservedly to surpass in that treatment the most profound intellects among the ancients] (p. 674). The later redaction was revised under the supervision of Salutati, who had altered his opinion of Boccaccio around this date, as I illustrated above.

Despite the fact that Villani may have drawn on vernacular works, such as the *Filocolo*, for autobiographical detail, Boccaccio's texts written in the *volgare* are accorded only a brief formal treatment. Villani notes that Boccaccio composed in rhyme and prose, and indiscriminately describes all the vernacular texts as the products of wanton youth ('lascivientis iuventutis', p. 675) of which Boccaccio was ashamed in his maturity. Boccaccio himself had referred to his first Latin eclogues as 'lascivia' in his letter to Fra Martino (see Chapter 1). Villani may also have taken his cue from the alleged burning of Boccaccio's early vernacular poetry, discussed in Boccaccio's letter to Pietro da Monteforte (*Ep.* XX) and Petrarch's letter to Boccaccio (*Sen.* V. 2).[43]

Domenico Bandini was one such contemporary proto-humanist. He was born in Arezzo, but held a chair at the Florentine *Studio*, and was a friend of Villani and correspondent of Salutati.[44] In 1378 Salutati wrote to Bandini concerning his request for Boccaccio's *De casibus*: 'alium nescio quem librum petebas: si recolo bene, Boccaccium De casibus virorum illustrium. non [sic] facile haberi potest; aliquando tamen habebimus' [you were looking for I know not which other book: if I remember well, Boccaccio's *De casibus virorum illustrium*. It is not easily possible to get; at some time, nevertheless, we will have it].[45] It may have been at Salutati's request that Bandini compiled an index to Boccaccio's *Genealogia*. Shortly before Petrarch's death, Bandini showed him a draft of his encyclopedic work, the *Fons memorabilium universi*, which he began before 1374 but probably did not finish until the beginning of the fifteenth century. Book 30 deals with illustrious men and includes the second biography of Boccaccio.[46] Much shorter than the previous biography, it witnesses the immediate appeal of Villani's Life among Boccaccio's educated contemporaries, drawing almost exclusively from it. Massèra writes:

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[43] See sections 1.4 and 2.1 respectively for further discussion of these letters.
[44] For biographical details see ibid., pp. 320-23; A. T. Hankey, 'Domenico di Bandino of Arezzo', *Italian Studies*, 12 (1957), 110-28; A. T. Hankey, 'Bandini, Domenico (Domenico di Bandini)', in *DBI*, V (1963), 707-09.
[45] Novati, III, 292. Other, presumably Latin, works by Boccaccio appear to have been equally hard to locate. For example, in 1391 Salutati wrote to Filippo di Bartoletto di Valle di Querciola: 'librum illum Boccacii non facile contingit reperire. si in manus venerit meas, postquam ubinam degas scio, te conscium faciam' [it happens to be not easy to find that book of Boccaccio. If it comes into my hands, after I know where you live, I shall let you know] (Novati, IV, 254).
[46] The biography is published in Massèra, pp. 323-25 and Solerti, pp. 677-78.

> una sola aggiunse di suo alle notizie raccolte dal Villani, Domenico d'Arezzo: la notizia che messer Giovanni ospitò in casa sua, *sumptibus suis*, a Firenze, il suo maestro di greco Leonzio. Nel rimanente della biografia del Bandini è chiara in vece la derivazione dall'altra del suo predecessore. (p. 336)

Bandini thus opens with a note of the author's birthplace, followed by a description of Boccaccio's father's Parisian adventures taken from the second redaction of Villani's biography. A condensed version of the first redaction follows, with the same description of the curtailment of Boccaccio's literary studies, sojourn in Naples, revelation at Virgil's tomb, and cultivation of humanistic studies. However, proportionally more space is devoted to a description of Boccaccio's cultivation of Greek studies, reflecting how the reception of Boccaccio continued to be bent to the humanistic mould towards the beginning of the fifteenth century. Bandini follows Villani's example and lists all five Latin works by name, but he is less fulsome in his praise, partly perhaps from lack of space, but also because his tastes seem to have differed a little from those of Villani. The *Genealogia* is still described as useful ('util[is]'), but also laborious, which has more ambiguous connotations ('laborios[us]') (p. 677). Likewise, *De montibus* is referred to as useful, but no comment is made on *De casibus*, *De mulieribus*, and the *Buccolicum carmen*, other than that the latter is written in verse. Once again, however, the vernacular works are described as the regrettable product of wanton youth.

CHAPTER 3

Boccaccio and the Wider Public

Most of the authors and patrons of literature in contact with Boccaccio formed part of an intellectual élite, which was to a large extent influenced by the renewed interest in classical culture promoted by Petrarch. As the letter to Mainardo Cavalcanti demonstrates, however, this did not prevent readers informed by different cultural and social backgrounds expressing an interest in Boccaccio. The full impact of his works on the different strata of society, in various geographical locations within Italy, is more evident once books leave the confines of Boccaccio's immediate circle of acquaintances. This chapter offers a survey of these responses.

3.1 LENDING, BORROWING, READING, AND GLOSSING

Vittore Branca uses two important early testimonies of Boccaccio's reception to argue that Mainardo Cavalcanti was only one of a large number of Tuscan merchants amongst whom the *Decameron* rapidly found success.[1] The first is a letter written in 1360 by Francesco Buondelmonti, a Florentine who moved to Naples and became involved in politics with the support of his uncle, Niccolò Acciaiuoli.[2] On 13 July Buondelmonti wrote to Giovanni Acciaiuoli in Florence whilst on business in Ancona, concerning the matter of 'il libro de le novelle di messer Giovanni Bocacci', asking Giovanni to recover the manuscript from the wife of a certain Monte Belandi and send it to him.[3] Buondelmonti is clear about his ownership of the book, writing 'il quale libro è mio' (p. 163), but the letter also reveals that others were keen to read, and perhaps even copy, the work for themselves, since Buondelmonti loaned his manuscript to Monte Belandi, who subsequently left it with his wife in Florence. Although the letter does not contain an explicit judgement of the work or its author, it can be inferred from the urgency with which Buondelmonti writes and the detailed guidance he gives for its safe return, that it was considered an object of some value by its owner. However, it is not clear whether Buondelmonti is already familiar with the *Decameron*, and is keen to read it again, or whether his urgency is born of the reputation that preceded it.[4] Branca interprets

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[1] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 163-69, 177-81.
[2] D. Nenci, 'Buondelmonti, Francesco', in *DBI*, XV (1972), 205-07 (p. 205).
[3] See Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 163-64, for the full text of the letter.
[4] Marco Cursi suggests that Buondelmonti commissioned the manuscript when he passed through Florence in 1359, but had not been able to pick it up, although this does not clarify whether or not Buondelmonti was already familiar with the contents ('Per la più antica fortuna

Buondelmonti's fervour as 'il riflesso dell'ansia e della trepidazione con le quali [...] erano in quegli anni ricercate le copie di questo nostro primo grande libro di lettura amena', an attitude akin to that which might have been exhibited by the ladies in Mainardo Cavalcanti's household.[5] There is some evidence within the letter that others may have wished to waylay the book on its way to Buondelmonti because they too wished to read it. Acciaiuoli is instructed not to entrust the *Decameron* to messer Neri: 'guardate non venga a mano a messer Neri perché non l'avrei' (p. 163), and on the back of the letter is written: 'e guardatevi del libro mio di prestarlo a ser Nicolò, però ch'egli vi sarà ladro' (p. 164). However, there is also a suggestion, which Branca does not mention, that Buondelmonti does not want others to get hold of the work because they will not regard it favourably: 'guardate di non prestarlo a nullo perché molti ne sareno malcortesi' (pp. 163-64).

The second important testimony is held in the so-called Strozzi fragment. Eighteen folios, now bound into a single manuscript, contain an anonymous transcription of extracts from the *Decameron* made between 1358 and 1363: the conclusions to Days I-IX, including the *ballate* and *novella* IX. 10.[6] The extracts are prefaced by an 'introduction' in which the author of the comments appears to have followed very closely the guidelines for readers offered by the Author of the *Decameron*.[7] Addressing women, as Boccaccio himself had done in both the *Decameron* and *Teseida*, the anonymous author describes Boccaccio as a writer who has dedicated himself to writing about women and for women:

> valorosissime donne, [...] torniamo a comendare la fama di coloro, i quali ànno a vostra reverenzia ad alcune belle e dilettevoli inventive dato composizione. De' quali, infra gli altri di cui io al presente mi ricordo, che merita perfette lodi e fama, si è il valoroso Messer Giovanni di Boccaccio. (p. 179)

Clearly a fan of the *Decameron*, the writer in effect continues the defence begun by Boccaccio in the introduction to Day IV and conclusion, focusing on the importance of praising women ('e chi può fare più lodevole operazione che mantenere una vaga donna lieta nella sua giovanezza?'), and the hypocrisy of the clergy ('[i religiosi] biasimandole [le donne] in pergamo e nel segreto lodandole, vogliono essere da loro serviti' (p. 178)). Like Boccaccio, he draws on past examples to lend weight to his defence of praising

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del *Decameron*: mano e tempi del "frammento magliabechiano" II, II, 8 (cc. 20*r*-37*v*)', *Scrittura e civiltà*, 22 (1998), 265-93 (p. 286).

[5] *Tradizione*, II, 164.

[6] Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, MS Magliabechiano II, II, 8. I have used Cursi's dating in 'Per la più antica fortuna', p. 281.

[7] The introduction is printed in full in Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 177-80.

women, including the *dolce stil novo* tradition: 'certi poeti furono che a imagini angeliche le donne asomigliarono' (p. 178), and the immorality of the clergy is illustrated with an anecdotal story. The 'diletto' and 'piacere' that derive from books about women is at the heart of the writer's commendation, although, as in the Author's comments in the *Decameron*, there are passing references to 'vertù'. The writer is not only a fan of the *Decameron*, but apparently of Boccaccio's vernacular *oeuvre* thus far:

> questi, [Boccaccio] da picciol tempo in qua, à fatti molti belli e dilettevoli libri, e in prosa e in versi, in onore di quelle graziose donne, la cui magnanimitade nelle cose dilettevoli e vertudiose aoperare si contenta, e de' libri e delle belle istorie leggendole, o udendole leggiere, sommo piacere e diletto ne prendono, di che a lui n'accresce fama, e a voi [valorosissime donne] diletto. (p. 179)

The suggestion that women read these works may be a reflection of reality, or it may be a continuation of Boccaccio's fictional projected readership, or both.

Branca describes the anonymous author as 'probabilmente un borghese d'ambiente mercantesco, fortemente intinto di letteratura', a representative of the 'piccola Firenze della seconda metà del Trecento' in which the *Decameron* circulated.[8] The *ricordi* kept by Florentine merchants also witness that the *Decameron* was well known and circulated by readers from a mercantile background. The wool merchant Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli mentions Boccaccio's description of the plague, and Doffo degli Spini describes how his manuscript of the *Decameron* was in demand from other readers: 'ricordanza che questo dì x di luglio prestai a Mariotto di [...] da Volterra [...] il mio libro delle Cento Novelle, che mandai a Volterra [...] perché lo copiasse'.[9]

However, some elements of Branca's thesis on merchant readership have recently been challenged.[10] Marco Cursi agrees, on linguistic and palaeographic grounds, that the Strozzi fragment was written by a Florentine writer, but has identified the same hand in an account book belonging to Lapa Acciaiuoli. He therefore argues that the extracts from the *Decameron* were compiled in Naples, where the manuscript circulated among wealthy readers: 'con tutta probabilità, questa antologia decameroniana non circolò tra le famiglie mercantili della "piccola Firenze della

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[8] Ibid., p. 180.
[9] See Bec, *Les Marchands écrivains*, pp. 397-98. See also *Mercanti scrittori: ricordi nella Firenze tra Medioevo e Rinascimento*, ed. by Vittore Branca (Milan: Rusconi, 1986), pp. 207, 209; Giovanni di Pagolo Morelli, *Ricordi*, ed. by Vittore Branca (Florence: Le Monnier, 1956), pp. 287, 290.
[10] For a more detailed discussion of Cursi's critique see Chapter 7.

seconda metà del Trecento", ma piuttosto tra quei ricchi fiorentini che vivevano lontano da Firenze, negli esclusivi ambienti della corte angioina'.[11]

Cursi's findings suggest that the author of the Strozzi fragment and Francesco Buondelmonti may have been acquainted, since Lapa Acciauoli was Buondelmonti's mother. This new evidence also highlights the point that merchants could encompass a range of social, cultural, and economic backgrounds. Cursi comments that Buondelmonti was not accustomed to writing, but in contrast, the script of the Strozzi fragment is described as 'una minuscola cancelleresca sicura ed elegante', and the author as 'fortemente intinto di letteratura'.[12]

Evidence from Buondelmonti's letter and the Strozzi fragment has demonstrated that the *Decameron* was read in a courtly environment as well as by merchants, and there is additional evidence, not mentioned by Branca, that the *Decameron* was read at court in Ferrara. At the beginning of the fifteenth century the courtier Pietro Andrea de' Bassi wrote a commentary to Niccolò Malpigli's *canzone* 'Spirto gentile da quel gremio sciolto', which had been composed for Niccolò III d'Este.[13] In the commentary de' Bassi included a summary of *novella* IV. 1, which, he reports, was narrated 'per Zohanne Bocazo nel suo centiloquio'.[14] De' Bassi was no stranger to other works by Boccaccio, composing a commentary to the *Teseida*, and drawing on the *Genealogia* in his own work *Le fatiche d'Ercole*.[15]

The critical emphasis which has been placed on the *Decameron* and essays highlighting the features in the *Decameron* which would have appealed to merchants have tended to suggest that the mercantile response is particularly linked to the *Decameron*.[16] However, merchants were also interested in other vernacular works by Boccaccio. Paolo de' Sassetti's account book records that a copy of the *Corbaccio* was sent to Bartolo di Bellozzo: 'mandamo a Monpulieri per le mani di Giovanni di Stefano del Migliore, fattore di Michele di Vanni di ser Lotto e compagni, dì ... di luglio anno mccclxxxj l'onfrascritte cose, cioè: [...] j libro chiamato Corbacchio in bambagia

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[11] Cursi, 'Per la più antica fortuna', pp. 280-8.
[12] Ibid., pp. 272, 286-87, and Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 180. There is, however, no evidence that the scribe of the Strozzi fragment was synonymous with the author of the comments on Boccaccio.
[13] The exact date of the commentary is unclear. According to G. Orlandi in 'Intorno alla vita e alle opere di Pietro Andrea de' Bassi', *GSLI*, 83 (1924), 285-313 it was written towards the end of de' Bassi's life. He died before 1447.
[14] Ibid., p. 312.
[15] For the influence of the *Genealogia* on the *Fatiche* see ibid, pp. 308-10. The significance of the commentary on the *Teseida* is considered in section 6.2.1.2.
[16] See Vittore Branca, 'L'epopea dei mercatanti', in his *Boccaccio medievale e nuovi studi sul 'Decameron'*, 2nd edn (Florence: Sansoni, 1998), pp. 134-64.

coverto d'assi'.[17] A letter written by the Pisan Antonio di Checo Rosso to Marco di Goro Strozzi in 1422 reveals a similar excitement surrounding the *Filocolo* to that surrounding the *Decameron* suggested by Buondelmonti's letter:

> il *Filocolo*, il quale ebbi dalla benedetta anima di Nicholò, a cui Dio abbi facto compita misericordia, mi sarebbe istato caro Il'averlo tenuto alquanto più, ma poi che voi mi scrivete che Piero Pecori lo vuole e favene grandissima fretta, ve lo mandarò prestissimamente e se non fusse per rispecto del tempo vel mandarei ora a questa volta.[18]

The *Teseida* was also read by merchants. The *canzone* 'Donna gentil, nel tuo vago cospetto', attributed to the Florentine merchant Matteo di Dino Frescobaldi contains a reference to the *Teseida*, which is the earliest extant evidence for the circulation of any work by Boccaccio.[19] Frescobaldi probably died in the plague of 1348, and therefore it is highly likely that the *Teseida* was in general circulation very shortly after its composition, in the 1340s.[20] Stanza IV of the *canzone* in question contains a list of those who have been overcome by the power of love, and includes 'la semplicetta Emilia | Ippolita ed Urilia'. Santorre Debenedetti has argued that the conjunction of the name Emilia with that of Ippolita, together with the epithet 'semplicetta', must refer to Boccaccio's *Teseida*, since medieval and ancient sources did not recognize Emilia as Ippolita's sister. Debenedetti's argument is reinforced by a reference in the same stanza to the nymph Mensola which clearly echoes the wording of the *Ninfale fiesolano*.[21] Although this *canzone* represents an acknowledgement of the existence, rather than an explicit judgement of the quality of the *Teseida*, Debenedetti goes further to argue it is evidence not only that these works were known, 'ma [che] già godevano d'una certa popolarità a Firenze, se ivi un rimatore poteva citarne le eroine accanto alle più illustri dell'antichità' (p. 263).

The *Teseida* may also have appealed to the religious community. Between 1363 and 1367 a certain Guiduccino della Fratta transcribed four *ballate* 'della fede amorosa' on the blank leaves in an account book belonging to the monastery of Montelabbate in the Marche. Like Frescobaldi's *canzone*, the final stanza of the third *ballata* suggests

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[17] Quoted in Bec, *Les Marchands écrivains*, pp. 397-98.
[18] Ibid., p. 398.
[19] S. Debenedetti, 'Per la fortuna della *Teseide* e del *Ninfale Fiesolano* nel sec. XIV', *GSLI*, 60 (1912), 259-64.
[20] For the date of Frescobaldi's death see F. De Propris, 'Frescobaldi, Matteo', in *DBI*, L (1998), 504-05 (p. 504).
[21] See Debenedetti, p. 263.

that the author and his audience were familiar with the *Teseida*, since Arcita's love for Emilia is used as a point of comparison:

> Sì comme Arcita scese en carcierato
> che podeia sempre Ymilia vedere
> maie huomo la mondo ebbe tale stato
> che par quillo io no credesse avvere.[22]

Although Baldelli claims this is 'un'altra prova della rapida diffusione delle opere del Boccaccio', it is less clear in this case whether the reference is to Boccaccio's version of events, or to another source.[23] Boccaccio's *Teseida* is explicitly named as the source for a summary of Theseus's campaign found in a manuscript of the *Thebaid* given to the convent of Santa Croce in Florence in 1406 ('Dominus Johannes Buccacius de florencia in libro rithmico vulgari, qui intitulatur lu theseo' [master Giovanni Boccaccio of Florence published with a rhythmical vernacular book, which is called the Theseo]). The glossator may have come from central or southern Italy and was probably writing from memory, although the gloss is likely to have been written in the Florentine convent.[24] Use of the *Teseida* in this manner shows that it had become accepted as an authorized scholarly work, as well as a source for lyrics.

Alongside the diffusion of vernacular works, there is also evidence from the end of the fourteenth century that Boccaccio's Latin works were in use, although in this case the context is exclusively scholarly. Like the *Teseida*, the *Genealogia* was also being used as a source for glossators. In a manuscript containing Seneca's tragedies, Boccaccio keeps company with a number of classical sources, including Cicero, Augustine, and Virgil.[25]

3.2 IMITATION OF THE *DECAMERON*

The responses that have been discussed thus far have illustrated that Boccaccio's texts were often used as sources for other literary compositions. Among the Latin works use of the *Genealogia* was particularly widespread, and the *Trattatello* was also popular among the vernacular texts. The *Decameron* was also an important influence on the structure and content of vernacular fictional narrative. Steven Botterill writes that:

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[22] The *ballata* is published in Ignazio Baldelli, 'Ballate e preghiere in un libro di conti del secolo XV', *SFI*, 10 (1952), 25-35.
[23] Ibid., p. 31.
[24] David Anderson, 'An Early Reference to the *Teseida*', *StB*, 16 (1987), 325-28.
[25] Black, *Humanism and Education*, p. 214. See also Vittore Branca, *Tradizione delle opere di Giovanni Boccaccio. I: Un primo elenco dei codici e tre studi*, 2 vols (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1958), I, 240.

> in strictly literary terms [...] the most fruitful model left by the *tre corone* seems to have been Boccaccio's *Decameron*. Both the *Trecentonovelle* [...] of Franco Sacchetti (c. 1332-1400) and the *Novelle* of Giovanni Sercambi (1347-1424) start from the desire to compete with, or at least re-envision, the acknowledged prose masterpiece of the preceding generation.[26]

Giovanni Sercambi's *Novelle* were probably begun at least a decade earlier than Sacchetti's work, in the 1370s.[27] The stories are set during the plague in Lucca and 'messer Johanni Boccacci' is explicitly cited as a source for a particular *novella* on three occasions.[28] Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle* do not follow the framework of the *Decameron*, but Sacchetti is more forthcoming in his praise for Boccaccio, acknowledging his debt to the 'eccellente poeta fiorentino messer Giovanni Boccacci' and his 'libro delle Cento Novelle' in the proem.[29] Unfortunately, the damaged state of the manuscript transmitting the text has made it impossible to gauge exactly what follows. It is difficult to determine whether Sacchetti recorded that the *Decameron* was already well diffused and requested, even in France and England, where it had been translated, or whether he expressed his desire that this were the case.[30] Sacchetti also praised Boccaccio's eloquence and virtue in a sonnet he composed and sent to the *certaldese* when rumours abounded that Boccaccio had become a Carthusian monk in Naples, presumably during his final visit there in 1370.[31]

However, despite his admiration for the *Decameron* and its influence on his own work, like Salutati, Sacchetti chose to immortalize Boccaccio as a Latin poet in a *canzone* lamenting his death:

> Chi sonerà parola
> in letture propinque,
> là dove libri cinque
> di questo diretan composti stimo?
> De' viri illustri il primo,
> conta e 'l secondo De le donne chiare,
> terzo si fa nomare

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[26] *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature*, ed. by Peter Brand and Lino Pertile, rev. edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 113.
[27] Carlo Muscetta, 'Giovanni Boccaccio e i novellieri', in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, dir. by Emilio Cecchi and Natalino Sapegno, 9 vols (Milan: Garzanti, 1965), II, 317-558 (p. 520). Sacchetti may have begun some of the *novelle* in 1389, but the majority were written between 1392 and 1397 in the last decade of Sacchetti's life (Franco Sacchetti, *Opere*, ed. by Aldo Borlenghi (Milan: Rizzoli, 1957), p. 34).
[28] Novelle C, CVII, CLIII (Giovanni Sercambi, *Novelle*, ed. by Giovanni Sinicropi, 2 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1972), I, 426, 469; II, 739).
[29] Sacchetti, *Opere*, pp. 41-42.
[30] Ibid., p. 41.
[31] Sonnet 70 (CL), ibid., p. 1009.

Buccolica, il quarto Monti e fiumi,
il quinto Delli dii e lor costumi.[32]

Although the loss of Boccaccio is the stimulus for the poem, his death is the last in a catalogue of recent mortalities. No longer the central focus, he nevertheless receives authorization as one of a select number of famous fourteenth-century Florentines, much like his status in the biographical compendia written by Villani and Bandini.[33]

Giovanni Gherardi's *Paradiso degli Alberti* was written somewhat later than Sercambi's *Novelle* and Sacchetti's *Trecentonovelle*, in the second decade of the fifteenth century. Divided into five books, the *Paradiso* describes a journey taken by the author to Crete and Cyprus (Book I), conversations amongst a group of nobles on a pilgrimage in Tuscany (Book II), and conversations amongst the same group of nobles that took place in Antonio degli Alberti's villa 'Paradiso' in Florence in 1389, where they were also joined by others (Books III-V). Antonio Lanza describes the structure of the *Paradiso* as 'un singolare capovolgimento del modello decameroniano attuato mediante l'elefantiaca dilatazione della cornice, a scapito delle novelle, che sono soltanto nove'.[34] Like Sacchetti, Gherardi professes a debt to Boccaccio at the beginning of the *Paradiso*, but Gherardi's inspiration is not limited to the *Decameron*, rather it is the vernacular language exalted and ennobled by Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio: 'scusimi ancora l'ardentissima voglia che continuamente mi sprona il [...] edioma materno con ogni possa sapere esaltare e quello nobilitare, come che da tre corone fiorentine principalmente già nobilitato et esaltato si sia; le quali umilissimamente sì seguo'.[35] Gherardi was thus the first to employ Boccaccio to mount a defence for the use of the Florentine vernacular in an age culturally governed by classicism, prefiguring Lorenzo de' Medici's promotion of the *volgare* spoken in his city over half a century later. The structure of the *Paradiso* was designed to incorporate stories which echoed the *Decameron*, as well as discussions on philosophical and historical matters, demonstrating that the vernacular was capable of dealing with a variety of different styles, registers, and concepts. Gherardi lectured on Dante in the

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[32] Ibid., p. 1060.
[33] Francesco De Sanctis describes the *canzone* as 'l'elogio funebre del Trecento' in his *Storia della letteratura italiana* (Milan: Mondadori, 1961), p. 247. Cf. 'Lasso, Fiorenza mia, ch'io mi ritrovo' [CCXLIV] in Franco Sacchetti, *Il libro delle rime*, ed. by Franca Brambilla Ageno (Florence: Olschki, 1990), pp. 374-83.
[34] Antonio Lanza, *Polemiche e berte letterarie nella Firenze del primo Rinascimento (1375-1449)*, 2nd edn (Rome: Bulzoni, 1989), p. 174.
[35] Giovanni da Prato, *Il 'Paradiso degli Alberti': ritrovi e ragionamenti del 1389*, ed. by Alessandro Wesselofsky, 3 vols (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1968), II, ii-iii.

Florentine *Studio* and was familiar with almost all the vernacular works written by Boccaccio, and with at least the *Genealogia* from among the Latin texts.[36]

3.3 FLORENTINE POLITICS

Gherardi also composed a sonnet 'per messer Giovanni Boccacci', written from the perspective of the dead author who describes the fame he enjoyed during his life and also his subsequent 'etterna vita'.[37] In this context Gherardi does not mention whether Boccaccio is under the spotlight as an author of Latin or of vernacular works, because the sonnet was written not only in order to document Boccaccio's fame, but also to promote the city of Florence for political ends. From the very end of the fourteenth century responses to Boccaccio were no longer couched in purely literary terms, but began to serve an overtly political agenda. There had been continual tension between Ghibelline Milan and Guelf Florence from the middle of the thirteenth century onwards, and in the 1380s Milan, under the control of the Visconti, began to extend its power southwards, encompassing smaller city-states in its wake and threatening the independence of the Florentine republic. By 1400 Florence was alone in a territory controlled by Giangaleazzo Visconti, and was only saved by the timely death of the tyrant in 1402.[38] Historians such as Hans Baron have argued that it is this republican freedom which is a vital element in the Italian Renaissance: at the beginning of the new century, humanism in Florence ceased to be a purely literary movement and fused with a new civic awareness.[39]

The war between Milan and Florence was not only carried out on a military level, but was also fought with humanist eloquence. Salutati's letters from the Florentine chancery were said to cause as much damage as the Florentine army. Vittorio Rossi comments: 'anche Gian Galeazzo Visconti volle a' suoi ordini uomini, che sapessero fronteggiare degnamente le epistole del Salutati ed accompagnare i maneggi della sua politica, i trionfi o le sconfitte de' suoi soldati con scritture sonanti di

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[36] Lauro Martines, *The Social World of the Florentine Humanists, 1390-1460* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 313; Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 165.
[37] For the full text see *Lirici toscani del Quattrocento*, ed. by Antonio Lanza (Rome: Bulzoni, 1973), p. 664.
[38] Hans Baron, *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance: Civic Humanism and Republican Liberty in an Age of Classicism and Tyranny* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), pp. 12-46 and Albert Rabil Jr, 'The Significance of "Civic Humanism" in the Interpretation of the Italian Renaissance', in *Renaissance Humanism: Foundation, Forms, and Legacy*, ed. by Albert Rabil Jr, 2 vols (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), I, 141-74 (pp. 145-46).
[39] See in particular *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*. For a critical evaluation of Baron's theory see Rabil, pp. 141-74.

bei periodi latini'.[40] Antonio Loschi was one such notary in the Visconti chancery who wrote a work of Milanese propaganda entitled *Invectiva in Florentinos*. In response, Cino Rinuccini, an educated and extremely wealthy Florentine merchant who did not subscribe to the humanist school of thought, wrote a *Risponsiva* emphasizing the importance of republicanism over tyranny in the context of Roman and Florentine history.[41] Salutati wrote an invective of his own in 1403, the *Invectiva in Antonium Luschum Vicentinum*, responding to each of the points made by Loschi.[42] Visconti politics are condemned and Florence is presented as the true 'flo[s] Italiae' [flower of Italy].[43] The beauties and riches found in Florence are listed, from the strength of its city walls, to the sweetness of its waters, to the success of its trade. Among these many virtues are included 'viri clariores' [more illustrious men] (p. 34), said to be too numerable to list individually. Salutati sees fit to end his invective, however, by demanding where else Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio could be found ('ubi Dantes? ubi Petrarca? ubi Boccaccius?', p. 34). The invective is a natural extension to the connection already made between Boccaccio and Florence in the eulogies of Boccaccio written by Salutati and Sacchetti, and the compendium of famous men compiled by Villani, with an overtly political dimension. Although Salutati does not go into any more detail about Boccaccio's achievements, it is clear from the explicit mention of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio to the exclusion of all others, and from the rhetorical force of the question that Salutati considers them to be the crowning glory of Florence. Boccaccio is accorded a position equal to that of Dante and Petrarch, and the placing of these poets at the apex of the invective reveals the confidence of this view. In this context there is no hint of the reservations expressed in 1395.

Use of the *tre corone* in Florentine propaganda was evidently a powerful weapon, because even enemies of Florence could not fail to admire them. Politically, the Sienese Simone Serdini was in opposition to the Florentines, but held Dante in

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[40] Vittorio Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, rev. by Rossella Bessi (Milan: Vallardi, 1933; repr. Padua: Piccin Nuova Libreria, 1992), p. 32.
[41] For Rinuccini's background, see Cino Rinuccini, *Rime*, ed. by Giovanni Balbi (Florence: Le Lettere, 1995), pp. 37-39; Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 129. See Ronald Witt, 'Cino Rinuccini's *Risponsiva alla invettiva di messer Antonio Lusco*', *Renaissance Quarterly*, 23 (1970), 133-49 (pp. 139-41) for a description of the contents. There is much controversy over the dating of the *Risponsiva*: Baron and Antonio Lanza date it as early as 1397, whilst Ronald Witt dates parts of it as late as 1414 (Lanza, *Polemiche*, pp. 130-40).
[42] I have followed the dating given by Garin in *Prosatori latini del Quattrocento*, ed. by Eugenio Garin (Milan: Ricciardi, 1952), p. 4 and by Bec in *L'umanesimo civile: Alberti, Salutati, Bruni, Bracciolini e altri trattatisti del '400*, ed. by Christian Bec (Turin: Paravia, 1975), p. 58.
[43] I have used the extract included in *Prosatori latini*, ed. by Garin, pp. 8-37 (p. 34).

particular in great esteem.[44] A fifteenth-century manuscript contains the *Trattatello in laude di Dante*, followed by a sonnet by Serdini 'a laude del poeta Dante e di messer Giovan Boccacci, che nella sopradetta prosa dice di lui appieno', and the *Vita nuova* with Boccaccio's gloss.[45] Boccaccio is presented and praised in the sonnet primarily as the author of the life of Dante:

> Del suo [di Dante] essilio e dell'altrui perfidia,
> e come visse al mondo glorïoso,
> qui legger puoi per merito aütore;
> ché simile oratore
> non ebbe al mondo mai sì dolce lima,
> che fu 'l Boccaccio in prosa e Dante in rima.[46]

This is the first instance where Boccaccio's merits as a prose writer are juxtaposed with the poetical skill of another author, in this case, Dante. The comparison is also an early reflection of the humanistic distinction between prose and verse, embodied, in classical terms, by Cicero and Virgil.[47]

3.4 TRADITIONALISTS AND HUMANISTS, CRITICISM AND CONTROVERSY

Although so-called 'traditionalists' such as Giovanni Gherardi and Cino Rinuccini came together with humanists such as Coluccio Salutati in praise of Boccaccio, with the common aim of defending their city, elsewhere they were in disagreement over Boccaccio's status as an author. While Gherardi was content to state his allegiance to the *tre corone* and let his vernacular work speak for itself, Rinuccini was more forthright in his defence of the *trecentisti*, composing an invective entitled *Invettiva contro a certi calunniatori di Dante, di messer Francesco Petrarca e di messer Johanni Boccaci*'.[48] Originally written in Latin because it addressed humanists directly, it was designed to extol the virtues of scholasticism, and promote the merits of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio.[49] Rinuccini is the first to champion Boccaccio overtly as a

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[44] On Serdini see Natalino Sapegno, *Il Trecento*, 4th edn, rev. (Padua: La Nuova Libreria, 1981), pp. 450-53.
[45] Simone Serdini da Siena, detto il Saviozzo, *Rime*, ed. by Emilio Pasquini (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1965), p. xxxiii.
[46] Ibid., pp. 235-36.
[47] See, for example, Salutati's comments that Petrarch was excellent in both verse and prose and therefore should be considered superior to both Virgil and Cicero (*Ep.* XVIIII to Poggio Bracciolini (Novati, IV, 126-45)).
[48] Lanza dates the invective to between 1398 and 1400 in *Polemiche*, p. 144.
[49] The invective survives only in a vernacular translation by an unknown author. See Witt, p. 135.

writer of vernacular and Latin works in the same context: 'le storie poetiche dicono [gli umanisti] essere favole da femmine e da fanciugli, e che il non meno dolce che utile recitatore di dette istorie, cioè messer Giovanni Boccaci, non seppe gramatica [latino], la qual cosa io non credo essere vera'.[50] Rinuccini's reference to Boccaccio's 'grammatical' ability defends the quality of his Latin, which by the end of the fourteenth century Salutati, and no doubt other humanists, had begun to consider rather crude and corrupt in comparison with classical authors such as Cicero.

The *Invettiva* written by Rinuccini was probably aimed at the humanists Niccolò Niccoli, Leonardo Bruni, and Roberto de' Rossi, among others.[51] These three all appear as characters in Bruni's *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum*, which can be read as the humanist reply to traditionalist attacks.[52] Lanza notes:

> quando il Bruni si accinse alla composizione dei *Dialogi*, gli umanisti avevano già subito quattro durissimi attacchi: il Landini, il Torini, Giovanni da San Miniato e Cino Rinuccini li avevano esplicitamente accusati di essere ignoranti, empi e nemici della patria.[53]

This highlights, once again, that the debate over the status of the *tre corone* was as much about patriotism and politics as it was about literary merits. Leonardo Bruni was not born in Florence, but he moved there when of university age to study the liberal arts and civil law. Salutati took him under his wing, but he was one of the first generation of humanists able to progress beyond the hybrid of medieval and classical tendencies exhibited by figures such as Salutati and Benvenuto da Imola. Bruni's understanding of Greek, which he studied in Florence under Manuel Chrysoloras, far surpassed the efforts of Petrarch, Boccaccio, and Salutati. He went on to become apostolic secretary for four popes and the chancellor of Florence before his death in 1444.[54] Bruni's attitude towards the vernacular, and towards Boccaccio as a fourteenth-century author, is complex and expressed in a number of contexts.

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[50] Ibid., p. 155. Mirko Tavoni notes that the term 'grammatica' is used in the sense of 'latino' 'in testi non grammaticali, dal Due fino al pieno Cinquecento – sempre più col carattere di relitto terminologico di una visione declinante o declinata' in his *Latino, grammatica, volgare: storia di una questione umanistica* (Padua: Antenore, 1984), p. 16.
[51] Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 143.
[52] Lanza argues that the *Dialogi* were probably composed in 1401 in *Polemiche*, pp. 34-41. Baron, however, argues that the *Dialogi* were composed at two, separate and later, dates: see in particular pp. 243-44 of *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*.
[53] Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 41.
[54] For a detailed biography of Bruni see *The Humanism of Leonardo Bruni: Selected Texts*, trans. and intro. by Gordon Griffiths, James Hankins, and David Thompson (New York: Centre for Medieval and Early Renaissance Studies, 1987), pp. 21-42 and C. Vasoli, 'Bruni (Brunus, Bruno), Leonardo (Lionardo), detto Leonardo Aretino', in *DBI*, XIV (1972), 618-33.

The *Dialogi* are not an unambiguous rejection or exaltation of the *trecentisti* by Bruni, and they are further complicated by the fictional context and introduction of other historical characters. Salutati and Niccolò Niccoli both play central roles in the *Dialogi* in relation to the views expressed about Boccaccio. Niccoli was another Florentine humanist and protégé of Salutati, who seems to have been a rather eccentric character, surrounding himself with classical paraphernalia, such as coins, medals, busts and so on.[55] There are no extant documents that provide a first-hand account of Niccoli's opinions on Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, but he seems to have gained a bad name for humanism, refusing to join the political cause and praise the *tre corone* in the name of patriotism and pro-Florentine propaganda. The *Dialogi* can be read as Bruni's attempt to 're-write' Niccoli's opinions, and distance himself and other humanists from criticism.

As in Rinuccini's *Invettiva*, the main theme in the *Dialogi* is the state of the liberal arts. In the first dialogue Niccoli laments the current state of philosophy, dialectic, grammar, and rhetoric, whose demise he feels is due to a lack of knowledge about, or the survival of, classical works. Furthermore he notes how those classical works which do exist are too incorrect to be of much use.[56] This lament leads Salutati to try to temper Niccoli's pessimism by reminding him of some of the positive aspects of contemporary culture, namely the *tre corone*. Thus, Boccaccio's position as an author is evaluated in relation to classical culture:

> Illud vero cogitare non possum, qua tua ratione adductus dixeris, neminem fuisse iamdiu, qui aliquam praestantiam in his studiis habuerit: nam potes, ut alios omittam, vel tres viros quos his temporibus nostra civitas tulit, non praestantissimos iudicare: Dantem, Franciscum Petrarcham, Iohannem Boccatium, qui tanto consensu omnium ad caelum tolluntur? (p. 68)

> [However, I cannot think what led you to say that for a long time now there has been no one who had any excellence in these studies; for to pass over the others, can you consider not outstanding at least three men whom our city has borne in these times, Dante, Francesco Petrarch and Giovanni Boccaccio, who by such consensus of all are exalted to the heavens?][57]

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[55] See Ullman, *The Humanism of Coluccio*, p. 125 and Giuseppe Zippel, 'Niccolò Niccoli, contributo alla storia dell'umanesimo', in *Storia e cultura del rinascimento italiano*, ed. by Gianni Zippel (Padua: Antenore, 1979), pp. 68-157.

[56] The attitude of humanists, from Petrarch onwards, to the liberal arts was complicated and not altogether positive. I have used the edition printed in *Prosatori latini*, ed. by Garin, pp. 44-99 (pp. 52-60).

[57] Translations are taken from Griffiths, Hankins, and Thompson, p. 72.

Salutati then asks Niccoli either to explain his reasons for failing to mention the three poets or to admit that he had forgotten them. Niccoli responds: 'Quos tu mihi Dantes, inquit, commemoras? quos Petrarchas? quos Boccatios? an tu putas me vulgi opinionibus iudicare, ut ea probem aut improbem quae ipsa multitudo?' (p. 68). [What Dantes are you reminding me of? What Petrarchs? What Boccaccios? Do you think I judge according to the opinions of the populace, so that I approve or disapprove what the multitude does?] (pp. 72-73). Niccoli then goes on to criticize each poet in more detail. He accuses Dante of misinterpreting Virgil, being ignorant of the age of Marcus Cato, misplacing people in *Paradiso* or *Inferno*, and of lacking in Latinity. Petrarch is condemned for proclaiming the *Africa* to be his greatest work, when it is a 'ridiculus mus' (p. 72) [ridiculous mouse].[58] His eclogues are not pastoral and his orations lack the art of rhetoric. Of Boccaccio, Niccoli says:

> Possum haec eadem de Iohanne Boccatio dicere, qui quantum possit in omni opere suo manifestissimus est. Verum ego etiam pro eo satis dictum esse opinor. Nam cum illorum, qui tuo atque adeo omnium iudicio sibi permultum antecellunt, ego multa vitia demonstrarim, atque etiam plura, si quis in ea re occupatus vellet esse, demonstrari possent, potes existimare, si de Iohanne dicere vellem, orationem mihi non defuturam. (pp. 72-74)
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> [I can say the same things about Giovanni Boccaccio, the extent of whose ability is manifest in his every work; but I think I have said enough to cover him as well. For since I have shown the many faults of those who in your judgment and everyone else's much excel him (and anyone who wished to occupy himself with the matter could point out more), you can suppose that, if I wished to talk about Giovanni, speech would not fail me.] (pp. 74-75)

The following day Bruni, Salutati, Niccoli, and Piero Sermini visit Roberto de' Rossi's gardens and de' Rossi asks Salutati to defend Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio against the claims Niccoli had made on the preceding day. At this point the truthfulness of Niccoli's invective is brought into question for the first time. Salutati claims that Niccoli was in league with Bruni to cause him to feel compelled to praise the *tre corone*, and therefore he is reluctant to satisfy their wishes. Bruni rules that Niccoli himself should defend the three poets. Niccoli confirms that he did indeed wish to provoke Salutati into praising the poets and protests his love for each, countering each of the accusations he had formerly made. He deals with Boccaccio last, and says:

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[58] This is a reference to Horace: 'parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus' (*Ars poetica*, l. 139). Niccoli is therefore commenting on both the long and unfruitful gestation of the *Africa*, and the paltry results.

ad Boccatium veniamus, cuius ego doctrinam, eloquentiam, leporem, maximeque ingenii praestantiam in omni re omnique opere admiror: qui deorum genealogias, qui montes atque flumina, qui varios virorum casus, qui mulieres claras, qui bucolica carmina, qui amores, qui nymphas, qui cetera infinita, facundissimo atque lepidissimo ore cecinerit, tradiderit, scripserit. Quis igitur hunc non amet? (p. 94)

[let us come to Boccaccio. His learning, eloquence, humor, and especially the excellence of his genius, I admire in every field and in every work. With great eloquence and charm he sang, recounted and wrote genealogies of the gods, mountains and rivers, the various ends of men, famous women, bucolic poems, loves, nymphs, and infinite other things. Who therefore would not love him?] (p. 83)

The five Latin works mentioned are those most likely to appeal to a humanist and be used in a list of Boccaccio's achievements, as demonstrated by Salutati, Benvenuto, Sacchetti, Villani, and Bandini.

Many critics at the beginning of the twentieth century tended to interpret literally the opinions expressed in the *Dialogi*.[59] There is certainly remarkable consistency with the views expressed by Salutati in his letters and *Invettiva*, but the presentation of Niccoli's opinions is more problematic. Several years after the *Dialogi* were composed Bruni again attributed criticism of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio to Niccoli in his polemic with the humanist, expressed in the *Oratio in nebulonem maledicum*: 'nam et Dantem optimum nobilissimumque poetam vituperare assidue prope convicio non cessat et de Petrarcha ita loquitur quasi de homine insulso et ignorantie pleno, Boccacium ita spernit ut ne tres quidem litteras scisse illum asseveret' [for he nearly does not cease with reproach to find fault continually with Dante, excellent and noble poet, and of Petrarch he speaks as if he is an absurd man and full of ignorance; he despises Boccaccio to such an extent that he insists that he knew not even three letters].[60] Yet Niccoli reputedly provided the cases for the books which Boccaccio left to Santo Spirito.[61] Some critics have seen the presentation of two contradictory judgements as symptomatic of conflicting feelings expressed towards the three *trecentisti* in the first moment of humanism. Hans Baron argued that the *Dialogi* were written at different stages in Bruni's thought. Hence in the first dialogue Bruni sides

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[59] For the full range of critical interpretations see Leonardo Bruni, *Dialogi ad Petrum Paulum Histrum*, ed. by Stefano Baldassarri (Florence: Olschki, 1994), pp. 7-12.
[60] Zippel, p. 130. The invective is dated by Zippel to 1424.
[61] In the *Dialogi* Niccoli says: 'Iohannem autem Boccatium quomodo odisse possum, qui bibliothecam eius meis sumptibus ornarim propter memoriam tanti viri?' [but how can I hate Giovanni Boccaccio, I who provided his library at my expense for the sake of the memory of such a man?] (*Prosatori latini*, ed. by Garin, pp. 82-84). For the books owned by Boccaccio see Mazza, 'L'inventario'.

with Niccoli's extremist views, but the second dialogue, added in 1405-06, represents a shift towards the views held by Salutati.

Whatever Bruni's real feelings in the *Dialogi*, he continued to maintain an interest in the *tre corone* and employ them to provide support for Florence in politically troubled times. In 1436, during a second conflict with Milan, Bruni composed a life of Dante and Petrarch in the *volgare*, but explained that he preferred not to include a biography of Boccaccio 'non perché egli non meriti ogni grandissima loda, ma perché a me non sono note le particolarità di sua generazione e sí di sua privata condizione e vita'.[62] It is possible therefore, that Bruni was not familiar with the preceding biographies written by Villani and Bandini, although he did write a short *Notizia* about the author, focusing mainly on information derived from the author's own works, but also noting that Boccaccio learned his Latin as an adult: 'apparò grammatica da grande, e per questa cagione non ebbe mai la lingua latina molto in sua balía' (p. 61). Unlike the earlier biographers, therefore, Bruni uses Boccaccio's unorthodox education as an explicit defence to explain his lack of skill in Latin. This contrasts with Villani's judgement that Boccaccio's language was elegant, and contradicts the view Niccoli is made to express in the *Dialogi*. Despite his linguistic misgivings, Bruni judges the *Genealogia* the best of Boccaccio's Latin works, presumably in terms of its content, which many humanists evidently found useful. Boccaccio's intellect and dedication is also admired: 'egli fu di grandissimo ingegno e di grandissimo studio e molto laborioso, e tante cose scrisse di sua propria mano, che è una maraviglia' (p. 61).

In line with the recantation in the *Dialogi* Bruni is also more forgiving of Boccaccio's vernacular works than Villani, focusing on the quality of the language rather than their content: 'per quel che scrisse in vulgare, si vede che naturalmente egli era eloquentissimo, e aveva ingegno oratorio' (p. 61). This does not mean that Bruni thought the vernacular should unequivocally be used as a literary language. In a debate with Flavio Biondo over the historical relationship between Latin and the vernacular, Bruni argued that the *volgare* was an ungrammatical language used by the illiterate, and he preferred to translate Boccaccio's *novella* relating the story of Guiscardo and Ghismonda (*Dec.* IV. 1) into Latin, despite composing his own *Novella di Antioco re di Siria* in the vernacular.[63] Although Bruni does not name any of Boccaccio's vernacular

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[62] The biographies are published in Solerti, pp. 97-107, 288-93, 679, and Leonardo Bruni, *Le vite di Dante e del Petrarca*, ed. by Antonio Lanza (Rome: Archivio Guido Izzi, 1987). I have quoted from the latter.

[63] On the debate between Bruni and Biondo, see below. Bruni was not alone in translating *novelle* from the *Decameron* into Latin. See Chiari, p. 300 and also Vasoli, pp. 629-30.

works in the *Notizia* he reveals that he is familiar with several of them in the procm to *Le vite di Dante e del Petrarca.* Here he describes Boccaccio as a 'dolcissimo e soavissimo uomo' (p. 29), but treats the vernacular works as frivolous texts suited for entertaining and not for serious consideration, since they only deal with love. Bruni's main concern is the *Trattatello*, which he feels has been written, inappropriately, in the same manner as the *Filocolo*, *Filostrato*, or *Fiammetta*:

> mi parve che [...] scrivesse la vita e i costumi di tanto sublime poeta come se a scrivere avesse il *Filocolo*, o il *Filostrato* o la *Fiammetta*. Perocché tutto d'amore e di sospiri e di cocenti lagrime è pieno, come se l'uomo nascesse in questo mondo solamente per ritrovarsi in quelle dieci giornate amorose, le quali da donne innamorate e da giovani leggiadri raccontate furono nelle *Cento Novelle*. (p. 29)

The stated aim of Bruni's own *Vita di Dante*, which he insists should be seen 'in supplimento' to the *Trattatello*, rather than as an attempt to denigrate Boccaccio's work, is to write 'con maggior notizia delle cose estimabili' (p. 30), and at several points throughout the *Vita* he highlights deficiencies in the gravity of the *Trattatello*. Despite his often apparently ambiguous relationship to Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Dante, Bruni would be forever linked with the *trecentisti* in the minds of some humanists: Carlo Marsuppini composed an elegy on the death of Bruni in 1444 primarily to console Benedetto Accolti, which pictures Bruni in the company of the *tre corone* and Salutati.[64]

In the same politically unstable period in which Bruni composed his *Vite*, Poggio Bracciolini joined in the debate over the status of the *tre corone* and composed *De infelicitate principum* in order to counter Niccoli's negative pronouncements.[65] Bracciolini was born in 1380 in Terranuova, near Arezzo. He moved to Florence to study as a notary, before becoming a papal secretary, and was friendly with Salutati, Niccoli, and Bruni. As a humanist of the new generation like Bruni, Bracciolini was not an uncomplicated supporter of the *tre corone*. At the beginning of the fifteenth century he had criticized a eulogy of Petrarch written by Salutati.[66] In *De infelicitate* Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio are accorded praise, but as in Bruni's *Dialogi*, this is put into the mouth of Niccoli, with the similar problem that it is not clear whether or not Bracciolini shared these views, or merely wanted to defend Florence and the integrity of humanism. In this case, at least, there is no criticism and recantation, although Boccaccio is once again judged inferior to Dante and Petrarch: 'eadem ferme aetate et

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[64] The relevant passage from the elegy is published in Robert Black, *Benedetto Accolti and the Florentine Renaissance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 49. For further details on Accolti's relationship to Boccaccio see below (3.13).
[65] *De infelicitate* was written in 1440 (Lanza, *Polemiche*, pp. 50-51).
[66] Ibid., p. 206.

Iohannes Boccatius vir singularis ingenii, sed doctrina impar superioribus floruit' [and at nearly the same time Giovanni Boccaccio flourished, a man of singular talents, but unequal in erudition to the more distinguished [poets]]. Nevertheless, reference is made to the library Niccoli prepared for his books: 'cuius plurimi extant libri ad instructionem audientium ac legentium editi' [whose many surviving books I have displayed for the teaching of listeners and readers].[67] The remaining comments about Boccaccio are biographical, revealing little of Niccoli or Bracciolini's views about Boccaccio as an author other than a cursory knowledge of Boccaccio's life, which Poggio may have gleaned from conversations with those who had known Boccaccio.

Niccoli, Bruni, and other humanists such as Poggio Bracciolini, seem to have inspired Domenico da Prato to write an invective against the 'usurpatori delli moderni discenti'.[68] Domenico worked as a notary in the *contado* of Florence between 1415 and 1432.[69] His invective is found in the *Prefazione* to a collection of his poetry, which may have been written as early as 1409, but was then used as a dedicatory letter *c.* 1428.[70] 'Iohanni Boccacci' is named as one of the targets for the humanists' 'falso giudicio', but Domenico does not elaborate further on the criticisms levelled against him, despite describing in some detail the accusations made against Dante and Petrarch. Niccoli's criticism of Boccaccio in the *Dialogi* is not as extended as the criticism of Dante and Petrarch, and neither does it touch on specific areas. If Domenico was familiar with the *Dialogi*, or the views expressed in Bruni's work were a reflection of comments circulating in speech or non-extant written form, the lack of concrete and specific criticisms in Niccoli's comments about Boccaccio would have been difficult for Domenico to work with. Of the three crowns, Niccoli seems to have judged Boccaccio the most inferior, and therefore saw no reason to expend time and energy justifying his inferiority. Despite defending the cause of the *tre corone*, the silence surrounding Boccaccio's role suggests that Domenico also saw him as the poor relation.

However, Domenico is not shy about praising the vernacular language in the *Prefazione*: 'O gloria e fama eccelsa della italica lingua! Certo esso volgare, nel quale scrisse Dante, è più autentico e degno di laude che il latino e 'l greco che essi [gli

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[67] An extract is printed in Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 51.
[68] Lanza has identified these humanists as the unnamed foci of Domenico's attack. However, Lanza interprets certain criticisms to be directed at Niccoli on the basis of Bruni's depiction of the humanist in the *Dialogi*, which may not be a reliable indication of Niccoli's real views (*Polemiche*, pp. 198-207).
[69] Ibid., p. 189. The *Prefazione* is published in *Lirici toscani*, ed. by Lanza, pp. 511-14.
[70] Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 196.

usurpatori] hanno'.[71] In the poem 'Nel paese d'Alfea un colle giace', Domenico implicitly refers to Boccaccio's vernacular works, and certainly to the *Teseida*, describing Boccaccio and Fiammetta as a pair of famous lovers.[72]

Despite Domenico's accusations in the *Prefazione*, not all humanists found it difficult to reconcile an interest in classical antiquity with admiration for Boccaccio. I have already noted that Salutati's response is consistently one of praise for Boccaccio's achievements in Latin, although there is a small shift in his views over time, and Domenico da Poggibonsi evidently saw no contradiction in mourning the death of Salutati in 1406 together with the loss of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio in the 'canzone fatta da messer Domenico da Poggibonzi per la morte di messer Coluccio Salutati cancelliere e poeta'.[73] Francesco da Fiano also admired the 'humanistic' aspects of Boccaccio's life and works. Francesco lived in Rome, but was in contact with many Florentine humanists, such as Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini, through the Roman chancery.[74] He composed various literary works, written mainly in Latin, including the invective *Contra ridiculos oblocutores et fellitos detractores poetarum*, written between 1399 and 1404.[75] This work was designed to defend an orator who had been ridiculed by members of the Curia for quoting from ancient poets, and was also written in defence of classical poetry as a whole. Francesco quotes from Book XIV of the *Genealogia* and praises its author as: 'vir ille ingenio clarus ac sonantis stili gravitate potens et per cunta scripturarum genera curiosus,[76] Certaldi natus' [that man famous for his talents and powerful in the weight of his resonant style, and curious for all manner of writings, born in Certaldo].[77] Boccaccio therefore seems to be depicted primarily as an erudite Latin scholar, whose language and style Francesco evidently did not find overly 'medieval'.

3.5 CLERICAL RESPONSES

Not everyone involved in the debate over the status of the *tre corone* was concerned with literature or civic pride. The Dominican preacher Giovanni Dominici was drawn

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[71] *Lirici toscani*, ed. by Lanza, p. 511.
[72] XLVII. 142 in ibid., p. 564.
[73] Ibid., pp. 445-47. There is no further evidence to document the existence of a Domenico da Poggibonsi in Florence *c.* 1406, which prompted Francesco Novati to argue that the *canzone* was written by Piero di Domenico da Poggibonsi who was studying canon law in the Florentine *Studio* in 1404 (Novati, pp. 480-81).
[74] Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 83.
[75] This is Lanza's dating, ibid., p. 82.
[76] Cf. Boccaccio's comments about Paolo da Perugia in *Genealogia*, XV. 6.
[77] Maria Luisa Plaisant includes an edition of the text in her 'Un opuscolo inedito di Francesco da Fiano in difesa della poesia', *Rinascimento*, 1 (1961), 119-62 (p. 157).

to defend Boccaccio's merits because he felt that reading pagan literature was a threat to Christian morality and ethics. Dominici began a merchant apprenticeship before entering the Florentine monastery of Santa Maria Novella in 1373. He began to preach in Venice in 1380, before returning to Florence.[78] His was an extreme form of ascetism, voiced in a series of literary works, as well as sermons. The work entitled *Lucula noctis*, which Dominici sent to Salutati in 1405, is described as 'un vasto trattato in 47 capitoli, più un prologo, dei quali i primi dodici costituiscono un riassunto delle tesi del Salutati ed i rimanenti trentacinque la demolizione delle stesse'.[79] Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio are recommended because they knew true religion, unlike the pagans. Boccaccio is referred to twice as 'venerandus' [venerable] and, like Francesco da Fiano, Dominici quotes from Book XIV of the *Genealogia* in defence of his argument.[80]

San Bernardino da Siena also made a name for himself as a preacher and was concerned about the immorality of literature. However, although he was friends with literary men such as Leonardo Bruni and Vespasiano da Bisticci, San Bernardino did not address his comments about Boccaccio to the literati, but to the general public that came in vast numbers to hear him preach.[81] The sermons he held in the Piazza del Campo in Siena in 1427 only survived for posterity because a certain Benedetto di maestro Bartolomeo took it upon himself to take notes and transcribe them each day.[82] In one of these sermons, San Bernardino preaches about the dangers of certain books, and refers specifically to the *Corbaccio*: 'la quinta cosa si è che tu ti levi da studio de' libri disonesti, come il *Corbaccio* e altri libri fatti da messer Giovanni Boccacci che [...] ne fè parecchi che fusse il meglio se ne fusse taciuto'.[83] Therefore, although Dominici was warning against the dangers of reading pagan books, he was also informed by the literary context in which he was writing, and could assume that his audience was capable of reading the sober Latin works composed by Boccaccio. The vast majority of San Bernardino's audience was far more likely to read Boccaccio's vernacular works, if they could read at all. However, San Bernardino evidently felt that the *Corbaccio* also posed a threat to the educated mind, because he mentions it a second time as part of the

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[78] Biographical information on Dominici is given in Lanza, *Polemiche*, pp. 90-94.
[79] Ibid., p. 98. A summary of the contents is given on pp. 98-102. See also B. L. Ullman, 'The Dedication Copy of Giovanni Dominici's *Lucula noctis*', in *Studies in the Italian Renaissance* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1955), pp. 257-77.
[80] Cardinalis S. Sixti Beatus Iohannes Dominicus, *Lucula noctis*, ed. by Remi Coulon (Paris: Librarie Alphonse Picard, 1908), pp. 93, 164.
[81] *Prosatori volgari del Quattrocento*, ed. by Claudio Varese (Milan: Ricciardi, 1955), p. 41.
[82] San Bernardino da Siena, *Le prediche volgari*, ed. by Piero Bargellini (Milan: Rizzoli, 1936), pp. 20-21.
[83] Bec, *Les Marchands écrivains*, p. 426, n. 300, section 3.

seven rules and conditions that should be imitated in order to be a good student.[84] Condition two is 'separatio', namely separation from every outside distraction ('scilicet ab omni distractivo extrinseco') and in particular from harmful studies, for instance, from studying the *Corbaccio*, which it is better not to know than to know ('a studiis noxiis, sicut studere [...] *Corbaccium*, que melius est nescire quam scire', p. 406).

San Bernardino was not alone in judging Boccaccio's vernacular works dangerous. The Florentine humanist Matteo Palmieri claimed that the content of 'i suo [sic] libri vulgari' had already caused harm. Palmieri was born in 1406 into an upper-middle class family prominent in administrative circles. In 1428 he inherited his father's wealth, which had been built up through the apothecary business, making him one of the city's richest businessmen.[85] Palmieri seems to have preferred to leave others in control of the business, however, while he indulged his literary leanings and took an active role in public life.[86] Through both his humanistic studies and his skill at oratory he came into contact with many of the leading figures in Florentine public life and literary circles.[87] Probably written in the 1430s, the dialogue *Della vita civile* is designed to illustrate how virtuous citizens should live.[88] Palmieri draws on precepts from classical authors, notably Quintilian, Plutarch, and Cicero[89] but unusually for a humanist text, it is written in the vernacular, revealing that attitudes towards the *volgare* were slowly beginning to change. In the dedication Palmieri explains that many have not been able to access works which provide instructions on how to live virtuously because they have not been able to read Latin, and those works which have been translated have distorted the original meanings. He then goes on to list the only authors who he feels have written well in the vernacular, namely Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. The highest praise is accorded Dante, while he says of Boccaccio:

> Terzo è poi il Boccaccio, assai di lunge da' primi pel numero dell'opere da lui composte, meritamente lodato. Volesse Iddio che i suoi libri vulgari non fussino ripieni di tanta lascivia e dissoluti essempli d'amore, che certo credo che, avendo così attamente scritto cose morali e precetti di bene vivere, non meriterebbe essere chiamato

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[84] 'Pro scholaribus 7 Discipline', in S. Bernardinus Senensis, *Opera omnia*, ed. by R. Sepinski and P. Augustini, 9 vols (Florence: Ad Claras Aquas, 1965), IX, 406.
[85] See Martines, pp. 138-39 for a discussion of Palmieri's social and economic status.
[86] Ibid., pp. 191-93 for a list of the public offices held by Palmieri.
[87] Ibid., p. 196.
[88] Letizia Panizza dates it to 1429 in 'The Quattrocento', in *The Cambridge History*, pp. 131-77 (p. 138), and it is dated between 1438 and 1439 in *The Three Crowns of Florence: Humanist Assessments of Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio*, ed. and trans. by David Thompson and Alan F. Nagel (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), p. 84.
[89] Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, p. 225.

> Boccaccio, ma più presto Crisostomo.[90] E oltra questo, grandemente gioverebbono i suo [sic] libri vulgari a' nostri costumi, dove in questo modo credo abbino nociuto e nuochino a molti.[91]

In order to support his own undertaking Palmieri is compelled to refer solely to Boccaccio's vernacular output. Like Bruni in his *Vite*, Palmieri praises Boccaccio's skill as a writer, but disapproves of the manner in which he chose to apply his skills. The content of the vernacular works is judged entirely inappropriate, because they are perceived as frivolous entertainment rather than as serious vehicles for imparting advice on correct moral behaviour.

3.6 NON-TUSCAN HUMANISTS

In 1435 Leonardo Bruni and Flavio Biondo entered into the first debate about the historical relationship between Latin and the vernacular, which involved many contemporary humanists and was to last well into the fifteenth century. Biondo originally hailed from Forlì in the Romagna, but was working for the Roman curia when the dispute began in an antechamber belonging to Eugene IV.[92] The first written documentation of the discussions over the language spoken by the citizens of ancient Rome that took place among the apostolic secretaries is a letter written by Biondo and addressed to Bruni, entitled *De verbis romanae locutionis*.[93] Biondo presents his own argument for the existence of a Latin language that could be adapted for different uses, as well as interpreting Bruni's position to mean that the 'vulgus' spoke a language similar to the vernacular, while the 'litterati' spoke another, grammatical language.[94] Refuting Bruni's diglossia thesis led Biondo to trace the origins of the vernacular back to corruptions of Latin resulting from barbaric invasions, and also, somewhat paradoxically, to argue for the grammaticality of the vernacular. Boccaccio, together with Dante, is cited as an example of identification between the modern vernacular and grammar: 'de luculentis Bocchacii vulgaribus fabulis vel ut ipse appellat novis, quae cum grammaticis astricto regulis sermone scripta videmus, in latinitatem dicimus esse

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[90] Thompson and Nagel comment: 'Chrysostom, fourth-century Church father. Palmieri plays on the names of the two Giovanni's [sic]: *Chrysostom* means 'golden mouth' in Greek; *Boccaccio* can be considered as 'bocca' ('mouth') plus the derogatory suffix '*-accio*' ('filthy'). Cf. *Decameron*, I. 6.' (p. 86, n. 3).

[91] Varese, pp. 356-57.

[92] *Scritti inediti e rari di Biondo Flavio*, ed. by Bartolomeo Nogara (Rome: Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, 1927), pp. lvii-lxxvi. See also R. Fubini, 'Biondo Flavio', in *DBI*, X (1968), 536-59.

[93] On the nature of the debate, the text of Biondo's letter, and Bruni's reply, see Tavoni, *Latino*, pp. 3-41, 197-221. Biondo's letter is also printed in Nogara, pp. 115-30.

[94] Tavoni discusses how Biondo's interpretation of Bruni's thesis differs from Bruni's version on pp. 5-10.

conversa (p. 200)' [concerning the distinguished vernacular stories of Boccaccio, or as he himself calls them, 'new', which when we see them, since the discourse is written by one adhering to the rules of grammar, we say that it is converted into Latinity]. This is apparent support, not for the content, but primarily for the language and style of Boccaccio's vernacular works. Nor is Boccaccio placed in third place behind Dante and Petrarch, the latter of whom is not even named. However, Mirko Tavoni warns:

> non si deve aver fretta ad attribuire all'uno o all'altro dei disputanti la qualifica di partigiano o avversario del volgare. Punto di partenza dev'essere il carattere fondamentale di questa disputa, cioè il suo carattere umanistico [...]. A questo universo di discorso il problema dell'uso letterario del volgare era, fondamentalmente e costituzionalmente, estraneo. (p. 39)

Also outside Florence, and out of contact with humanists such as Bruni, Sicco Polenton, who was a notary in Padua and later chancellor of the city, does not seem to have engaged with the debates raging over the status of the vernacular and the *trecentisti*.[95] Polenton included a short and complementary biography of Boccaccio in his work on Latin writers, *Scriptorum illustrium latinae linguae libri*, which was probably completed in 1437.[96] Boccaccio himself was the source for some of the *Scriptorum*, but much of the information for the biography was gleaned from a friend residing in Tuscany, and Polenton does not seem to have used the earlier biographies written by Villani, Bandini, or Bruni.[97] The result is a short passage which focuses on Boccaccio's output, mentioning only brief details about his life, such as his place of birth and residence in Naples.[98]

The most striking feature of Polenton's biography is his definition of Boccaccio as a historian ('historicus'). The author's life and works are discussed alongside classical historians such as Livy, as well as his near contemporary, Benvenuto da Imola. In contrast, Dante and Petrarch are described as poets ('poetae') and benefit from longer biographies. Described as a historian, Boccaccio's Latin catalogues and encyclopedias are naturally under the spotlight, and thus *De casibus*, *De mulieribus*, the *Genealogia*, and *De montibus* are listed by name. The *Buccolicum carmen* is absent as it is written

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[95] For biographical information on Polenton see Siccus Polentonus, *Scriptorum illustrium latinae linguae*, ed. by B. L. Ullman (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1928), pp. viii-xii and Massèra, pp. 325-26.
[96] On the dating of this work see Polentonus, pp. xxxi-iv.
[97] Boccaccio is mentioned explicitly as a source on five occasions, on three of which *De montibus* is named as the work in question. See Polentonus, pp. 14, 54, 230, 344, and 495. On the retrieval of information for Boccaccio's biography see Massèra, p. 326.
[98] The biography is published in Massèra, p. 328; Solerti, p. 694; Polentonus, p. 224. I have quoted from the latter.

in verse and is not explicitly about history. After the description of *De mulieribus* ('mulieres claras'), Polenton notes: 'librum quoque de Feminis Impudicis fecit' [he also composed a book about shameless women]. The reference falls within the list of works labelled as 'latine ac perite' [in Latin and skilfully [written]], and therefore must be a misattribution or reference to the women in *De mulieribus* who did not behave morally. Polenton is not moved to comment on the quality of the language of these Latin works, and does not seem to see any discontinuity between the classical historians and Boccaccio. Unlike Villani, and despite the context of the biography, neither is he bound to believe that Boccaccio's merits lie solely with his Latin historical works. Regarding the vernacular texts, Polenton writes: 'sermone autem patrio atque suavi complura volumina edidit fabulis pulcherrimis ac multis plena' [and with sweet native speech he also published several books filled with many and beautiful stories]. It is difficult to judge whether the reference is solely to the prose works, but the reference to 'multae fabulae' suggests that Polenton had at least the *Decameron* in mind. Interestingly, Polenton also chose to note that Boccaccio had translated Livy into the vernacular, despite Boccaccio's own attempt to distance himself from this fact by removing his name from the manuscripts he had copied (see Chapter 1).

3.7 THE *CERTAME CORONARIO*

In 1441 the hitherto relatively isolated attempts by authors such as Giovanni Gherardi and Matteo Palmieri to demonstrate that the vernacular was capable of expressing serious sentiments culminated in an event which marks a fundamental stage in the development of the vernacular as a literary language. The humanist Leon Battista Alberti helped to organize a vernacular poetry competition in Florence, the theme of which was friendship. Eight poets competed for the laurel crown, none of whom were deemed worthy of the prize by the judges.[99] The prize was instead assigned to the treasury of Santa Maria del Fiore, the church where the competition had taken place. Despite the official failure of the competition, however, Guglielmo Gorni claims that its success was testified by the circulation of the competing texts in the second half of the fifteenth century.[100]

Anselmo Calderoni recited his own *canzone*, 'Benché si dica nel volgar parlare', in the *Certame*. Calderoni was 'di origine popolana', but by 1441 the poetry that he

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[99] For a list of participants see Guglielmo Gorni, 'Storia del Certame Coronario', *Rinascimento*, 12 (1972), 135-81. See also *De vera amicitia: i testi del primo Certame coronario*, ed. by Lucia Bertolini (Modena: Panini, 1993).
[100] Ibid., p. 159.

wrote on commission while in the service of Guidantonio da Montefeltro, Count of Urbino, had brought him a certain degree of notoriety.[101] Boccaccio is included in a list of authors given in the second stanza of the *canzone*, where remarkably the *tre corone* and humanist authors are praised in the same context for writing in both the vernacular and Latin:

> così come del greco fu Omero,
> sol simile è Virgilio nel latino;
> e Dante fiorentino nobilitò questo nostro idïoma.
> Boccaccio in prosa ed in rima sincero
> [...]
> Petrarca, l'Aretino e 'l Salutato
> e molti hanno trattato
> oltre al greco e latino, in bel volgare'.[102]

The passage from classical authors to humanists via the fourteenth-century authors is pictured as an uninterrupted journey.

Francesco Alberti took part in the *Certame*, but the poem that records his response to Boccaccio was written to mark the death of his fellow poet and friend, Burchiello, in 1449. His comparison of Burchiello to the *tre corone* demonstrates that the fourteenth-century authors were used as a mark of the highest esteem. Boccaccio's eloquence is singled out for particular comment, for he is said to give 'suo edïoma tal diletto | qual gli promise il fonte di Parnaso'.[103] However, it is also significant that Burchiello and his comic verse represented 'anti-academic' culture in Florence.[104] For a humanist like Niccolò della Luna, who was educated in Greek and mixed with other eminent scholars such as Matteo Palmieri, Leonardo Dati, Leonardo Bruni, Niccolò Niccoli, Francesco Filelfo, and Ambrogio Traversari, the *tre corone* did not represent the pinnacle of either Florentine or vernacular culture.[105] Della Luna was willing to defend the validity of the vernacular with his 'capitolo della amiciçia', which formed a prose prologue to the *Certame*, but did not deem the verse compositions of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio worthy of comparison to those of his own contemporaries:[106]

> Che se il nostro celebrato poeta Dante, o 'l Petrarcha, o 'l Bocchaccio ànno tanto conseguitato di gratia et di gloria solamente innelle loro dolcissime e suavissime rime, certamente maggiore degnità che quella meritano odierni poeti, i quali non solamente le

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[101] S. Marconi, 'Calderoni, Anselmo', in *DBI*, XVI (1973), 616-17 (p. 616).
[102] *Lirici toscani*, ed. by Lanza, p. 349.
[103] Ibid., p. 147. See also Lanza, *Polemiche*, pp. 339-40.
[104] Lanza, *Polemiche*, p. 348.
[105] On Niccolò della Luna's background and education see P. Viti, 'Della Luna, Niccolò', in *DBI*, XXXVII (1989), 84-86 (p. 85) and Martines, p. 342.
[106] Gorni argues that the 'capitolo' must be considered a prologue to the *Certame* (p. 166).

> rime ànno avute ardire di cantare, che non sono composte se none del numero delle sillabe, ma ancora ànno avuto ardire non solamente di cantare l'eroico verso esametro e 'legorico, ma anchora di cantarllo con grandissime lode.[107]

3.8 THE COURT OF FERRARA AND THE INFLUENCE OF LEONELLO D'ESTE

The *Certame* did not have any immediate or visible effect on the views held by the majority of humanists, who continued to advocate the imitation of classical authors and ignore the vernacular as a medium for literary expression. In 1429 Niccolò III d'Este invited the humanist Guarino da Verona to Ferrara to tutor his son, Leonello. Guarino was one of the founders of Renaissance education and gave equal weight to the study of Latin and Greek. Under the combined influence of Guarino and Leonello, who enthusiastically cultivated an interest in ancient authors, the court in Ferrara became a centre for classical learning, attracting many prominent humanists.[108] Giorgio Valagussa, who was born in Brescia in 1428, came to study under Guarino and boarded in his house.[109] In a letter written in 1452 and addressed to Guarino, Valagussa commented on Boccaccio within a purely Latin context, without acknowledging that either the *trecentista* or his own contemporaries wrote in the vernacular. Humanists, such as Francesco Filelfo, Guarino, and Leonardo Bruni, are credited with restoring the golden age of literary studies that had been lost since antiquity, but Valagussa was willing to accord Petrarch and Boccaccio some praise for facilitating its renaissance: 'Petrarca Bocatiusque fere principes dextra, ut aiunt, porrecta haec humanitatis studia multum iuvere' [Petrarch and Boccaccio, virtually the leading figures, by stretching out their right hands, as they say, greatly assisted these studies of the classics]. The quality of the Latin language used is criticized for not being up to classical, Ciceronian standards: 'licet non in succum illum ciceronianum ipsam dicendi copiam penitus adduxerint' [although they did not draw the power of speaking itself completely into that Ciceronian spirit].[110]

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[107] Ibid., p. 177.

[108] Giulio Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense e la coltura ferrarese ai tempi del duca Ercole I (1471-1505)* (Turin: Loescher, 1903), p. 7; Anita della Guardia, *La 'Politia Litteraria' di Angelo Decembrio e l'umanesimo a Ferrara nella prima metà del sec. XV* (Modena: Blondi e Parmeggiani, 1910), pp. 1-8, 27-63; Antonia Tissoni Benvenuti, 'Il mondo cavalleresco e la corte estense', in *I libri di 'Orlando Innamorato'* (Modena: Panini, 1987), pp. 13-33 (p. 17); Eugenio Garin, *La letteratura degli umanisti*, in *Storia della letteratura italiana*, III (1966), 122-32.

[109] Valagussa was in Ferrara by at least 1448 according to Gianvito Resta, *Giorgio Valagussa: umanista del Quattrocento* (Padua: Antenore, 1964), p. 5.

[110] The letter is published in full in ibid., pp. 209-13 (p. 211). An extract, including the comments on Boccaccio, is included in *Epistolario di Guarino Veronese*, ed. by Remigio Sabbadini, 3 vols (Venice: A spese della società, 1915; repr. 1959), III, 463.

The humanist Angelo Decembrio was also attracted to Ferrara and left a record of the discussions which took place among the intellectual élite in his *Politia litteraria*, which deals with the art of writing 'elegantly' ['polite'] in seven books.[111] Both Guarino and Leonello figure in the discussions and express views which are interesting for a history of Boccaccio's reception, although the *Politia* is a work of fiction and their judgements are filtered through Decembrio. In Book I, Guarino refers to all three of the *tre corone*, but is less forgiving about their relationship to humanists than Valagussa. It is evident that Guarino makes a clear distinction between the Dark Ages that succeeded the fall of Rome and the renewal of eloquence that only began with true humanist studies in the fifteenth century. The *tre corone* are thus relegated to a position alongside authors such as Walter of Châtillon, Isidore of Seville, and Cassiodorus, who tried to emulate classical Latin, but whose language is inherently medieval from Guarino's perspective: 'non tamen eos [Dantem, Petrarcham, et Boccaccium] audemus in hanc politiorem quam nunc struimus bibliothecam admittere, alius quippe eis locus assignandus est. Cum Gualfredis, Gualteriisque similibus, cum Cassiodoris et Isidoris palatini stili lampade, ut ipsi dicerent coruscantibus'[112] [we would however not dare to admit them [Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio] into this rather polished library which we are drawing up at present, for they should be assigned to some other place. With the Walfreds, and Walters, and their like, with the Cassiodoruses and Isidores who glisten, as they would themselves say, with the lamp of Palatine style].[113] Guarino was also critical about the quality of Boccaccio's Latin and even Salutati's language came under attack for its use of vernacularisms:

> nam quid de Petrarcha dixerim, et Boccatio, Collutio Pierioque omnis tempestatis illius scriptoribus, in omnibus epistolis, quae adhuc extant, ut arbitror, cernere nonnumquam licuit, scaramucciam pro dimicatione aut proelium, badaluchum pro tumultu, roncinum pro equo, capitaneum pro duce, et id genus plurima.

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[111] There is no critical edition of the *Politia litteraria*, but the contents is outlined on pp. 485-86 of P. Viti, 'Decembrio, Angelo Camillo', in *DBI*, XXXIII (1987), 483-88. Decembrio had begun work on the text by 1447 and it was completed during the pontificate of Pius II (1462-1470) (p. 485). See also Jane E. Everson, 'Read What I Say and Not What I Read: Reading and the Romance Epic in Fifteenth-Century Ferrara', *Italian Studies*, 58 (2003), 31-47 (in particular, pp. 31-34).

[112] This passage is quoted in McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, p. 122, n. 51.

[113] 'Palatine style' is used in this context to mean pure Roman, i.e. classical style. A Gualfredus or Walfred, described as 'poetriae scriptor' [writer of poetics], is included in Book IV of Sicco Polenton's *Scriptorum illustrium latinae linguae*. He is said to have written a book 'non incommodam studiosis' [not inconvenient to scholars], but 'non gratum pontifici' [not agreeable to the pontiff] (p. 126).

> [What can one say about Petrarch, Boccaccio, Coluccio Pierio [Salutati],[114] and the writers of that whole age, in all of whose epistles that have survived, it has been possible sometimes to come across 'scaramuccia' for 'dimicatio' or 'proelium', 'badaluchus' for 'tumultus', 'ronzinus' for 'equus', 'capitaneus' for 'dux', and countless similar examples].[115]

Leonello's views on Boccaccio are featured in Book VI, in the context of the debate over the use of language by the ancient Romans, begun by Bruni and Biondo. In the *Politia* Leonello follows Bruni and argues for the existence of an ungrammatical vernacular in opposition to the learned Latin language. Using Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio as examples of authors who have written in the vernacular, he proclaims 'cuius ideo generis auctores idiotas nominant, qui illiterati sint, conterraneo tantum usu loquentes' [therefore they call authors of this type unlearned, who are illiterate, speaking only in the language of their fellow countrymen].[116] Petrarch and Boccaccio are given the honour of being described also as Latin authors, although Leonello repeats verbatim Guarino's sentiment that they are not worthy of being admitted into their library of classical and humanistic authors:

> itaque seu ii vulgariter, quo populo placerent, quas fecissent fabulas, sive etiam grammatice, scripsere, uti praeceptor ipse Franciscus Ioannesque discipulus, non tamen eos audemus in hanc politiorem, quam nunc struimus, bibliothecam admittere. Alius quippe eis locus adsignandus est: cum Gualfredis Gualteriisque et similibus, cum Cassiodoris et Isidoris, palatini styli lampade, ut ipsi dicerent, coruscantibus.[117]
>
> [and so those who have produced stories either write in the vernacular, by which they please the people, or else in Latin, as the teacher Franciscus himself and Ioannes his disciple, however we do not dare to admit them into this rather polished library which we are now constructing. For they should be assigned to some other place: with the Walfreds, and Walters, and their like, with the Cassiodoruses and Isidores who glisten, as they would themselves say, with the lamp of Palatine style].

Leonello appears to judge Boccaccio's status negatively as both a vernacular and Latin author. However, allowances must be made for the context of the judgement, since Leonello is speaking in a work of fiction, and because the comments refer to the debate initiated by Bruni and Biondo.[118] There is evidence elsewhere that Leonello continued to support vernacular literature produced by the *trecentisti*. The Marquis inherited a library containing a significant number of vernacular books from his father, and

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[114] Salutati was also known as Coluccio di Piero (or Pierio) di Salutati. See, for example, Filippo Villani's reference to 'Coluccius Pierius' (Solerti, p. 676).
[115] McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, p. 122, n. 51.
[116] Quoted from the extract from Book VI published in Tavoni, *Latino*, p. 226.
[117] Ibid., p. 227.
[118] See Tavoni's warning above (3.6).

continued to commission works in the *volgare* and support vernacular writers.[119] Leonello's library probably also contained a copy of the *Genealogia*.[120]

3.9 BOCCACCIO AND THE PAPACY

The *Politia litteraria* was dedicated to the Sienese Pius II (Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini), who was pope between 1458 and 1464. Piccolomini was also the author of several literary works, including the *Commentarii*, which he began in 1462 and continued working on until his death.[121] Written in the third person, the *Commentarii* is an autobiographical account of the events of his pontificate. In the second book of thirteen, Pius recounts how he stopped at Florence on his way to Mantua, which gives him occasion to consider the illustrious men of Florence. Although this section is entitled broadly 'de viris illustribus Florentinis', Piccolomini is most interested in those who have excelled in literature. Dante and Petrarch are both praised for their vernacular works, but Boccaccio is considered inferior to them because he was 'paulo lascivior' [somewhat more lascivious].[122] It is unclear exactly which work or works Piccolomini had in mind when he made this comment, although he was certainly familiar with the *Decameron*. In Book IV of the *Commentarii*, the pope recounts how he used his knowledge of *novella* III. 3, in which a woman manipulates a friar in order to fulfil her adulterous desires, to avoid getting involved in an analogous situation himself.[123] *Novella* III. 3 is a good example of Boccaccio's 'lasciviousness', and although Piccolomini demonstrates how he refused to be hoodwinked like the friar in Boccaccio's story, he passes up the opportunity to extrapolate the lesson and berate Boccaccio further. Furthermore, the pope's comment that the *novella* [fabell[a]] may in

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[119] On the library of the Este family see Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense*. Vernacular works transcribed for Leonello include Boccaccio's *Teseida*: see Giulio Bertoni, 'Un copista del marchese Leonello d'Este (Biagio Bosoni da Cremona)', *GSLI*, 72 (1918), 96-106 (p. 98), and copies of the *Decameron*, *Filocolo*, and *Filostrato* were rebound in the 1440s: Giulio Bertoni, 'Notizie sugli amanuensi degli estensi nel Quattrocento', *Archivum Romanicum*, 2 (1918), 29-57 (p. 32). Leonello also elected to cancel the debts belonging to Pietro Andrea de' Bassi: Orlandi, p. 288. See also Everson, 'Read What I Say'. On the inconsistency between Leonello's views in the *Politia* and elsewhere in relation to Dante, see Dante Fatini, 'Dante presso gli estensi: contributi allo studio e alla fortuna di Dante nel sec. XV', *Il giornale dantesco*, 17 (1909), 126-44.

[120] The *Genealogia* was consulted by Pietro Andrea de' Bassi in the 1430s or 40s (Orlandi, pp. 296, 308-10) and a copy was still in the library in 1460 (Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense*, p. 63).

[121] Remo Ceserani, 'Note sull'attività di scrittore di Pio II', in *Enea Silvio Piccolomini papa Pio II: atti del convegno per il quinto centenario della morte e altri scritti*, ed. by Domenico Maffei (Siena: [n. pub.], 1968), pp. 99-115.

[122] Enea Silvio Piccolomini Papa Pio II, *I commentarii*, ed. by Luigi Totaro (Milan: Adelphi, 1984), p. 360.

[123] *Dec.* III. 3 is referred to simply as 'Bochaccii fabul[a]' [Boccaccio's story], p. 776.

fact have been a true story [historia], only serves to reinforce the theme of the stupidity and hypocrisy of the clergy in general that runs throughout the *Decameron* and is particularly strong in III. 3. Overall, the passage gives the impression that Piccolomini enjoyed the *Decameron* in private, which had also served to influence works he wrote before becoming pope, despite not wishing to condone the salacious details.[124]

Piccolomini's humanist taste may not have prevented him from enjoying the vernacular works of the *tre corone*, but his opinion of the Latin works of Petrarch and Boccaccio is clouded by his preference for a classical Latin style. He comments that Boccaccio's work is not entirely 'tersus' [clean],[125] while in contrast, the humanist Leonardo Bruni receives nothing but praise for his knowledge of Latin and Greek, and his eloquence is described as nearly equal to that of Cicero.[126]

3.10 THE COURT OF FERRARA AND THE INFLUENCE OF BORSO AND ERCOLE D'ESTE

Borso d'Este succeeded Leonello in 1450, but was far less cultured than his brother, preferring to have classical works translated into the vernacular.[127] During Borso's governance many of Boccaccio's vernacular works were borrowed from the court library, including the *Filostrato*, *Corbaccio*, *Ameto*, *Decameron*, and *Teseida*.[128] Bernardo Ilicino mentions Boccaccio in his role as a friend of Petrarch ('tenne el Petrarcha mentre che 'l visse grandissima amicitia con Giovan bocchacio') in his commentary on Petrarch's *Trionfi*, dedicated to Borso.[129] Polismagna, 'un traduttore dell'epoca di Borso', was asked to translate the works of Pier Candido Decembrio into Italian for Borso, and excused himself for not having done 'quanto merita la *sua* Excellentia, ch'el non ce bastaria il Petrarca o il Bochazzo'.[130]

Ercole d'Este governed Ferrara from 1471 to 1505 and, like his half-brother Borso, preferred the classics in translation. His library contained copies of the

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[124] On the influence of the *Decameron* on Piccolomini's *Chrysis* and *Historia de duobus amantibus* see Vincenzo De Caprio, 'Roma', in *Letteratura italiana. Storia e geografia*, dir. by Alberto Asor Rosa, 3 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1988), II. i, 327-472 (p. 394).
[125] Piccolomini, p. 360.
[126] 'Leonardus natione arretinus [...], graecis ac latinis litteris apprime imbutus, cuius eloquentia prope ac Ciceronem accessit', ibid., p. 360.
[127] Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense*, p. 18 and Tissoni Benvenuti, p. 18.
[128] Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense*, pp. 55-65.
[129] Francesco Petrarca, *Trionfi. Sonetti, canzoni* (Venice: Bartolomeo Zanni, 1500), fol. a9^{v}. For a discussion of Ilicino's commentary see C. Dionisotti, 'Fortuna del Petrarca nel Quattrocento', *IMU*, 17 (1974), 61-113 (pp. 70-77).
[130] Quoted in Tina Matarrese, 'Il volgare a Ferrara tra corte e cancellaria', *Rivista di letteratura italiana*, 8 (1990), 515-60 (p. 555).

Filostrato, *Corbaccio*, *Decameron*, *Filocolo*, and *Teseida*, and several manuscripts of the *Genealogia*, which the Duke used for his own studies.[131] Many books in the vernacular were dedicated to him, including *Le porretane* by Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti.[132] Arienti was born in Bologna, *c.* 1443-1445, and was appointed secretary to Andrea Bentivoglio at the Bolognese court.[133] His relationship with Ercole d'Este probably began when he accompanied Andrea to Ferrara for the wedding of Ercole and Eleonora of Aragon, and Arienti began corresponding with Ercole in the late 1470s.[134] After Andrea's death in 1491, Arienti was keen to transfer to the Ferrarese court, and *Le porretane* was 'offered as evidence that he could make the transition from the idealized and symbolic court of his dead master in Bologna to the real court of Ferrara'.[135] Fifteenth-century *novelle* could not escape the influence of the *Decameron*, and *Le porretane* is no exception, echoing Boccaccio's work in structure, some subject matter, and style.[136] Arienti is not explicit about his source of inspiration, but demonstrates a good knowledge of Boccaccio's vernacular works. In *novella* XIII, a reference is made to Boccaccio's description of the beauty of Madonna Beatrice in *Dec.* VII. 7: 'nel suo Decameron cum dolce e singular facundia inquinò l'onesta fama del nostro muliebre onore, dicendo che la dolceza del bolognese sangue non fu mai de pianti né de suspiri vaga'.[137] *Novella* XXX paraphrases a line in the *Filocolo*: 'come dixe el poeta da Certaldo, credo che voi e 'l diavolo siate una medesima cosa' (p. 268).[138] Praise for Boccaccio's use of the vernacular is implicit in *novella* LVI, where it is used as a measure for the excellence of the prose and verse of the Bolognese poet Giovanni Battista Refrigerio: 'i volumi de' soi [di Refrigerio] versi e prose [...] chiaramente el mostrano e cum tal splendore che è iudicato lui avere equato la tuba del divino Petrarca e Boccaccio' (p. 491). It may be significant that no mention is made of either Petrarch or Boccaccio in the context of the praise for Refrigerio's Latin prose which follows,

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[131] For inventories taken in 1467 and 1495 see Appendices I and II in Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense*, pp. 222, 224-25, 238, 241-42, 251. In the margin of an entry for the *Genealogia* received in 1489 is written 'has geneologias habuit Ill. D. Dux noster die 20 maij 1489 et in studium suum possuit' [our illustrious Lord Duke received these genealogies on 20 May 1489 and has made use [of them] for his study] (p. 262).

[132] Tissoni Benvenuti, pp. 19-21.

[133] Carolyn James, *Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti: A Literary Career* (Florence: Olschki, 1996), pp. 1-2.

[134] Ibid., pp. 53-54.

[135] Ibid., p. 35. The work was probably written over a number of years and may not have been completed until as late as 1495 (p. 26).

[136] For the influence of Boccaccio on Arienti, see Chiari, pp. 313-16.

[137] Sabadino degli Arienti, *Le porretane*, ed. by Bruno Basile (Rome: Salerno Editrice, 1981), p. 109.

[138] *Filocolo*, III, 35, I.

although Arienti was familiar with and influenced by Boccaccio's *De mulieribus*. In 1487, he compiled a *Trattato della pudicizia*, composed of a selection of biographies from *De mulieribus* translated into Italian, and in 1492 presented Ginevra Bentivoglio with the *Gynevera de le clare donne*, which is a mixture of original biographies and lives taken from Boccaccio.[139]

3.11 THE ARAGONESE COURT OF NAPLES

Literary imitation of Boccaccio was not restricted to authors in the centre and north of Italy. The *Novellino* by Masuccio Salernitano (Tommaso Guardati) is a collection of fifty *novelle* divided into five thematically defined parts, which recalls the *Decameron* in structure and tone.[140] Like *Le porretane*, the *Novellino* was written in a courtly environment, and it is dedicated to Hippolyta of Aragon, wife of Alfonso II. Masuccio was secretary at the court of Naples to Robert, Prince of Salerno, whose death he laments at the end of the book, and each *novella* is dedicated to a member of the Neapolitan nobility. At the beginning of Part III Mercurio appears to Masuccio to reassure him about the new theme of the sexual wickedness of women and advises him to imitate Juvenal and Boccaccio. Boccaccio is described as the 'famoso commendato poeta', whose 'ornatissimo idioma e stile' Masuccio has always tried to imitate. Given the context, Boccaccio seems to be invoked as a prose writer, and the *Corbaccio* recommended for imitation, together with Juvenal's *Satires*.[141]

Also at Naples was Pietro Jacopo de Jennaro, a nobleman and poet who wrote in both Latin and the vernacular. His poem, *Clepsimoginon*, written in *ottava rima*, has a strong Boccaccian flavour,[142] and he mentions 'el limato dire del fiorentin Voccaccio'

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[139] On the *Trattato* see James, pp. 71-73. For further details on the contents of the *Gynevera* see James, pp. 73-86; Laura Torretta, 'Il *Liber de claris mulieribus*. Parte IV. I plagiari, gli imitatori, i continuatori del *Liber de claris mulieribus*', *GSLI*, 40 (1902), 50-65 (pp. 57-60); V. Zaccaria, 'La fortuna del *De mulieribus claris* del Boccaccio nel sec. XV: Giovanni Sabbadino degli Arienti, Jacopo Filippo Foresti e le loro bibliografie femminili', in *Il Boccaccio nelle culture e letterature nazionali*, ed. by F. Mazzoni (Florence: Olschki, 1978), pp. 519-45; Pamela Joseph Benson, *The Invention of the Renaissance Woman: The Challenge of Female Independence in the Literature and Thought of Italy and England* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 40-44.

[140] On the contents of the *Novellino* and its relationship to the *Decameron* see Chiari, pp. 310-13. The work was composed between 1450 and 1475: G. Paparelli, 'Note sulla fortuna del Boccaccio a Napoli nel periodo aragonese', in *Il Boccaccio nelle culture*, ed. by Mazzoni, pp. 547-61 (p. 547).

[141] 'Poeta' can be defined as 'scrittore, o artista in genere, che nelle sue opere sia riuscito a trasfigurare in vera poesia il suo contenuto spirituale' (*Il vocabulario Treccani*, 1997).

[142] Pietro Jacopo de Jennaro, *Rime e lettere*, ed. by Maria Corti (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1956), pp. x-xi. For a short description of de Jennaro's life and works see Rossi, *Il Quattrocento*, pp. 740-41.

in a letter to Giovanni Cantelmo in 1468.[143] In the same period, Ceccarella Minutolo also praised Boccaccio's eloquence in a letter, claiming that the recipient, Iacopo Solimea, could 'parl[are] et raiun[are] de poetica como poeta et de vulgare como el limato et alto Petrarca et como lo ornato et eloquente Boccaccio' [speak and reason about the art of poetry like a poet, and about the vernacular like the polished and noble Petrarch and like the ornate and eloquent Boccaccio].[144] This response is singularly important for the reception of Boccaccio, because it is, as far as I know, the only explicit reference to Boccaccio provided by a woman before 1520.[145]

3.12 THE COURT OF URBINO

To my knowledge, Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino, did not leave any first-hand evidence of his relationship to Boccaccio. Ownership of books by Boccaccio and knowledge of his texts has, however, been attributed to him by others. Vespasiano da Bisticci is best known as the Florentine stationer patronized by important clients such as the Medici in the middle of the fifteenth century.[146] In 1478 he was put out of business, probably due to his refusal to sell printed texts, and retired to the country where he composed a collection of biographies entitled the *Vite*.[147] Vespasiano included a life of Federico da Montefeltro, for whom he had provided many manuscripts. A detailed list of these is given, including 'tutte l'opere del Petrarca et latine et volgari, tutte l'opere di Dante et latine et vulgari'.[148] In contrast, however, only the Latin works of Boccaccio were apparently included ('tutte l'opere del Bocaccio latine', I, 392). The inventory drawn up in the fifteenth century by the court librarian, Federico Veterano, seems to confirm Vespasiano's statement, listing only manuscripts of the *Genealogia*, *De casibus*, *De mulieribus*, and *De montibus*.[149]

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[143] De Jennaro, p. 37. Also quoted in Paparelli, p. 551.
[144] Ceccarella Minutolo, *Lettere*, ed. by Raffaele Morabito (Naples: Edizioni scientifiche italiane, 1999), p. 64.
[145] Post-1520 material is not discussed in this thesis (see the Introduction for a discussion of the reasons behind this decision).
[146] See de la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', pp. 401-05.
[147] Ibid., pp. 412-13. On the dating of the *Vite* see Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Le 'Vite'*, ed. by Aulo Greco, 2 vols (Florence: Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento, 1970), I, v-vi.
[148] Vespasiano, *Le 'Vite'*, I, 391-92.
[149] The inventory is pulished in two parts: C. Guasti, 'Inventario della libreria urbinate compilato nel secolo XV da Federigo Veterano bibliotecario di Federigo I da Montefeltro duca d'Urbino', *Giornale storico degli Archivi Toscani*, 6 (1862), 127-47, continued in 7 (1863), 130-54. Boccaccio's manuscripts are found in vol. 7 at nos 533-35 (p. 145).

Federico da Montefeltro was essentially a humanist, as his predominantly Latin library attests.[150] However, he was depicted as a great lover of the vernacular works of Boccaccio, as well as Petrarch and Dante, in a work written in the *volgare* by Angelo Galli, a poet at the court in Urbino.[151] Galli's untitled text, which is extant in only one manuscript, is known by part of its opening rubric as the *Operecta in laude dela belleza e detestatione dela crudeltade dela cara amorosa del Signor Duca Ferando.*[152] Drawing on the *Teseida*, *Amorosa visione*, *Ameto*, and *Genealogia*, as well as Dante's *Commedia* and Petrarch's *Trionfi*, Galli relates how a dead friend appears to him and leads him to the Mount of Parnassus, where Boccaccio and Petrarch are engaged in a dispute over literary form. Boccaccio is arguing for the supremacy of prose, while Petrarch defends the merits of verse. Dante suggests they appoint an arbiter, and the author's guide puts forward Federico da Montefeltro, who is deemed appropriate because he is:

> innamorato de voi [Boccaccio e Petrarca], come sapete, che non se vede mai nè straccho nè satio de leggere et de studiare le gentile opere vostre. Et dela vostra questione per suo intendimento et per lo longo studio dela vostra lectura ne sirà cum giusta sententia buono determinatore et dricto giudice. (pp. 480-81)

From the context it is clear that the vernacular works which deal with love are under the spotlight, since Federico is found banished from the realm of Venus to a barren wilderness because of the death of his lover, where he reads tales of unfortunate love. When asked to arbitrate in the dispute, Federico requests that Boccaccio and Petrarch defend their positions with compositions on the theme of love.[153]

The *Operecta* illustrates and confirms that the cult of the *tre corone* was fully established in Urbino in the mid-fifteenth century, even if Federico was not an avid reader of Boccaccio's vernacular works.[154] Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio are the only moderns on Parnassus, aside from a contemporary of Galli, Giusto da Valmontone.

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[150] At Federico's death approximately two-thirds of the books in his library were in Latin: Luigi Michelini Tocci, 'La formazione della biblioteca di Federico da Montefeltro: codici contemporanei e libri a stampa', in *Federico di Montefeltro: lo stato, le arti, la cultura*, ed. by Giorgio Cerboni Baiardi, Giorgio Chittolini, and Piero Floriani, 3 vols (Rome: Bulzoni, 1986), III, 9-18 (p. 1).

[151] See Marco Santagata, 'La lirica feltresco-romagnola del Quattrocento', in *Federico di Montefeltro*, ed. by Cerboni Baiardi, Chittolini, and Floriani, III, 219-72.

[152] The work is edited in Berthold Wiese, 'Ein unbekanntes werk Angelo Gallis', *Zeitschift für Romanische Philologie*, 45 (1925), 445-583.

[153] As Wiese points out, the contest recalls the *Certame Coronario* which took place in 1441 (pp. 454-55).

[154] The *Operecta* was probably composed in 1453, and the date of the 'vision' is set to 1450 (ibid., p. 452).

Boccaccio is accompanied by a host of classical prose writers, although this serves to authorize the *trecentista* as a vernacular prose writer rather than refer to his proto-humanist activities. Despite the fact that the compositions recited by Boccaccio and Petrarch are judged equally proficient and the outcome of the contest remains undecided, there are suggestions that Boccaccio's place in literary history is ultimately inferior to that of Petrarch. Most significantly, when the Galli sees the two authors for the first time he writes: 'la loro loquela me gli facieva assai manifesti, quantunqua l'uno de loro, quale dele famose foglie dela figlia de Peneo stava incoronato, *più toghato fusse che l'altro*, che del'herba di Baccho il suo serto portava' [my italics] (p. 479). In accordance with these allegiances, Petrarch and his party pray to Apollo for victory in the contest, while Boccaccio and his followers offer prayers to Bacchus. Both gods were patrons of poetry, but Bacchus was also the god of wine and women, and could symbolize excess, unlike the rational and harmonious Apollo. Thus, the unrestrained nature of works such as the *Decameron* and *Corbaccio* are by implication counterposed with Petrarch's more moderate lyrical output.

3.13 FLORENCE

Vespasiano mentions only two vernacular works by Boccaccio. In the *Breve descriptione di Vespasiano di tutti quegli ch'hanno scripto istorie*, he notes that Boccaccio wrote 'la vita di Dante in volgare, molto ornata',[155] of which he clearly approves, but in the *Vita dell'Alexandra de' Bardi composta da Vespasiano et mandata a Giovanni de' Bardi* Vespasiano writes that mothers who wish to bring up their daughters 'secondo l'onesto et costumato vivere' should learn:

> a non fare loro leggere né i Cento Novelle, né i libri del Bocchaccio, né i sonetti del Petrarca, ché, bene siano costumati, nonn'è bene che le pure mente delle fanciulle imparino ad amare altro che Iddio et di loro propri mariti [...] acciò che [...] voltinsi a cose gravi e non leggieri. (II, 499)

The reference to the *Decameron* as a 'cosa leggiera' suggests that Vespasiano did not consider Boccaccio's claim to teach women to 'cognoscere quello che sia da fuggire e che sia similmente da seguitare' valid.[156] However, the inclusion of Petrarch's sonnets under the umbrella of forbidden reading tempers the negative connotations for Boccaccio and reinforces the idea that any reading other than 'cose sacre, o vite di sancti o istorie' (p. 499), would be considered unsuitable. Therefore, although there are

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[155] Vespasiano, *Le 'Vite'*, II (1976), 503.
[156] *Decameron*, p. 5.

similar overtones to Boccaccio's letter to Mainardo Cavalcanti, the emphasis here is on the weakness of female minds rather than the thorough corruptness of the *Decameron.*

In the context of the love of books exhibited by Pope Nicholas V, Vespasiano describes how Niccolò Niccoli had a library built to hold Boccaccio's manuscripts after his death (I, 46). The subject is raised again in the *Comentario della vita di messer Giannozzo Manetti composta da Vespasiano e mandata a Bernardo del Nero* (II, 615), but is discussed at greatest length in the life of Niccoli:

> Sendo morto meser Giovanni Bocacci, et avendo lasciati tutti i sua libri a Sancto Spirito, sendo posti in casse et armari, parve a Nicolaio che gli stessino bene in una libreria che fussi publica a ognuno, et per questo delle sua sustantie fece edificare una libreria a fine vi si potessino mettere i detti libri, sì per la loro conservatione, il simile ancora per onore di meser Giovanni, et a fine che fussino comuni a chi n'avessi bisogno; et a sua ispese la murò, et fece fare le panche da tenere i libri, le quali si vegono infino al presente dì. (II, 239)

Vespasiano is clearly well acquainted with the history of Boccaccio's library, and although its story is repeated with the aim of emphasizing Niccoli's generosity more than praising Boccaccio, the author of the *Vite* evidently approved of Niccoli's actions.

It is difficult to say whether the benevolence described by Vespasiano runs contrary to the strength of Niccoli's views about Boccaccio expressed through Bruni, or whether, despite his personal contempt for the *trecentista*, Niccoli recognized the importance of preserving Boccaccio's work. Vespasiano himself seems to accord some credit to the Latin works of Boccaccio, Petrarch, and even Dante, noting on two occasions that 'cominciò col mezo di questi tre la lingua latina alquanto a risuscitare' (II, 503; cf. I, 236). Boccaccio's *De mulieribus* is also mentioned on three occasions, once in the life of Piero di Neri Acciaiuoli in the context of Andrea degli Acciaiuoli 'alla quale meser Giovanni Bocaci manda il libro delle donne illustre' (II, 5), once in the *Breve descriptione* ('compose uno libro Delle donne illustre, in latino, molto degno', II, 503-04), and once in the proem of the *Vita dell'Alexandra de' Bardi.* Here Vespasiano places Alessandra on an equal footing with Sulpicia, wife of Fulvius Flaccus, praised by Boccaccio for her chastity (*De mulieribus*, LXVII), and Portia, famed for her bravery (*De mulieribus*, LXXXII), and claims 'se fusse stato al tempo suo [di Boccaccio], l'ornava con le sue lettere' (II, 464).[157] The comparison only functions in its intended capacity as praise and flattery for Alessandra because of the implied high status of *De*

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[157] Also cited in *Vespasiano da Bisticci e il suo epistolario*, ed. by Giuseppe M. Cagni (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1969), p. 212. Cf. the comparison Vincenzo Bagli makes between Lucrezia Baglione and women from *De mulieribus* in the dedication which prefaces the 1506 edition of *De mulieribus* (section 8.2.2).

mulieribus. A further mark of Vespasiano's esteem for *De mulieribus* is represented by his own collection of biographies of women, written in the vernacular.[158] *De mulieribus* is mentioned once in Vespasiano's *Libro delle lodi delle donne* ('i' libro suo [di Boccaccio] fu de le donne chiare di fama e di virtù'), although, as in the *Vite*, this is in the context of Boccaccio's dedication to Andrea Acciauoli, rather than as an explicit recognition of Vespasiano's reliance on *De mulieribus* as a model.[159]

There is also evidence from some thirty years before the composition of the *Vite* and the *Libro delle lodi* that Vespasiano was interested in Boccaccio. In a letter dated 1454, Giannozzo Manetti promises to send Vespasiano the biography of Boccaccio he had written, which was collected together with his biographies of Dante, Petrarch, Socrates, and Seneca:

> et io provederò che tu harai le Vite mie, che sono 5 in uno volume, il quale pochi dì fa riebbi da Monsignore di Fermo. Se di costà non le potrai havere, che ne scriverrò a Agnolo, et alla risposta di questa te le manderò, se da Agnolo non l'arai.[160]

Manetti's decision to compose biographies of ancient and modern authors illustrates that he was a humanist able to find a way of reconciling humanistic culture with the *tre corone*, and his reference to the Lives in the above letter illustrates that they were in demand among contemporaries. The biographies of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio were composed after 1436 and also seem to have circulated in a separate volume, entitled *De vita et moribus trium illustrium poetarum florentinorum*.[161] In the preface to this work Manetti refers to a division in the *fortuna* of the *tre corone*, between their immense popularity among the common people ('vulgus'), who considered them the greatest writers of the vernacular, and the lack of regard in which the learned (eruditi et docti) held them, due to the quality of their Latin and the fact that they composed in the vernacular.[162] Manetti's stated aim is rectify this situation and increase awareness

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[158] On the relationship between Vespasiano's *Libro delle lodi* and *De mulieribus*, see Torretta, 'Parte IV', p. 60; Benson, pp. 36-40.
[159] Vespasiano da Bisticci, *Il libro delle lodi delle donne*, ed. by Giuseppe Lombardi (Rome: Vecchiarelli, 1999), p. 104.
[160] Cagni, p. 132. Monsignore di Fermo is Domenico Capranica, Bishop of Fermo 1427-58, and Agnolo is a relation of Giannozzo (1432-1479). Vespasiano mentions the Manetti's life of Boccaccio on three further occasions: in his 'Vita di meser Giannozo Mannetti, Fiorentino' (Vespasiano, *Le 'Vite'*, I, 536), in the *Descriptione breve* (II, 507), and in the *Comentario della vita di messer Giannozzo Manetti composta da Vespasiano e mandata a Bernardo del Nero* (II, 624).
[161] Massèra, p. 329.
[162] The preface is included in Solerti, pp. 108-12.

among the learned of the merits of the *tre corone*. For this reason, he has chosen to write in Latin.[163]

In the preface Manetti acknowledges that Villani and Bruni have already written biographies of the poets. Bruni is criticized for writing in the vernacular, and for having omitted Boccaccio, while Villani is taken to task for deflecting attention away from the *trecentisti* by combining their lives in a catalogue of other biographies. However, this does not prevent Manetti from using the facts gathered by Villani to form the basis of his biography of Boccaccio. Massèra comments:

> Sel [sic] in fatti, noi togliamo dalla sua trattazione la pompa delle citazioni di opere boccaccesche (citazioni che si riducono in sostanze ad una sola: quella dell'ultimo libro della *Genealogia deorum*); se ne togliamo la lunga, per quanto non inutile, digressione sopra i progressi della coltura greca in Italia; e se finalmente facciamo astrazione dalle numerose variazioni retoriche sopra gli studî del Boccaccio e la sua diligenza nel trascrivere i manoscritti, la biografia del Manetti si riduce a ben poca cosa: ad un ricamo, non sempre armonico ed aggraziato, sopra il canovaccio dei fatti narrati primamente dal Villani.[164]

It is the 'digressions' and 'rhetorical variations' which constitute the most interesting features in Manetti's account and demonstrate how Manetti sought to validate Boccaccio's life within a humanistic context.

The first subject on which Manetti saw fit to embellish Villani's account concerns Boccaccio's education and his relationship to his father. Manetti is less concerned than Villani with presenting Boccaccio's father in a positive light, and therefore chooses to provide a mixture of paraphrase and direct quotation from Boccaccio's own account of his education in *Genealogia*, XV. 10, in which Boccaccio presents himself as an unwilling participant in his father's career choice for him. This version of events is consistent with the image of a dedicated poet and scholar that Manetti is keen to promote. When the education in Latin that would have prepared Boccaccio for a career in letters is cut short prematurely, Manetti therefore blames greed and stupidity where Villani cited poverty: Boccaccio's father is described as 'paullulum eruditum' [very little educated] and motivated by 'pecuniae cupiditas' [greed for money] (Solerti, p. 681). Manetti then paraphrases Boccaccio's account of his unhappy merchant apprenticeship and studies in canon law, followed by his decision to turn to poetry much against the will of his friends and family. The 'miracle' in front of Virgil's tomb is no longer necessary, because Manetti is not concerned to maintain harmony

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[163] The biography of Boccaccio is printed in Massèra, pp. 330-35 and Solerti, pp. 680-93. I quote from the latter.
[164] Massèra, pp. 337-38.

between Boccaccio and his father. Instead, Manetti takes his cue from Boccaccio's own comments that he was born for letters and stresses that Boccaccio was destined by God to be a poet, thereby retaining the sense of divine sanction that Villani had introduced: 'ad ipsam poeticam ita natus est, ut pene ab ipso Deo factus ad haec sola fuisse videretur' [thus he was born for poetry itself, so that it can be seen he was made for this alone almost by God himself] (p. 682).

At the heart of Manetti's attempt to raise Boccaccio's status is his emphasis on Boccaccio's scribal activity and interest in Greek. Boccaccio's diligence in copying his own manuscripts was noted first by Bruni and becomes another means by which Manetti is able to illustrate Boccaccio's dedication to humanistic studies: 'multa non modo veterum poetarum, sed oratorum etiam et historicorum volumina quicquid pene in latina lingua vetustum inveniri potuit, propriis manibus ipse transcripsit' [many books not only of ancient poets, but also of prose writers and historians, almost all that could be found that was old in the Latin language, he transcribed himself with his own hands] (p. 684). The importance of this activity is emphasized when Manetti mentions it again towards the end of the biography. The theme which is accorded the lengthiest treatment, however, is that of Boccaccio's contribution to the study of Greek. Villani had already noted that Boccaccio studied Greek with the help of Leonzio Pilato, and Bandini added that Leonzio was a guest in Boccaccio's own home. Manetti expands on the important role Leonzio played in bringing Greek manuscripts to Italy and gives a history of Greek studies, beginning with Petrarch and ending with Manuel Chrysoloras. Boccaccio's knowledge of Greek is described as superior to that attained by Petrarch, but most importantly, he is credited with being responsible for the progress in Greek studies made by Manetti's contemporaries: 'quicquid apud nos graecorum est, Boccacio nostro feratur acceptum' [whatever of the Greeks there is among us, let it be said that it was received from our Boccaccio] (p. 687).

In a comparison between the *tre corone*, Manetti judges that Boccaccio excelled over Dante and Petrarch in two areas. The first of these is his knowledge of Greek, which we have already seen was extremely important, and the second is his vernacular prose writing [materna ac soluta orati[o]] (p. 693). Compared with the biographers who preceded him, Manetti is the most effusive in his praise for Boccaccio's vernacular works in both prose and verse. Perhaps influenced by Villani, however, he does acknowledge that these are youthful works, and therefore implicitly less serious, and like Bruni, he is careful to focus on the quality of the language rather than the content: 'quamquam ab eo adolescente scripta fuisse constat, tanto [...] lepore, tantaque

verborum elegantia condita conspicimus' [although it is certain they were written by him when he was a young man, we observe [that they were written with] so much charm and so much polished elegance of words] (p. 688). Whilst praising works written in the *volgare*, Manetti is careful not to detract from the main focus reserved for the Latin texts. Nothing is said here of the superiority of Boccaccio's vernacular prose, and none of the vernacular texts are singled out by name, although he acknowledges the *Trattatello* in the preface. In contrast, the *Buccolicum carmen*, *De casibus*, *De mulieribus*, and the *Genealogia* are individually named, and reference is made to Boccaccio's Latin epistles. Once again, however, what Manetti does not say is as significant as what he chooses to include. Thus, no reference is made to the quality of Boccaccio's Latin, which could offend fifteenth-century humanists, nor even to the contents of each work. Emphasis is instead placed on culturally neutral details: which person was chosen to be the recipient for the dedication in each text. Somewhat surprisingly, there is no mention of *De montibus*, despite the fact that it appears in Manetti's source text. Its omission may have been an oversight rather than a deliberate comment, perhaps because Manetti was unfamiliar with the work. Manetti restricts himself to one value judgement regarding the *Genealogia*, for which he may have felt on safe ground, given its widespread popularity: 'composuit [...] praeclarum *Genealogiarum* [...], quod inter omnia opera sua consensu omnium principatum tenet' [he composed the excellent *Genealogiae*, which in the agreement of everyone holds the first place among all his works] (p. 688). The respect Manetti felt for the *Genealogia* and his personal knowledge of its contents are illustrated in a letter dated 1449 addressed to Vespasiano, which documents an ongoing debate between the two men over the precedence of Moses and Homer. As part of his argument that Moses predated Homer, Manetti references the *Genealogia*: 'il Bocchaccio nelle sue *Geneologie* ne fa expressa mentione'.[165]

Like Manetti, Benedetto Accolti was also a humanist who did not neglect the vernacular. Accolti was born in Arezzo in 1415, but had strong cultural and personal links with Florence. His father had a house in Florence and worked there, and Benedetto married into a prominent Florentine family, taught law in the Florentine *Studio*, worked as a legal consultant for Florentines, and in 1458 was elected chancellor of the city.[166] He took part in the *Certame Coronario* in 1441, and he was particularly influenced by Leonardo Bruni and Matteo Palmieri, both of whom nurtured some

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[165] Cagni, p. 124.

[166] On Accolti's background and education see Black, *Benedetto Accolti*, pp. 22-113, and Martines, pp. 343-44.

interest in the *volgare*. Accolti's *Dialogus de praestantia virorum sui aevi*, written in 1462, has been described as the 'first systematic defence of the modern age and especially modern Florence against the classicists' overestimation of antiquity'.[167] Remarkably, the vernacular poetry of Dante and Petrarch is equated with the works of Virgil and Homer, although the quality of their Latin works is not judged so highly. Boccaccio is considered with more brevity and no comparison is made with classical poets, although he is praised for both his poetry and prose works: 'neque in hac re Ioannem Boccaccium praetereundem censeo, qui apprime eruditus, versu et soluta oratione ita in scribendo elegans fuit; ut si rem ipsam, non verbi modum consideremus, non solum Poeta bonus, sed etiam orator optimus videatur' [nor do I consider that Giovanni Boccaccio should be overlooked in this matter; a man who, being exceptionally learned, was so artistic in writing in verse and in prose that, if we were to reflect upon the material itself [and] not merely the style, he would appear not merely a good poet, but also an outstanding speaker].[168] It is not clear whether Boccaccio's vernacular or Latin works, or both, are the subject of the discussion. The decision to focus on the subject rather than the language would seem to suggest that, as with Dante and Petrarch, the quality of Boccaccio's Latin is the only point on which Accolti voices a criticism.

Accolti's judgement on the *tre corone* and its implications for the status of the vernacular signal the beginning of the move towards vernacular humanism which finds a fuller expression in Cristoforo Landino and Lorenzo de' Medici. As a young man Cristoforo Landino had recited verse composed by Francesco Alberti at the *Certame Coronario* organized in 1441 by Leon Battista Alberti, whom he profoundly admired.[169] His own poetry in this period, however, was composed in Latin, and in it Boccaccio is mentioned on two occasions.[170] He exhibits respect for the 'nobile nomen' [noble reputation] of Boccaccio, although this is the Boccaccio 'qui pinxit varium [...] amoris opus' [who depicted diverse works of love],[171] and Landino elsewhere emphasizes

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[167] Baron, p. 347. See also Black's evaluation of the work in relation to the ongoing quarrel over the ancients and moderns: *Benedetto Accolti*, in particular pp. 199-200. For the dating of the *Dialogus* see p. 190.

[168] Benedictus Accoltus Aretinus, 'Dialogus de praestantia virorum sui', in *Liber de civitatis Florentiae famosis civibus*, ed. by Gustavi Camilli Galletti (Florence: Mazzoni, 1847), pp. 101-28 (p. 122).

[169] Mario Santoro, 'Cristoforo Landino e il volgare', *GSLI*, 131 (1954), 501-47 (pp. 502-03). See also Carlo Dionisotti, 'Cristoforo Landino', in *Enciclopedia dantesca*, dir. by Umberto Bosco, 6 vols (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia Italiana, 1970-1976), III, 566-68 (p. 566).

[170] On Landino's Latin poetry see McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 167-73.

[171] Christophorus Landinus, *Carmina omnia*, ed. by Alexander Perosa (Florence: Olschki, 1939), p. 112.

Boccaccio's frivolous nature, referring to his 'lusus' [dalliances],[172] rather than his serious works of Latin scholarship.

Almost thirty years after the *Certame*, Landino returned to Alberti's cause and contributed to a new vision of the vernacular, based on Tuscan, which would take Florence forwards and exist in harmony with Latin culture. The prolusion Landino wrote to his lecture series on Petrarch in 1467 has been described as the most coherent fifteenth-century re-thinking of Tuscan language and literature.[173] In it, Landino was obliged to justify the value of commenting on a poet who had written in the vernacular, which he does by anticipating the complaints commonly made about the *volgare*, and systematically making a case against them. Taking up Leon Battista's line of reasoning, he argues that the vernacular is not fundamentally weaker than Latin or Greek, but has lacked the number and diversity of learned writers and orators who have enriched the classical languages gradually over the years.[174] Boccaccio has the honour of being named as the first prose writer who 'dette grande aiuto alla fiorentina eloquenzia', and for this Landino says he must be praised 'perché sempre si debbe a' primi auttori delle cose portare quasi immortale reverenzia'.[175] However, although Boccaccio is described as a 'uomo di grande ingegno e di non poche lettere', Landino does not neglect to point out his shortcomings: 'maggiore sarebbe stato se avessi meno perdonato alla fatica e non si fussi tanto nel dono della natura confidato che nell'arte fussi alquanto negligente'. Boccaccio is criticized for his excessive reliance on 'natura' rather than on 'arte' because Landino held that eloquence in the vernacular was not possible 'se prima non arà vera e perfetta cognitione delle lettere latine'.[176]

Landino's commentary on the *Commedia* was printed in 1481 by Niccolò della Magna. It was the first commentary to be printed in Florence and is remarkable for its forthright promotion of the city, with Dante presented as one of its greatest assets.

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[172] Ibid., p. 124.

[173] For the date of the prolusion see Mirko Tavoni, *Il Quattrocento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1992), p. 68. This view is held by Roberto Cardini in his *La critica del Landino* (Florence: Sansoni, 1973), pp. 149-50.

[174] Alberti writes: 'e sia quanto dicono quella antica apresso di tutte le genti piena d'autorità, solo perché in essa molti dotti scrissero, simile certo sarà la nostra s'e' dotti la vorranno molto con suo studio e vigile essere elimata e polita' in the proem to Book III of *Della famiglia* (Leon Battista Alberti, *I libri della famiglia*, ed. by Ruggiero Romano and Alberto Tenenti (Turin: Einaudi, 1969), p. 188).

[175] Cristoforo Landino, *Scritti critici e teorici*, ed. by Roberto Cardini, 2 vols (Rome: Bulzoni, 1974), I, 35. Landino makes a similar comment with regard to Dante as the first poet in the proem to his commentary on the *Commedia*: 'innumere e grandissime grazie gli [a Dante] renderemo perché fu el primo che la lingua nostra patria, insino a' suoi tempi roza, inessercitata, e di copia e d'eleganzia molto nobilitò e fecela culta e ornata' (ibid., p. 137).

[176] Ibid., p. 37. See also McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, p. 178.

Published over a decade after the Petrarch prolusion, the commentary reveals the maturation of Landino's ideas and his preference for poet-philosophers, to the detriment of Boccaccio.[177] Although Boccaccio is mentioned under the section entitled 'Fiorentini eccellenti in eloquenzia', he is dealt with extremely cursorily, as an imitator of Dante and Petrarch.[178] In terms of the resurrection of the vernacular, Boccaccio is now also relegated to third place, described simply as 'molto inferiore' to Petrarch 'ma di poetico ingegno da natura instrutto e d'invenzioni molto ornato' (p. 138). However, despite these rather subdued comments, Boccaccio remained of interest to Landino as the first commentator and biographer of Dante. A reference is made to Boccaccio's *Trattatello in laude di Dante* (p. 131), and when listing those who preceded him in his task as commentator of the *Commedia*, Landino significantly refers to 'Ioanni *nostro* Boccaccio' [my italics] (p. 101), perhaps to distinguish Boccaccio's *Esposizioni* from the 'barbarie di molti esterni idiomi' (p. 102) used by other commentators.

Landino's pupil, Lorenzo de' Medici, also played a vital role in promoting and defending the Tuscan language.[179] In 1476 he had dedicated a collection of Tuscan poetry (known as the *Raccolta aragonese*) to Federico, son of King Ferdinand in Naples, as a gesture of friendship, and also propaganda. Attached to the collection was an epistle written by Angelo Poliziano, full of praise for the Tuscan language and for Tuscan poets, and written in prose similar to that used by Boccaccio in the *Trattatello in laude di Dante*.[180] The *Raccolta aragonese* contained some verse by Lorenzo, which only a year or two earlier he had begun collecting into a unified corpus.[181] In 1480 Lorenzo embarked on a commentary to his *rime*, following Dante's example, which he justifies in the proem.[182] Like Landino's *Prolusione* and proem to his Dante commentary, Lorenzo's proem also provides space for an eloquent defence of the vernacular. Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio are used as proof that the *volgare* can be used to express any concept in both poetry and prose: 'Dante, il Petrarca e il Boccaccio, nostri poeti fiorentini, hanno, nelli gravi e dolcissimi versi e orazioni loro, mostro assai chiaramente con molta facilità potersi in questa lingua [volgare] exprimere ogni senso'

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[177] On the development of Landino's ideas via the *Disputationes Camaldulenses* see Cardini, *La critica*, pp. 152-60.
[178] Landino, *Scritti critici*, I, 119.
[179] On Lorenzo's literary formation see *L'umanesimo*, ed. by Bec, pp. 20-22.
[180] For further details on the *Raccolta aragonese*, see Tavoni, *Il Quattrocento*, pp. 74-75. On Poliziano's prose see Gianfranco Contini, *Letteratura italiana del Quattrocento* (Florence: Sansoni, 1976), p. 128.
[181] Lorenzo de' Medici, *Comento de' miei sonetti*, ed. by Tiziano Zanato (Florence: Olschki, 1991), p. 123.
[182] On the dating see ibid., p. 128. Lorenzo responds to those who might criticize his decision to write a commentary on love poems on pp. 133-43 of the proem.

(p. 147). Patriotism for their native city also links Landino and Lorenzo, however, where Landino felt some reservations towards Boccaccio in particular, Lorenzo expresses unconditional support for all three of the *tre corone*. The following description of Boccaccio's achievements and qualities as a prose writer illustrates his enthusiasm for the *trecentista*, as well as his faith in the flexibility of the vernacular:

> in prosa e orazione soluta, chi ha letto il Boccaccio, uomo dottissimo e facundissimo, facilmente giudicherà singulare e sola al mondo non solamente la invenzione, ma la copia et eloquenzia sua; e considerando l'opera sua del *Decameron*, per la diversità della materia, ora grave, ora mediocre e ora bassa, e contenente tutte le perturbazioni che agli uomini possono accadere, d'amore e odio, timore e speranza, tante nuove astuzie e ingegni, e avendo a exprimere tutte le nature e passioni degli uomini che si trovano al mondo, sanza controversia giudicherà nessuna lingua meglio che la nostra atta a exprimere. (pp. 147-48)

Two of Lorenzo's contemporaries and friends provide further evidence of the high regard in which Boccaccio was held in Tuscany in the second half of the fifteenth century. Unlike the response found in Lorenzo's *Comento*, these references to Boccaccio are found in personal, unpublished letters, and were probably unmotivated by political concerns. Braccio di Domenico Martelli, a member of Marsilio Ficino's academy and an author himself, described three evenings of entertainment he had enjoyed in Lorenzo's absence.[183] He writes to Lorenzo: 'hor quivi quello che seghuì, nonché io giovene indocto et inexperto, sanza alchuna facultà di scrivere, ma il fonte d'eloquentia Giovanni Bocchaccio, divino narratore di simili chose, non sarebbe abastantia' (p. 277). The 'simili chose' included singing and dancing, and therefore a work such as the *Decameron* is most likely to be the subject of his praise. A letter from 'messer Martello' to Lorenzo, written in 1478, also uses Boccaccio as a point of comparison (pp. 276-77). Martello explains that Lorenzo has asked him to write 'qualche bel dicto in franzexe, come se io fussi uno maestro Alano Charrectier, che fu un Petrarcha overo Bochaccio in Francia' (p. 278). Chartier was primarily a poet, indicating that the Frenchman was being compared to Boccaccio the poet, even though Petrarch's poetic abilities were usually juxtaposed with Boccaccio's skills at prose writing. Equally, the comparison suggests that Martello was aware of the French cult of esteemed authors, which connected Boccaccio and Petrarch with Alain Chartier, much like the cult of the *tre corone* in Italy.[184]

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[183] The letter is dated 1465. See Gino Corti, 'Il Boccaccio citato in due lettere a Lorenzo de' Medici', *StB*, 21 (1993), 275-78 (pp. 275-76).

[184] For example, in *Le livre du cuer d'amours espris*, written *c.* 1457 by René d'Anjou, the names of Boccaccio, Petrarch, and Alain Chartier are grouped together on a tomb with Ovid,

Francesco Filelfo wrote a formal Latin epistle to Lorenzo in 1473 with the aim of securing the chair in Greek and philosophy at the Florentine Studio. In contrast with the preceding letters to Lorenzo, Filelfo consciously sets forth his views on the relationship between the vernacular and Latin languages.[185] The debate over the language spoken by the ancient Romans that was initiated by Bruni and Biondo, and continued by Guarino and Leonello in Decembrio's *Politia litteraria*, is the apparent stimulus for the epistle. Lorenzo felt that the current vernacular could be identified with the language spoken by the Romans. Filelfo, on the other hand, was a friend of Guarino,[186] and concurred with the Guarino-Biondo line that the Romans both wrote and spoke in Latin, and that the vernacular arose as the result of various barbaric tribes invading Italy.[187] However, Filelfo's views on the *volgare* and *tre corone* are more moderate than those expressed by Guarino.[188] Filelfo uses Boccaccio, among other authors, to illustrate his point that if the Romans had written in the vernacular some of their writings would have survived:

> nam, si huiusmodi sermone [vulgari lingua] prisci Romani illi essent usi, extarent aliqua eorum scripta, aliqui libri, aut versu aut soluta oratione, qualia videmus hac tempestate volumina plurima perdocte et eleganter scripta ab iis qui proximis temporibus claruere: duobus Guidonibus florentinis, Dante Aldigerio, Francisco Petrarca, Ioanne Boccacio et Asculano Ciccho aliisque quam plurimis, quorum monimenta nulla unquam memoria obscurabit.[189]
>
> [for, if the Romans had made use of language of this kind [the vernacular speech], some writings of theirs, some books, whether in verse or prose, would be extant, books of the kind we see in very great numbers today, written in a most learned and artistic fashion by those who were distinguished in recent times: the two Guidos [Guinizelli and Cavalcanti] of Florence, Dante Aligheri, Francesco Petrarca, Giovanni Boccaccio and Cecco d'Ascoli, by a very great number of others, the records of whom no memory will ever conceal.]

The vernacular is not promoted as a literary language, although Filelfo was clearly interested in the *volgare*. In 1431-1432 he had commented on Dante in the Florentine

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Guillaume Machaut (fourteenth-century poet and composer), and Jeun de Meung (author of the *Roman de la Rose*). All six authors are love poets. See Cornelius Johannes Henricus Walravens, *Alain Chartier: études biographiques, suivies de pièces justificatives, d'une description des éditions et d'une édition des ouvrages inédits* (Amsterdam: Meulenhoff-Didier, 1971), p. 217.

[185] Tavoni, *Latino*, p. 178.

[186] P. Viti, 'Filelfo, Francesco', in *DBI*, XLVII (1997), 613-26 (p. 613).

[187] Tavoni, *Latino*, pp. 170-77.

[188] For further details of Filelfo's views on language see Francesco Tateo, 'Francesco Filelfo tra latino e volgare', in *Francesco Filelfo nel quinto centenario della morte: atti del XVII convegno di studi maceratesi, Tolentino, 27-30 settembre 1981* (Padua: Antenore, 1981), pp. 61-87.

[189] The epistle is published in Tavoni, *Latino*, pp. 281-96.

Studio, and approximately ten years later composed a commentary on Petrarch's *Canzoniere* at the request of Filippo Maria Visconti in Milan.[190] Boccaccio and the *Corbaccio* are mentioned in relation to Petrarch's *Rime*, XCIX, which Filelfo says:

> fu scritto per risposta del Petrarca a messer Giovan Boccaccio nel tempo che 'l detto era di quella donna fieramente innamorato contra di cui scrisse finalmente il *Corvaccio*. Come donque la troia amaestra i suoi porcelini che mangino costumatamente, mentre lei tiene il mostaccio e li piedi insieme dentro al catino, così lui, essendo marcio d'amore, conforta il Boccaccio che a tal vanità non attenda ma solamente a virtù, per cui l'uomo diviene felice.[191]

In 1481 Filelfo finally received an invitation from Lorenzo to teach Greek in Florence, but died before he could begin.[192] Ugolino Verino marked his death with a eulogy, in which he pictures to Filelfo how he will enter heaven in triumph, surrounded by Dante, Petrarch, 'Bocaciusque tuum pone sequetur iter' [and Boccaccio will follow behind your path].[193] Ugolino was born in Florence eleven years before Lorenzo and was also a pupil of Landino.[194] Although he composed the *Paradisus* in the 1460s in honour of Cosimo de' Medici, Lorenzo denied him his support.[195] In 1483 Ugolino's history of Florence was published in three books entitled *De illustratione urbis Florentiae*.[196] In Book II he gives an account of Florentine poets, where the praise for Boccaccio which was implicit in the *Eulogium Philelphi* is expressed more fully with reference to the *Genealogia* and *De montibus*:

> Boccacius, teneros docte qui lusit amores:
> Quaecunque Ascraeus veterum miracula[197] vatum
> scripserat, explicuit. Montes, fluviosque, lacusque,
> Nympharumque domos, fontes expressit opacos.[198]

> [Boccaccio, who skilfully practised tender love stories as a pastime: he explained whatever wonders of the ancient poets Hesiod had written. He described mountains and rivers and lakes and the houses of nymphs and shady springs.]

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[190] Viti, 'Filelfo, Francesco', pp. 615, 617.
[191] Quoted in Dionisotti, 'Fortuna del Petrarca', p. 82. Dionisotti discusses the content of Filelfo's commentary on pp. 78-87.
[192] Viti, 'Filelfo, Francesco', pp. 620-21.
[193] *Poeti latini del Quattrocento*, ed. by Francesco Arnaldi, Lucia Gualdo Rosa, and Liliana Monti Sabia (Milan: Ricciardi, 1964), p. 876. An English translation of the eulogy is given in Thompson and Nagel, pp. 132-33.
[194] Arnaldi, Gualdo Rosa, and Monti Sabia, p. 841.
[195] Ibid., p. 841.
[196] Baron, p. 73.
[197] This reads 'miracular' in the 1583 edition.
[198] Ugolino Verino, *De illustratione urbis florentiae libri tres*, ed. by Audebertus Aurelius (Paris: M. Patisson, 1583), fol. 12^{r}.

At the end of the fifteenth century, Ugolino was condemned as a follower of Savonarola and suspended from public office for three years.[199] Girolamo Savonarola had been called to Florence in 1490 by Lorenzo, and absolved him on his deathbed two years later.[200] In 1497 Savonarola's famous bonfire of the vanities was held during carnival week, in which, if the sixteenth-century sources can be trusted, books by Boccaccio were among those that were burned. A biographer of Savonarola lists the books destroyed as 'latine et volgari, Morganti, Spagne, Petrarca, Dante [...] Boccaccio et simil cose inhoneste'.[201] Iacopo Nardi wrote his *Istorie della città di Fiorenza* around the middle of the sixteenth century, describing the events that took place between 1494 and 1531. He records the books burned as 'l'opere del Boccaccio e Morganti, e libri di sorte, e libri magici e superstiziosi'.[202]

3.14 BIOGRAPHIES OF BOCCACCIO AT THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

The support for the vernacular and for Boccaccio as an author of texts in the *volgare* exhibited in Florence in the second half of the fifteenth century is paralleled by the substantial number of editions of the *trecentista*'s vernacular texts that were printed in Italy before 1500. The 1472 edition of the *Filocolo* printed in Venice is of particular importance for the reception of Boccaccio, because it is the first edition which was printed together with a life of the author. The author of the biography was Girolamo Squarzafico, who was born in Alessandria and had found work as an editor in Venice in the 1460s.[203] Squarzafico worked on classical and humanistic texts, as well as vernacular editions, and he seems to have had a particular interest in Boccaccio. An edition of the *Genealogia* edited by Squarzafico followed the *Filocolo* in 1472, and the *Fiammetta* appeared in 1481.[204] Squarzafico's biography of Boccaccio is markedly different from the preceding biographies, therefore, because it was conceived for a different audience. Unlike the contributions to Boccaccio's *fortuna* made by Villani,

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[199] Arnaldi, Gualdo Rosa, and Monti Sabia, p. 842.
[200] Giorgio Inglese, 'Savonarola, Girolamo (Ferrara 1452 - Florence 1498)', in *Letteratura italiana. Gli autori. Dizionario bio-bibliografico e indici*, IX. ii (1991), 1595-97 (p. 1596); J. R. Hale, *Florence and the Medici: The Pattern of Control* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), p. 75.
[201] Franco Cordero, *Savonarola*, 4 vols (Rome: Laterza, 1987), III, 506.
[202] Iacopo Nardi, *Istorie della città di Firenze*, ed. by Lelio Arbilo, 2 vols (Florence: Società Editrice delle Storie del Nardi e del Varchi, 1842), I, 112.
[203] For biographical details on Squarzafico, see Joseph Allenspach and Giuseppe Frasso, 'Vicende, cultura e scritti di Gerolamo Squarzafico', *IMU*, 23 (1980), 233-92.
[204] Ibid., pp. 245, 252, 255.

Bandini, and Polenton, whose Lives presented Boccaccio as only one of a catalogue of illustrious men, or the biographies written by Bruni and Manetti, whose comments on Boccaccio were read in conjunction with the lives of Dante and Petrarch, the *Vita* accompanying the *Filocolo* related to Boccaccio alone and was more accessible to readers beyond the narrow social and cultural confines of humanism. Written in the vernacular and available in multiple copies, it could be read by those attracted by the prospect of an entertaining narrative. A printed biography also indicates that there was a substantial perceived demand for this kind of information about the author. Although it is difficult to determine whether readers were particularly attracted to Boccaccio's text, to his biography, or to both, vernacular editions which included the biography were popular. The *Filocolo* was reprinted with the *Vita* in Milan in 1476 and 1478, in Naples in 1478, and again in Venice in 1488, 1497, and 1503. It was also appended to editions of the *Decameron* printed in 1492, 1498, 1504, and 1510.[205]

As a result of these contextual differences, Squarzafico's biography makes some radical departures from the contents of the preceding Lives. It begins with a very personal account of Squarzafico's own pilgrimage to Certaldo where he visits Boccaccio's tomb and housè and is moved by the experience. The sense that Boccaccio was born in an age quite remote from that experienced by Squarzafico's readers is heightened by the opening sentences in which the biographer thought it necessary to set the political and geographical scene for the year of the author's birth. Having recounted his journey, however, Squarzafico returns to a format which is largely familiar from previous biographies, beginning with an account of Boccaccio's education and poetic vocation, and proceeding to a description of his output via his dedication to Greek studies. He was obviously familiar with Bruni's *Notizia*, because he comments on Boccaccio's pride and rejection of patronage 'secondo che scrive messer Leonardo Aratino' (p. 697). Squarzafico also cites Benvenuto da Imola as the source for his information that Boccaccio died of 'male di stomaco' (p. 697). Unidentified sources ('altri dicono') inform Squarzafico that it was not Boccaccio who succeeded in getting Leonzio Pilato to translate Homer into Latin, but Petrarch, while others discuss the nature of Boccaccio's love affairs ('varie sono l'opinione'; 'alcuni voleno dire'), although it is unclear whether these are written or verbal sources (p. 697). Like Bruni, Squarzafico also used Boccaccio's comments in his works as a source of information: 'dico che de vili parenti ebbe origine; et questo lui medesimo in molti luoghi di suoi libri non ha tenuto inascosto' (p. 695).

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[205] See Chapter 7. Squarzafico's biography is published in Solerti, pp. 695-97.

Beyond the general structure, there are also suggestions that Squarzafico was familiar with some of the preceding biographies. The opening line, 'Iohanne, il quale per cognome è detto Boccatio, fu da Certaldo, oppido di Toscana' (p. 695), recalls the opening lines of Bandini's Life: 'Johannes, cuius agnominatio est Boccatius, fuit de Certaldo' (p. 677). Squarzafico includes 'humanistic' details such as Boccaccio's study of Greek and the copying of manuscripts, and his account of Boccaccio's relationship to Leonzio Pilato, in particular, recalls the biography offered by Manetti. Although he does not digress with a history of Greek studies like Manetti, Squarzafico nevertheless echoes the tone of his enthusiasm with several lines of praise specifically for Leonzio. In other places, Squarzafico amplifies themes dealt with more cursorily by his predecessors. In relation to Boccaccio's early education, Squarzafico gives an account which is part way between that of Villani and Manetti and which may have been derived from *Genealogia*, XV. 10 in places: he gives poverty as the reason for which Boccaccio is apprenticed to a merchant, but reveals that the author was always unhappy with the situation and conscious that he was wasting his time. Readers are given a more detailed account of Boccaccio's study of canon law than that provided by Manetti, including details of the authors he preferred to read and his secret studies of literature.

Squarzafico uses his knowledge of the contents of a letter written by Boccaccio to Cino da Pistoia to demonstrate that Boccaccio himself knew that he was destined for poetry and asked Cino to assist him in achieving his aims.[206] An established poet therefore sanctions Boccaccio's vocation, rather than divine authority. In Squarzafico's biography Petrarch also plays an important part in authorizing Boccaccio's career. Villani had described Boccaccio and Petrarch as one soul in two bodies.[207] According to Squarzafico, the poets carried effigies of each other carved into the stones in their rings. He also describes how Petrarch prevented Boccaccio from abandoning his studies out of poverty by sending him some money and books.

The longest 'digression' from the format instituted by Villani centres on Boccaccio's output. Unlike previous biographers, Squarzafico does not provide a simple list of works. He comments: 'avendo [Boccaccio] già transcorso tutti li libri della lingua latina, se diede al componere, dove assai libri si fece vulgari et latini, il nome de li quali al presente non scrivo, perché sono notissimi a ciascuno amatore de lectere' (p. 697). Instead, Squarzafico comments on several works in the course of providing other information about Boccaccio. Thus, like Villani, Bruni, and Manetti

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[206] The letter to Cino is no longer extant.
[207] Villani may have taken this image from Petrarch's description of his relationship with Boccaccio in *Sen.* V. 2.

before him, Squarzafico names the *Genealogia* as the work which is judged the best overall and goes on to mention that it will shortly be appearing in print 'per mia intercessione' (p. 697). The only other Latin work named is the *Buccolicum carmen*, given as an illustration of Boccaccio's decision not to dedicate his work to anyone for profit. Squarzafico then introduces a new theme, relevant for the context of his biography. The *Filocolo* was written during Boccaccio's youth, traditionally the period for the composition of amorous works. Squarzafico therefore judges that readers will be interested in a discussion of Boccaccio's relationship to women, including the fiction of his love for Maria, daughter of King Robert, promoted by the *certaldese* in the *Filocolo*. Both the *Filocolo* and *Fiammetta* are thus named as works inspired by Boccaccio's love for Maria, and similarly the proem to the *Cento novelle*, where Boccaccio says that he has been the victim of a very lofty love. Squarzafico is therefore the first biographer to include the names of Boccaccio's vernacular texts.

Despite the apparent success of Squarzafico's biography, it did not inspire subsequent biographers of Boccaccio to continue in a similar manner. In fact, it is stretching the limits of the definition to call the brief account of Boccaccio included by Fra Jacopo Filippo Foresti da Bergamo in his historical compilation, the *Supplementum Chronicarum*, a biography at all.[208] It contains none of the personal flavour of Squarzafico's biography, nor does it discuss events which took place during Boccaccio's life. One of the only biographical 'facts' that is given is the age at which Boccaccio died, which is mistakenly recorded as forty-two. Foresti describes Boccaccio as 'poeta et philosophus atque astronomus' [poet and philosopher and astronomer], and then provides a selected list of texts which he says the author published. Given that Foresti says Boccaccio is most renowned for his Latin works, it is unsurprising that the list consists of the title of his Latin works, together with their opening lines. A work, *De viris illustribus*, is attributed to Boccaccio, which may be a case of mistaken attribution, but is more likely to be a reference to Boccaccio's *De casibus*, which is otherwise missing from the list. The main focus rests with the *Buccolicum carmen*, because it is the only work whose contents are described in some detail.

Foresti did not use the preceding biographies as his sources, and may have derived much of his information from the works themselves. The account suggests that Foresti was most familiar with the *Buccolicum carmen*, although other evidence demonstrates that he certainly knew *De mulieribus*, at least at a later date. In the 1490s

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[208] The *Supplementum Chronicarum* was first printed in Venice in 1483. The extract concerning Boccaccio is reproduced in Solerti, p. 698.

Foresti compiled his own collection of biographies of women, entitled *De plurimis claris selectisque mulieribus*, which borrowed heavily from Boccaccio's work, as well as from Sabadino degli Arienti's *Gynevera*.[209] The reference to Boccaccio as an astronomer may have been derived from *Filocolo*. V. 8, where the narrator, Idalogos, who was commonly taken to represent Boccaccio, describes the teaching in astronomy he received from Calmeta (who was taken to be the Genoese astronomer, Andalò del Negro, with whom Boccaccio had contact in Naples).

Although the *Filocolo* is not commented on explicitly, Foresti does not entirely neglect to mention Boccaccio's vernacular works. A final sentence is reserved for them: 'vernacula autem lingua multi extant libri iocis et vanitatibus pleni, sed sententiarum succo ac melliflua suavitate verborum sonantium repleti, utpote liber Centum novorum et Corbatius ac Philostratus' [however, in the vernacular language there still exist many books full of trifles and vanities, but all the same filled with the sap of memorable sayings and resounding words, namely the book the *Decameron* and *Corbaccio* and *Filostrato*]. Foresti's comment illustrates that even though his 'biography' is not linked to a vernacular edition like that of Squarzafico, it had become more appropriate to name vernacular texts towards the end of the fifteenth century than it was at the beginning of the century, and thus implicitly accord them greater emphasis, even though Foresti's praise focuses on Boccaccio's inventiveness and style of language whilst dismissing the content, in a manner which mimics Bruni's earlier judgement.

The final biography of Boccaccio written before 1520 is very heavily dependent on Foresti's account in context and content. The anonymous passage in the *Supplementum* added to Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum historiale*, follows Foresti's account almost word for word, but is somewhat reduced, omitting the opening line of each Latin work and the title of the *Buccolicum carmen*, despite retaining the description of this work's contents.[210] The year of Boccaccio's death is included and his age correctly given as sixty-two. Foresti's comment regarding the content and language of the vernacular has been omitted, making this 'biography' the most bereft of explicit opinion among those published before 1520. In contrast to Foresti's account, only the *Decameron* is named among the vernacular works, perhaps because it was the

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[209] On the relationship between Boccaccio, Sabbadino, and Foresti see Zaccaria, 'La fortuna del *De mulieribus*'. Foresti's *De plurimis* was printed in Venice in 1497, but a dedication copy may have been composed as early as 1493 (p. 543).

[210] The *Supplementum* is added to the 1494 edition printed in Venice: see Solerti, p. 196. The extract relating to Boccaccio is reproduced on p. 699.

most well known at this date. By 1494 the *Decameron* had been printed ten times, in contrast to the *Filostrato*, which existed in four editions, and the *Corbaccio* in only two.

The brevity and 'factual' tone of Foresti's account and his anonymous imitator contrast with the length and subjective particulars provided by Squarzafico. The two styles of biography serve to illustrate the different audiences to which they were directed and thus reveal the divergence in taste between the vernacular reading public eager for personal detail and their humanist counterparts, who retained only a residual interest in Boccaccio.

3.15 HUMANISM IN ROME AND VENICE

De hominibus doctis is a dialogue between Paolo Cortesi, the author, Alessandro Farnese, and a certain Antonio, which examines the influence of Cicero on the works of fifteenth-century humanists.[211] Antonio is asked to describe which men he thinks have excelled in eloquence. Eloquence in the classical languages is clearly in the spotlight because Antonio begins by lamenting the state of decadence into which the culture of his ancestors fell after the fall of Rome, and goes on to argue that eloquence only began to improve amongst his contemporaries through the teaching of Chrysoloras.[212] Already, therefore, Boccaccio has been snubbed as a vernacular and Latin author. However, Antonio concedes to Alessandro's request to comment on Dante and Petrarch, and adds a judgement on Boccaccio. As Martin McLaughlin notes, the *tre corone*, and Boccaccio in particular, are 'relegated to a parenthesis which looks like an afterthought'.[213] In contrast with Landino and Lorenzo, Cortesi is not interested in defending or revising vernacular literature, but passes judgement on the three *trecentisti* because, as Dionisotti writes, 'non poteva farne a meno, né d'altra parte poteva a quella data e in quello scritto giudicarne altrimenti'.[214] Of Boccaccio Antonio says:

> huius etiam praeclarissimi ingenii cursum fatale illud malum [sermonis] oppressit. Excurrit [...] licenter multis cum salebris ac sine circumscriptione ulla verborum.

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[211] Dionisotti dates the dialogue to 1489 in *Gli umanisti e il volgare fra Quattro e Cinquecento* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1968), p. 54. According to Maria Teresa Graziosi, it was composed between 1490 and 1491: Paolo Cortesi, *De hominibus doctis dialogus*, ed. by Maria Teresa Graziosi (Rome: Bonacci, 1973), p. xxi. Antonio has been identified with Giovanni Antonio Sulpizio da Veroli, who taught both Cortesi and Alessandro Farnese (Graziosi, p. xxiv). For biographical information on Cortesi see P. Ricciardi, 'Cortesi (Cortesius, de Cortesiis), Paolo', in *DBI*, XXIX (1983), 766-70.

[212] Cf. Guarino's comments in the *Politia litteraria.*

[213] M. L. McLaughlin, 'Histories of Literature in the Quattrocento', in *The Languages of Literature in Renaissance Italy*, ed. by Peter Hainsworth and others (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 63-80 (p. 75).

[214] Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, p. 54.

> Totum genus inconditum est, et claudicans et ieiunum, multa tamen videtur conari, multa velle, ex quo intelligi potest naturale eius quoddam bonum inquinatum esse pravissima loquendi consuetudine.
>
> [that deadly evil [of his language] burdens the career of this most distinguished genius too. He rushes forwards without restraint with many harshnesses and without any limit to his words. The whole style is unpolished, both incoherent and dry, yet he seems to try hard and to aspire high, from which it can be understood that a certain natural ability in the writer has been spoiled by linguistic bad habits].[215]

Antonio's humanist appraisal acknowledges the existence of raw talent in Boccaccio, but inevitably feels that he was let down by the language that he chose to use: the vernacular was deemed incapable of expressing themes with adequate depth and range, and the 'un-Ciceronian' Latin used by Boccaccio was judged as primitive.[216] A little further on in the dialogue it is conceded that humanists continued to read the *Genealogia*: 'Boccaccii *Deorum Genologiam* legimus, utilem illam quidem, sed non tamen cum Petrarchae ingenio conferendam' [we have read that *Genealogy of the Gods* of Boccaccio, useful it is true, but nevertheless not to be compared with the talent of Petrarch].[217] The emphasis, however, is on the usefulness of the contents of the *Genealogia*, rather than the art with which it is put together.

In *De hominibus* authors who had written in the vernacular are considered only as an aside, but almost two decades later Cortesi accorded the Italian language a fuller treatment in *De cardinalatu*.[218] In the intervening period Cortesi's house in Rome was frequented by the vernacular poets Serafino Aquilano and Vincenzo Calmeta,[219] Cortesi himself translated a vernacular *novella* into Latin, and there are various extant documents demonstrating that he had a reputation among contemporaries, such as Gaspare Visconti and Giovanni Filoteo Achillini, as a vernacular critic particularly interested in Tuscan.[220] The chapter 'De sermone' in Book II of *De cardinalatu* contains Cortesi's views on why cardinals should use the Italian language. Cortesi applies principles usually reserved for the evaluation of classical prose to the *Filocolo*

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[215] Cortesi, *De hominibus*, p. 18.
[216] Cf. similar comments made about the vernacular and Latin with regard to Petrarch: ibid., p. 18. On the nature of Cortesi's Ciceronianism see McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 187-227.
[217] Cortesi, *De hominibus*, p. 24.
[218] *De cardinalatu* was printed in 1510. Cortesi had probably been in the middle of revising it when death hit him in the same year: Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, p. 52.
[219] Cf. Calmeta's comments in his biography of Serafino: Vincenzo Calmeta, *Prose e lettere edite e inedite*, ed. by Cecil Grayson (Bologna: Commissione per i testi di lingua, 1959), p. 63.
[220] Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, pp. 54-56; McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, p. 221.

and *Decameron*, assigning the former to the high style and the latter to the middle style:[221]

> Proprium genus est quod nec altitudine nec tenuitate constat, sed quod intermedia mediocritate temperatur. Altitudo vero ea nominatur quae pinguium verborum constructione tumet, quale id genus sermonis videri potest, quod est Johannes Boccacius eo exquisito genere commentus, quod a Graecis *philocalon* nominari solet. [...] Mediocritas autem ea videri debet, in qua nihil aut defuturum aut redundaturum sit, quo sit in alterutram propensura partem: quo genere maxime est idem Joannes Boccacius in mythologica centuria usus.[222]
>
> [The appropriate style is [one] which depends neither upon loftiness nor plainness but which is controlled by a mean in between. In fact that [style] which swells up from the piling up of elaborate words is called loftiness; that type of discourse which Giovanni Boccaccio devised in that rarified style which is usually called by the Greeks *philocalon* can be seen to be of this type. [...] That [style] in which nothing is likely to be either lacking or superfluous by means of which it is likely to veer towards either extreme should be regarded as the mean: the same Giovanni Boccaccio made especial use of this style in his one hundred stories].

Despite referring to the 'genus exquisitum' of the *Filocolo*, Cortesi's preference seems to lie with the middle style, also cultivated by Petrarch, and therefore with the *Decameron*.[223] However, the preference is formulated in purely stylistic terms and does not concern the content of the *Decameron*. Cortesi's linguistic judgement reflects the beginning of the *Decameron*'s rise in status, which would come to overshadow the rest of Boccaccio's output in either the vernacular or Latin, and ensure the work's critical supremacy, in terms of both content and style, up until the present day.

The passage of the *Decameron* from entertaining trifle to serious linguistic model was by no means uncomplicated, however. Like Cortesi, Marcantonio Sabellico also wrote a Latin history of fifteenth-century literature, entitled *De latinae linguae reparatione* (1502), and his comments on Boccaccio resemble those expressed in *De hominibus*.[224] From a stylistic perspective, Boccaccio's Latin works are dismissed as

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[221] For a discussion of Cicero's three kinds of rhetoric in contemporary education see Grendler, pp. 225-28.
[222] Quoted in Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, p. 66.
[223] On the style of Petrarch's language see of McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 34-48. The tendency for Boccaccio's vernacular language to become less ornate and full of artifice as he matured has been noted by modern critics. See for example, Alfredo Schiaffini, *Tradizione e poesia nella prosa d'arte italiana dalla latinità medievale a G. Boccaccio* (Genoa: Emiliano degli Orfini, 1934), pp. 245-87. McLaughlin illustrates the stylistic transition with a comparison between similar passages in the *Filocolo* and *Decameron* (*Literary imitation*, pp. 63-64).
[224] On the life and works of Sabellico see Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, pp. 15-18; F. Tateo, 'Coccio, Marcantonio, detto Marcantonio Sabellico', in *DBI*, XXVI (1982), 510-15.

inconsequential and of no concern for a history of Latin literature, although there is some cautious acknowledgement of Boccaccio's talents:

> florentini lapi Antonii tudertini et aliorum quorundam scripta aliquid certe commodi latinis studiis attulerunt: sed ad id quod amissum erat reparandum non magis utilia quam quae non paucis ante annis franciscus petrarcha: et Ioannes bocatius scripsere: uterque alioqui clarus: hic mythica historia: ille rithmis eminens: sustinuerunt itaque plerique grassantis barbaricae impetum: propulsare tamen non potuerunt.[225]
>
> [The writings of Lapo of Florence, of Antonio of Todi, and of certain others have assuredly brought some advantage to Latin studies:[226] but [they have] not [brought] anything more useful for the purpose of renewing that which had been lost than what Francesco Petrarca and Giovanni Boccaccio wrote not a few years previously. Both are well known for other reasons: the latter is distinguished for his prose fiction, the former for his rhymed verse; and so they for the most part contained the assault of the advancing barbarian [language], but they were not able to drive it away.]

Vincenzo Calmeta was significantly more sympathetic towards the vernacular than Sabellico, and occupies an important role in the history of the *Decameron*'s linguistic ascendancy. Calmeta took part in Cortesi's literary gatherings in Rome at the beginning of the 1490s, and subsequently spent time in the service of the Sforza and Borgia families, and also in Urbino.[227] Paolo Trovato describes him as 'il più antico teorico della lingua "cortigiana"'.[228] His treatise in nine books entitled *Della volgar poesia* has unfortunately not survived, although some idea of its contents can be gleaned from Book I of Bembo's *Prose* and Castelvetro's comments in his *Giunta al primo libro delle Prose di M. Pietro Bembo*. According to Castelvetro, Calmeta held that the vernacular should be refined through selections made from Florentine and also other Italian dialects, where necessary.[229] However, in a shorter extant treatise, entitled *Qual stile tra' volgari poeti sia da imitare*, Calmeta advises authors to imitate the *tre corone*.[230] For the composition of the highest quality of verse, Calmeta advocates the imitation of both Dante and Petrarch, commenting extravagantly that 'in questi due la

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[225] Marcantonio Sabellico, *Opera* (Venice: Albertino da Lessona, 1502), fol. 111^{v}.
[226] Both Lapo of Florentine and Antonio of Todi translated Greek texts into Latin. They are listed as translators of Plutarch in manuscripts found in the Duke of Urbino's library (see Guasti, VII, nos 387-88, 390-92, 395). Lapo of Florence can probably be identified as Lapo da Castiglionchio the younger, born in Florence in the first decade of the fifteenth century, a student of Filelfo and friend of Bruni and Manetti (see *Prosatori latini*, ed. by Garin, p. 169). Vespasiano refers to him as 'Lapo di Castiglionchi, Fiorentino' in his *Vite* (I, 581).
[227] For further biographical details see Calmeta, pp. xiii-xxx and M. Pieri, 'Colli, Vincenzo, detto il Calmeta', in *DBI*, XXVII (1982), 49-52.
[228] Paolo Trovato, *Storia della lingua italiana: il primo Cinquecento* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1994), p. 104.
[229] See the extract from Castelvetro's *Giunta* printed in Trovato, *Storia della lingua*, p. 105.
[230] Published in Calmeta, pp. 20-25. For the dating of the treatise to the beginning of the sixteenth century see ibid., p. xlviii.

somma perfezione consiste' (p. 24). As an author whose lyric poetry was read infrequently, Boccaccio is evidently not considered in the same category as Dante and Petrarch. Instead, his (prose) works are not recommended 'per far stil di componere, ma per potersi nelle amorose imprese [...] prevalere' (p. 20). Reading Boccaccio can teach young men who want advice on how to behave and what to say to their lovers; how to 'buttare esclamazione e sospiri a tempo, recitar qualche novelletta con eleganza quando in circoli di donne si ritrova, esser pieno di motti arguti e faceti secondo che l'opportunità domanda' (p. 21). In a similar vein to Cortesi, Calmeta advises reading the *Decameron* rather than the *Filocolo* or *Fiammetta* on the basis of its more sober style: 'e deve più presto tra queste opere del *Cento Novelle* che del *Filocolo* o della *Fiammetta* dilettarsi, perocché in quello la conclusione è più candida e manco l'arte appare, in quell'altre più calamistrosa [overly ornate] e di affettazione piena'.[231]

3.16 THE PROPONENTS OF TUSCAN IMITATION

Pietro Bembo's contribution to the question of language marks a decisive turning point in the reception of Boccaccio and the history of the *Decameron*. Like Calmeta, Bembo advocated the imitation of Petrarch for vernacular poetry, but he was also concerned with finding an appropriate model for literary prose, for which he proposed and defended Boccaccio, and in particular the *Decameron*. In contrast with previous humanist supporters of the vernacular and Boccaccio, Bembo argued for direct imitation of the vocabulary and style of the Tuscan language used in the fourteenth century, free of subsequent dialectal influence and Latinisms. Bembo's ideas are set out and justified most fully in the *Prose della volgar lingua*, which was published in 1525.[232] As early as 1497, however, Bembo began to draft the *Asolani*, a debate on the question of love, which put Bembo's theory of imitation into practice.[233] Set in Asolo at the court of Caterina Cornaro, the *Asolani* are heavily influenced in subject-matter and language by Boccaccio.[234] Cortesi noted Bembo's dependence on the *Decameron* in *De cardinalatu*, when he follows his judgement of Boccaccio's text with the comment: 'quod idem etiam modo Petrus Bembus Venetus sequi in eo maxime libello solet, in quo per

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[231] Ibid., p. 21. 'Calamistrosa' derives from the Latin noun 'calamister', which has the figurative meaning 'artificial ornament' when referring to style.
[232] See Carlo Dionisotti, 'Bembo, Pietro', in *DBI*, VIII (1966), 133-151 (p. 142); Trovato, *Storia della lingua*, pp. 111-16.
[233] For the dating of the work see Dionisotti, 'Bembo, Pietro', pp. 134-36. The first edition was printed in Venice by Aldo Manuzio in 1505.
[234] The *Asolani* are discussed in Pietro Bembo, *Prose e rime*, ed. by Carlo Dionisotti (Turin: UTET, 1960).

antilogiam de amatoria ratione disceptatur' [which also the Venetian Pietro Bembo is accustomed to follow in the same way, especially in that little book in which is discussed by means of an argument the theory of love].[235] However, minor works such as the *Filocolo*, *Fiammetta*, and *Ameto* also played a part in the first edition of the *Asolani* and resulted in a dialogue characterized by affectation, as Calmeta had warned.[236] In the second edition of the *Asolani*, printed in 1530, Bembo revised the text to depend less heavily on linguistic and stylistic features found in Boccaccio's minor works and adhere more strictly to the language of the *Decameron*.[237]

Despite the reliance on Boccaccio in the *Asolani*, explicit reference to the *trecentista* is made only once. In Book II, xxiv of the *Asolani*, Gismondo describes Madonna Beatrice as 'la più dolce cosa del mondo', and to illustrate his sentiment further uses an analogy taken from the introduction to Day IV of the *Decameron*: 'se il romitello del Certaldese veduta v'havesse, quando egli primieramente della sua celletta uscì, egli non harebbe al suo padre chiesto altra papera da rimenare seco et da imbeccare che voi'.[238] The reference is fairly oblique, with Boccaccio named only as the 'Certaldese' and no mention of the title of his work, which suggests that Bembo's readership was expected to be fully familiar with the author of the *Decameron* and its contents.

The principles of archaic Tuscan imitation implicitly offered in the 1505 edition of the *Asolani* made a strong impression on contemporaries, even before the *Prose* and the second edition of the *Asolani* were published some years later. One of those inspired to publish his own tribute to the language of the *tre corone* was Giovan Francesco Fortunio. Originally from Pordenone, Fortunio was in Venice at the same time that Bembo was formulating his ideas on language and Aldo was publishing his innovative editions of Dante and Petrarch, and may even have read the drafts of the *Prose* that were circulating in 1512.[239] Four years later in 1516, Fortunio pre-empted Bembo and brought out the first grammar of the Italian language. The *Regole*

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[235] Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, p. 66.
[236] Dionisotti comments on the frequency of superlatives, diminutives, prefixes, and suffixes in the *Asolani*, as well as on its grammatical and stylistic affectation, such as the abundance of adjectives (see Bembo, *Prose e rime*, pp. 27-28). On Bembo's use of language see also Trovato, *Storia della lingua*, pp. 83-90.
[237] Trovato, *Storia della lingua*, pp. 265-74.
[238] I have quoted from the text of the 1505 edition reproduced in Pietro Bembo, *Gli Asolani*, ed. by Giorgio Dilemmi (Florence: L'Accademia della Crusca, 1991), p. 161.
[239] On Fortunio's background and the context of the *Regole* see Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, pp. 18-26 and Giovan Francesco Fortunio, *Regole grammaticali della volgar lingua*, ed. by Brian Richardson (Rome-Padua: Antenore, 2001), pp. ix-xxviii.

grammaticali della volgar lingua offered formalized rules for writing and speaking, with examples taken from Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio.

The proem of the *Regole* opens with equal praise conferred on all three authors: the brightness of 'li lumi dell'arte poetica et oratoria' found in their vernacular works is equated with that emanating from 'qualunque piú lodato auttore latino'.[240] In I. 27 Boccaccio is described as the 'volgar Cicerone certaldese' (p. 23), a comparison which recalls the dispute about imitation that had taken place between Bembo and Giovan Francesco Pico in 1512.[241] Bembo argued for a single, Ciceronian model for Latin prose writing, and applied the same principles to the *volgare*, citing Boccaccio as the model for vernacular prose. This was high praise indeed, and in I. 175 Fortunio comments that with regard to the rules of grammar Boccaccio 'fu osservatore diligentissimo' (p. 86). However, throughout the remainder of the work Boccaccio is subordinated to Dante and Petrarch. Fewer references are made to Boccaccio and his works,[242] and even when he is referenced, an example is not always forthcoming. For example, expressions such as 'li essempi non trascrivo' (I. 99, p. 53) or 'però non pongo suoi essempi' (I. 110, p. 58) are common in relation to Boccaccio. Furthermore, it is telling that at the end of Book I Fortunio promises 'nuove dichiarationi di molti passi occorrenti di Dante et del Petrarca' (I. 267, p. 126), without a mention of his third source. In the event, Boccaccio is mentioned seven times in Book II, and examples are given from the *Decameron.*

Despite the tertiary position accorded Boccaccio, the *Regole* contributed significantly to the rise of the *Decameron* at the expense of other works by Boccaccio. The author's prose is the sole focus of the examples given by Fortunio, and citations are taken almost exclusively from the *Decameron*, in contrast with abundant references to the poetical works of Dante and Petrarch.[243] When the *Decameron* is not explicitly named, Fortunio writes 'nelle novelle', or references a specific episode in the *Decameron*, for example, 'nella Giornata ottava, nella novella di mestro Simone' (I. 164, p. 82). In I. 118 Fortunio refers to the 'prose del Boccaccio' (p. 62), and similarly in II. 113 to 'prose boccacciane' (p. 174), but in both instances the *Decameron* is the sole target for the reference. The only other work by Boccaccio that is mentioned is the *Ameto* (I. 17, p. 19), although Richardson comments that Fortunio may have been

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[240] Fortunio, *Regole*, p. 3.
[241] On the debate between Bembo and Pico, see McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 249-74.
[242] Richardson has counted 406 citations from the *Commedia*, 274 citations from the *Canzoniere*, and 44 citations from the *Decameron*. Ibid., p. xlvii.
[243] Dante's *Commedia* and Petrarch's *Canzoniere* and *Trionfi* constitute the majority of the citations, see n. 242.

familiar with the *Filocolo*.[244] In line with judgements made by Cortesi and Calmeta, the style of language used in the *Decameron* may explain why Fortunio accorded it preference over works whose recourse to classical themes and more overt moralizing might have seemed more attractive to humanists at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The linguistic context of the *Regole* enabled Fortunio to make an implicit distinction between the style of the *Decameron* and its content, which rendered the work more palatable, and prefigures Bembo's explicit differentiation in the *Prose*.[245]

The question of access may also have determined which of Boccaccio's works were used. In general, Fortunio appears to have consulted printed editions of Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, and the majority of citations from the *Commedia*, *Canzoniere*, and *Trionfi* are taken from the Aldine editions printed at the beginning of the century.[246] On several occasions Fortunio refers to manuscripts of the *Decameron* that he has consulted, but more than half the citations from this work are taken from Niccolò Delfino's edition of May 1516.[247] Boccaccio's 'minor' works were not printed in large numbers at the beginning of the sixteenth century. Only two editions of the *Filocolo* (1503, 1514)[248] and *Fiammetta* (1503, 1511)[249] were printed in Venice, but this is compared with three editions of the *Decameron* after 1500 (1504, 1510, 1516).[250]

3.17 THE PROPONENTS OF COURTLY LANGUAGE

Whilst Fortunio was preparing his *Regole*, others were less sympathetic to the example of Bembo's *Asolani* of 1505. The pre-eminence of the Tuscan language was called into question in particular by supporters of the 'lingua cortigiana'. The dedication to the first redaction of Mario Equicola's *Libro de natura de amore* contains an attack on those that imitated Florentine, and a defence of the language used in the Roman court, which was rich in vocabulary from more than one region:

> **havemo la cortesiana romana, la quale de tucti boni vocabuli de Italia è piena, per essere in quella corte de ciascheuna regione preclarissimi homini. [...] Et volemo tucto il tusco idioma imitare per havere Dante, Boccaccio et Pulci non dico da imitare, ma robare? Cosa da imbecillo ingegno![251]**

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[244] Ibid., p. xlvii.
[245] McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, pp. 264-65, 269.
[246] Fortunio, *Regole*, p. li.
[247] Ibid., p. liii.
[248] *Index Aureliensis* 120.157; 120.174; EDIT16 2370; 2377.
[249] *Index Aureliensis* 120.156; 120.171; EDIT16 2369; 2375.
[250] For further discussion of the *Decameron* in print see Chapter 7.
[251] All quotes are taken from the first redaction of the text contained in the autograph manuscript (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS N.III.10), published in *La redazione manoscritta del 'Libro de natura de amore' di Mario Equicola,* ed. by Laura Ricci (Rome: Bulzoni, 1999), pp. 209-558

Equicola does not value the Tuscan language above any other, but sets himself in opposition to the likes of Bembo, preferring to incorporate Latinisms: 'dove li imitatori de la toscana lingua totalmente ogni studio ponendo in lontanarse dalla lingua latina, io ogni cura et diligentia ho usato in aproximarme ad quella' (p. 214). Born in Alvito, in the kingdom of Naples, Equicola was educated in Rome at the end of the fifteenth century and spent much of his life as a courtier in Ferrara, and subsequently in Mantua.[252] The dedication, addressed to Isabella d'Este, is found in the autograph manuscript of the *Libro*, and was probably composed shortly after Isabella employed Equicola as her tutor in 1508.[253]

Despite the polemical tone of the dedication, however, Equicola included passages of praise for Tuscan writers elsewhere in the manuscript redaction.[254] Book I of this version illustrates that Equicola's anti-Tuscanization thesis did not hinder his appreciation of native Tuscan writers. The history of amorous literature given in the first book includes several Tuscan authors, including Boccaccio, who is compared to Lucian and Apuleius: 'como apresso Greci Luciano, appresso noi Apuleio, socto nube et delectatione di fabule, in soluta oratione poeticamente scripsero, così questo [Ioan Boccaccio di Certaldo], sensa certi numeri, delicata poesia et bella materia per delectatione abbracciòe' (p. 249). Praising Boccaccio's language in these terms, Equicola runs contrary to humanists such as Cortesi, who imitated the clarity of Cicero's Latin, and aligns himself with humanists such as Filippo Beroaldo and Giovanni Battista Pio, who imitated Apuleius's ornate style.[255] The Apuleianism exhibited in letters written by Beroaldo at the end of the fifteenth century has led Dionisotti to comment that: 'l'artificio stilistico tocca i limiti del grottesco'.[256] Affectation and floridity do not hinder Equicola's appreciation of Boccaccio's vernacular works, which he prizes for their content as well as language. In contrast with Cortesi and Calmeta, Equicola appears to prefer the *Filocolo*, devoting most space to an

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(p. 213). On the nature of Equicola's courtly language thesis, see also Trovato, *Storia della lingua*, pp. 100-104.

[252] Stephen Kolsky, *Mario Equicola: The Real Courtier* (Geneva: Droz, 1991), pp. 23-62, 86-103.

[253] The initial redaction preserved in the autograph manuscript is dated 1505 to 1508. Equicola continued to revise the text and the second redaction was printed in 1525: *La redazione manoscritta*, ed. by Ricci, pp. 18-31. The dedication is crossed out in the autograph and was not printed (p. 15).

[254] Even Bembo is defended in Book I. For a discussion of the apparent contradiction with the stance taken in the dedication see *La redazione manoscritta*, ed. by Ricci, pp. 104-06.

[255] Apuleius was one of Boccaccio's models for both his Latin and vernacular works. On Apuleianism in Boccaccio and fifteenth-century humanists see McLaughlin, *Literary Imitation*, in particular pp. 50-53, 61-65.

[256] Dionisotti, *Gli umanisti*, p. 80.

explanation of its contents. The *Decameron* is commented on only briefly, and referred to as an entertaining text: 'non in tucto lasciaremo le soe novelle, opera iocosa et delectevole, dove si narrano cento fabule'.[257] The *Corbaccio* is described at some length, and the *Teseida* and *Ninfale fiesolano* are mentioned by name alone. The section on Boccaccio ends with a description of references to love in the *Genealogia*. There is no reference to Boccaccio's *De mulieribus* however, despite Equicola's undoubted familiarity with this text, having composed his own book of famous women in 1501.[258]

Baldesar Castiglione was another contemporary of Bembo who did not adhere to Bembo's thesis, but promoted the idea of a unified Italian language made up of more than one dialectal influence in his work entitled *Il libro del cortegiano*. Like Decembrio's *Politia litteraria*, the *Cortegiano* is set in a court, in this case Urbino, and recounts discussions that are set in 1507 when Castiglione was in the service of Duke Guidubaldo da Montefeltro. The work was composed over a number of years and was finally printed in 1528, although the second redaction, which already discusses Boccaccio and some of his works, dates from 1518 to 1520.[259] Count Ludovico da Canossa is given the task of describing the qualities which the perfect courtier should possess, but others are allowed to intervene and are frequently asked to put forward their views, so that the work forms a series of debates on various themes.

In the first book of the second redaction, the Count and Federico Fregoso enter into a discussion on language, inspired by the premise that a courtier should avoid that quality which Calmeta felt was inherent in the language of the *Filocolo* and *Fiammetta*, and which Bembo later worked at removing from the language of the *Asolani*: affectation. Neither Bembo nor the *Asolani* are mentioned, but it becomes increasingly clear that the Count's views represent those held by Castiglione, and they run contrary to Bembo's position, which is defended by Fregoso. While the Count does not dismiss the Tuscan vernacular and those who have written in it entirely, he holds that the most important feature of language must be the ease by which it is understood by everyone. Thus he praises those that choose to write in Tuscan because he admits that more grammatical rules have been retained in this vernacular than in other places in Italy, but

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[257] Ibid., p. 253.
[258] According to Conor Fahy in his 'Three Early Renaissance Treatises on Women', *Italian Studies*, 11 (1956), 30-55 (p. 40), 'the treatment of women [in Equicola's *De mulieribus*] is so fragmentary that it is impossible to indicate a precise source'. For details of Equicola's *De mulieribus* see also Kolsky, pp. 67-73.
[259] Ghino Ghinassi, 'Fasi dell'elaborazione del *Cortegiano*', *Studi di filologia italiana*, 25 (1967), 155-96 (p. 179).

this does not mean that vocabulary from modern Tuscan and non-Tuscan languages should not be used: 'basti che se servino le regole gramaticali e che l'uomo sii discreto e cauto in ellegere belle parole, ma però consuete nel comun parlare, et in tal modo ne resultarà una lingua che si potrà dire italiana, commune a tutti, culta, fiorita et abondante de termini e belle figure'.[260] The Count even suggests forming new words from Latin, French, and Spanish, and cites the Tuscan *trecentisti* themselves as precedents for this practice: 'come in Petrarca *ab experto* e *plora* e *repente* e molte altre [parole] spagnole e francese, ma nel Boccazio molto più frequentemente' (I. xxxvi, p. 48). However, in response to Fregoso's argument that:

> è necessario imitare uno, il quale di consentimento de tutti sia estimato buono e quello sempre avere per guida e scudo contra chi volesse riprendere; e questo parmi, nel volgare dico, che non debba essere altro che 'l Petrarca et il Boccazio, (I. xxxvi, p. 49)

Ludovico insists that imitation is not always advisable and can quash individual intellect:

> non scio adonque come sia bene volere mettere questa lingua in tante angustie, che ognuno sia sforzato ad imitare solamente il Petrarca et il Boccazio, li quali non forno né tanto dotti né tanto ingegnosi che non si possi sperare che di più ne abbino a venire e che in questa lingua [...] non sia possibile ritrovare dell'altre idee di dire tanto lodevoli quanto quelle. (I. xxxvii, p. 51)[261]

Despite the Count's argument in the *Cortegiano* that the language used by Boccaccio was not even understood 'dalli proprii toscani' (I. xxxi, p. 43), Castiglione's comments in a letter to his mother suggest that he did not believe that all Boccaccio's works were incomprehensible to fifteenth-century readers. On the contrary, he obviously considered the *Decameron* a work that was comprehensible to even the most ill-educated of readers. On 13 February 1508 Castiglione complained about the stupidity of his pageboy, writing: 'non sa far cosa alcuna, né una littera al mondo, e pur non sa legere el libro de *Morgante*, né le *Cento Novelle*'.[262] Castiglione obviously felt so strongly about the page and the fact that he could not even manage to read Boccaccio's work, that he made the same complaints again to his mother only eleven days later (p. 148). Whatever Castiglione's feelings towards the language of the

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[260] *La seconda redazione del 'Cortegiano' di Baldassarre Castiglione*, ed. by Ghino Ghinassi (Florence: Sansoni, 1968), I. xxxii, p. 44.

[261] A similar sentiment is also expressed by the Count in I. xxxviii: 'nel volgare non sia meglio imitare quella [lingua] del Petrarca e dil Boccazio, che de alcun altro, ma bene in essa esprimere gli suoi proprii concetti et in questo attendere, come insegna Cicerone, allo instinto suo naturale' (p. 52).

[262] Baldassar Castiglione, *Le lettere*, ed. by Guido La Rocca (Milan: Mondadori, 1978), p. 146.

Decameron, he was well acquainted with its contents and the speakers in the *Cortegiano* enjoy its humorous aspects. In the discussion on 'facezie', which takes place in Book I of the second redaction, Bernardo Accolti cites *novella* VIII. 2, among others from the *Decameron*, as an example of an amusing story:

> chi non ride quando nella ottava giornata delle sue *Cento novelle* dice Giovan Bocaccio che il prete da Varlungo, quando sentia la Belcolore in chiesa, diceva un *Chirie* et un *Sanctus* sforzandosi per parere un gran maestro di canto, che pareva uno asino che raghiasse, e tutto il resto della novella? Piacevoli narrazioni sono ancor in quelle di Calandrino et in molte altre'.[263]

The wording of this passage suggests either that Castiglione knew the text well enough to paraphrase from memory or that he had a copy of the *Decameron* in front of him while he was writing.[264] In Book II, the *Decameron* is again cited as a repertory of entertaining stories: 'tra gli altri [esempi di burle] molti piacevoli ne sono nelle novelle del Boccaccio, come quelle che faceano Bruno e Bufalmacco al suo Calandrino et a maestro Simone, e molt'altre di donne ingegnose et accorte che vi sono'.[265] The discussion then turns into a debate between Bernardo and Ottaviano Fregoso over the degree of respect women should hold for men. Ottaviano, who argues for equality of respect between the sexes, asks Bernardo:

> perché non fu così leccito a Riciardo Minutoli agabbare la moglie di Filippello e farla venire a quell bagno [III. 6], come a Beatrice fare uscire del letto Egano suo marito e fargli dare de le bastonate da Anichino, poi che un gran pezzo con lui giaciuta si fu? [VII. 7] et a quell'altra che si legò el spago al detto grosso e fece credere al marito proprio non esser dessa? [VII. 8] poiché voi dite che quelle burle di donne nel Giovan Bocaccio sono così ingegnose e belle. (II. lxxxviii, p. 174)

Bernardo responds with further praise for the comic details in Boccaccio's *novelle*:

> delle burle mo delle donne non dico io che facciano bene ingannare li mariti, ma dico che alcuni di quelli inganni che reccita Giovan Boccaccio delle donne, sono bellissimi et ingegnosi assai, e massimamente quegli che voi proprio avete detti. (II. lxxxix, p. 175)

A discussion follows on the behaviour of the women in III. 6 and VII. 7, which constitutes the longest consideration of Boccaccio's subject matter before 1520 (II. lxxxix-xci, pp. 175-78).

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[263] *La seconda redazione*, ed. by Ghinassi, I. xlviii, p. 136.
[264] Cf. 'e quando la domenica mattina la sentiva in chiesa, diceva un *Kyrie* e un *Sanctus* sforzandosi ben di mostrarsi un gran maestro di canto, che pareva uno asino che ragghiasse' (*Dec.* VIII. 2, p. 675).
[265] *La seconda redazione*, ed. by Ghinassi, II. lxxxvi, p. 171.

3.18 EDITIONS OF BOCCACCIO AT THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

Despite objections voiced by supporters of courtly language such as Equicola and Castiglione, the example of Bembo's *Asolani* and Fortunio's *Regole*, together with Aldo's editions of Dante and Petrarch edited by Bembo, undoubtedly inspired editors to bring out editions of Boccaccio's vernacular works. The year 1516 saw the publication of the first editions of the *Decameron* which claimed to employ editorial techniques normally reserved for Latin texts. In Venice Niccolò Delfino used a selection of manuscripts to return the text 'alla sua intera & chiara lettione', while the Florentine Filippo Giunta claimed to have recovered a superior text by virtue of a shared linguistic heritage.[266] The first edited *Corbaccio* was also published in 1516 by Castorio Laurario. However, an undertaking of this nature was still not without controversy at this date, and conscious that criticisms might be levelled against him for printing a work written by a fourteenth-century Tuscan author, Laurario seizes every opportunity to lavish praise on the style of Boccaccio's vernacular. The dedication is peppered with phrases such as 'raro Toscano stile' and '[la] limata lingua e [...] sublime et eccelente dir del Certaldo', and there is a lengthy invective against those who refer to the 'dir toscanuzzo'.[267] Boccaccio's rhetorical skills are compared with those of Cicero in Latin, a parallel, already made by Fortunio, which would have come to mind naturally in an editor influenced by Bembo.[268] Determined to ensure the success of the edition, which was intended to be the first of several containing texts by Boccaccio, Laurario also attached a prologue in which he defends the contents of the *Corbaccio*.[269] Laurario recounts how reading the *Corbaccio*, which helped himself to find respite after 'qualche amorosa esperienza', is 'a ingegni sul fior delli verdi anni salutifera' (p. 213).

Another edition of the *Corbaccio* was published by Laurario shortly after the first, this time in collaboration with his father, Bartolomeo, who also held Boccaccio's

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[266] See Chapter 7 for a full discussion of printed editions of the *Decameron*. In this section I discuss paratexts included in editions of works which do not form the main focus of this thesis.
[267] The dedication is printed in Angela Nuovo, *Alessandro Paganino (1509-1538)* (Padua: Antenore, 1990), pp. 216-18. See also Brian Richardson, 'Le edizioni del *Corbaccio* curate da Castorio Laurario', *La bibliofilia*, 94 (1992), 165-69, who reproduces the invective on p. 166.
[268] Laurario: 'la elegantia sovrana del Bocaccio singularissimo, in ciò [nel volgare] oratore qual lo arpinate Cicerone ne la latina lingua' (Nuovo, *Paganino*, p. 216). Cf. Guarino's comment in the *Politia litteraria* above.
[269] Laurario announces his intention to publish further 'bellissime operette del Certaldo nostro' at the end of the dedication (Nuovo, *Paganino*, p. 218). The prologue is also published in ibid., pp. 213-16.

language in high regard.[270] A new prologue and sonnet afforded Castorio the opportunity to repeat his defence of the contents of the *Corbaccio*, and also ridicule those who dared to criticize Boccaccio as a model for stylistic imitation.[271]

In 1520 an edition of the *Ameto* was published in Milan, edited by Girolamo Claricio and containing a dedication written by Andrea Calvo.[272] Once again, the dedication provides a forum for a defence of the vernacular, which draws on many arguments already put forward. In particular, Calvo returns to the question of which languages were spoken by the Romans, holding the same opinion as Filelfo and Biondo that Latin was both a spoken and written language, as comprehensible to the ancients as the *volgare* is to the moderns. Paolo Bongrani comments that Calvo was probably familiar with Filelfo's epistle to Lorenzo, and that Calvo's evocation of these arguments from half a century and more earlier is a reflection of the slower rate at which the imitation of Tuscan was accepted in Lombardy.[273]

Calvo uses Petrarch's verse and Boccaccio's prose as 'proof' against criticism that the vernacular is incapable of full expression:

> dirano, forsi, non doversi celleberare cotal lingua per esser ella troppo bisognosa cosí de vocaboli come d'altri dovuti ornamenti, la qual cosa quanto sia lontana dal vero, facilmente lo dimostrano e li versi leggiadrissimi di Francesco Petrarcha e il sciolto parlare dil nostro eloquentissimo Boccaccio. (p. 172)

This recalls Lorenzo's defence of the flexibility of the *volgare* in the *Comento* and the unreserved praise for Boccaccio found in Laurario's paratexts. Like Landino, Calvo admits that Latin is a richer language, but claims this is not due to an inherent superiority, but rather to the abundance of great writers who have enriched it over the years. This is reason enough in itself to argue that attention should now be focused on the vernacular, in order that it may attain the same levels of abundance. Boccaccio has the honour of being proposed as a guide in this undertaking, and is again compared with Cicero, although therein is a suggestion that the comparison had already become a

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[270] Ibid., pp. 166-67.
[271] The sonnet is reproduced in Richardson, 'Le edizioni', p. 167.
[272] On Claricio see C. Dionisotti, 'Girolamo Claricio', *StB*, 2 (1964), 291-341. Calvo's dedication is printed in Paolo Bongrani, 'La difesa del volgare nella prefazione di Andrea Calvo all'edizione milanese dell'*Ameto* (1520)', in *Lingua e letteratura a Milano nell'età sforzesca: una raccolta di studi*, ed. by Paolo Bongrani (Verona: Fiorini, 1986), pp. 167-96 (pp. 171-75).
[273] Bongrani, pp. 177, 185, 191.

literary trope, given the very ornate, Apuleian qualities of the language used in the *Ameto*:[274]

> non penso che possiamo haver guida megliore dil nostro Giovan Boccaccio, le cui bellissime opere, di ellegantia e di copia, di facilità e diversità di materie, secondo il giudicio de molti, pocho o niente cedono a quelle di l'antico Cicerone, e tanto somegliante è il parlare di l'uno a l'altro che quasi, se non fosseno diversi e' vocaboli, non vi si conoscerebbe diferenza alcuna.[275]

Calvo's contribution to the realization of this aim is naturally the edition of the *Ameto*, although he suggests that this is only the first of a series of works by Boccaccio which will appear, through which his audience can 'dilettarsi leggendo e ad imitatione di quelli scrivendo, far cose degne di esser d'altrui leggiute' (p. 174). However, Calvo does not follow Bembo wholeheartedly and propose Boccaccio as an unrivalled model for literary prose. Rather, he has a vision of two languages which 'insieme render e' frutti e fiorir in Italia' (p. 173): both Latin *and* the vernacular should be cultivated.

3.19 CONCLUSION TO PART I

Boccaccio's ability to adapt his authorial persona to the needs of his texts, which evolved in line with his intellectual development, together with the often ambiguous manner in which Boccaccio presented his own opinions, facilitated the manner with which both his supporters and detractors could adopt elements of his image to confirm their own cultural and intellectual preferences. The moulding of Boccaccio to personal requirements is a theme in the author's reception as relevant and valid for the Renaissance as it is for the twenty-first century. It is particularly striking, however, among Boccaccio's own acquaintances, who were keen to promote the image of the learned scholar projected in *De mulieribus* rather than that of the young lover evident in the *Teseida*, and to some extent, the *Decameron*. Thus, the full range of Boccaccio's vernacular works, and not only the *Decameron*, as scholars such as Branca have demonstrated, was ignored by humanists in the fourteenth century, who preferred to focus only upon his Latin output.

This chapter has also emphasized the importance of social, cultural, and economic context for Boccaccio's reception. Almost without exception, the responses recorded do not deal solely, or even primarily with Boccaccio. A history of his

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[274] McLaughlin examines the style of a passage from the *Ameto* in *Literary Imitation*, pp. 62-63 and comments that: 'this work marks the extreme in Latinate prose in Boccaccio's compositions in the *volgare*'.
[275] Bongrani, p. 174.

reception must always be a history of many different issues, which include politics, patriotism, the history of language, and his relationship to other literary figures. Even the focus placed on Boccaccio in biographies is almost always dissipated through the juxtaposition of the Lives of other authors, as Manetti himself noted. Leonardo Bruni's varied and sometimes apparently opposing responses are an excellent illustration of the effects that politics and patriotism exercised on an individual view. However, the identification between Boccaccio and Florence, which marks much of the author's reception, was first made by Bruni's mentor, Salutati, on the occasion of Boccaccio's death. It was continued in Villani's compendium of famous Florentines and found its fullest expression in Landino and Lorenzo nearly a century later, demonstrating that although Boccaccio was consistently used as a figurehead for his city, different qualities continued to be emphasized or downplayed to suit differing motivations.

The connection made between Boccaccio and Florence does not mean that the author was not well known in other cities in Italy. Somewhat ironically, it was a non-Florentine who conferred lasting fame on Boccaccio by employing the *Decameron* in the debate over the literary qualities of the vernacular, and the responses indicate that a range of Boccaccio's vernacular and Latin works played an important role in the cultural life of other cities in Italy, from Naples in the south to Milan in the north. Branca described how the *Decameron* circulated among Florentine merchants in the fourteenth century,[276] but it was also influential in the courts of Ferrara, Urbino, and Bologna, and in Venice in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

Many of the responses outlined in this chapter have presented Boccaccio as the heir to the literary legacy of Dante and Petrarch, or as one member of a triumvirate. Boccaccio himself set the precedent for this response in both his literary works and letters, with Petrarch even dominating his conversation with acquaintances. The *Trattatello* is one of the most frequently mentioned vernacular works, forming the basis of the connection between Boccaccio and other cultivators of Dante such as Benvenuto, Bruni, and Landino. Although the first example in which Boccaccio's skill at prose writing is singled out presents Dante as his verse complement (Simone Serdini), it becomes a commonplace to present Boccaccio in this capacity with Petrarch as the author of verse, reflecting Villani's observation that the two friends were two souls in one body.

This comparative relationship may have contributed to the apparent demise in popularity of the *Teseida*, whose existence is noted less often than either the *Decameron*

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[276] *Tradizione*, II, 182-94.

or *De mulieribus*. The *Teseida* is among one of the most frequently cited vernacular works in its initial phase of diffusion, from the 1340s to the beginning of the fifteenth century, but then virtually disappears from the record of critical responses. There is a hint that it did not vanish without trace in the structural echoes of Angelo Galli's *Operecta*, and Equicola was able to name the *Teseida* as one of Boccaccio's works at the beginning of the sixteenth century, but the text does not seem to have fared well with a humanist audience. Despite Boccaccio's efforts to direct it towards a learned public, the *Teseida* appears to have been enjoyed in a much wider-ranging context, amongst courtiers, merchants, and clerics, but was largely avoided by those able or willing to leave a lasting record of their response in their own literary compositions.

In contrast, the *Decameron* is one of the vernacular works most frequently cited throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and at the beginning of the sixteenth, and also the only text named by Boccaccio and Petrarch in their letters. Variations in the reception of this work occur in the cultural context of the pronouncements. The initial response is located primarily among non-humanists: courtiers, merchants, and authors of vernacular works influenced by its structure and content, while humanists show an interest in the language of the *Decameron* only towards the end of the fifteenth century. The endurance of the *Decameron* may also be due in part to its negative reception. There is evidence that its subject matter was found distasteful and subversive, an image that was promoted not least by Boccaccio himself, but that nevertheless succeeded in creating a lasting impression, unlike the more sober, and therefore forgettable, *Teseida*. The same argument could be applied to the *Corbaccio*, which is mentioned on numerous occasions, although the *Filocolo*, *Filostrato*, and *Fiammetta* also managed to maintain a significant presence throughout the fifteenth century, reflected by their early success in print.

More predictably, responses to *De mulieribus* are able to rival those stimulated by the *Decameron* in terms of quantity, although the Latin work attracted less comment for its specific qualities. Although the intellect behind the Latin works and their sober tone appealed to some humanists more than the frivolity apparently evident in the vernacular texts, *De mulieribus* does not seem to have been viewed as a valuable source book like the *Genealogia*, whose subject matter was widely acclaimed, even when the quality of its language was dismissed as overly medieval. Instead, the influence of *De mulieribus* is seen most clearly in the many imitations and continuations that it spawned, although authors did not tend to reference their source explicitly. Equicola's *De mulieribus* was commissioned by Margherita Cantelmo, who may have been aware

of Boccaccio's precedent. Stephen Kolsky comments: 'Margherita's decision to commission two works [*De mulieribus* and Agostino Strozzi's *Defensio mulierum*] in defence of women may indicate the urge felt by court ladies to assert themselves in a male-dominated world'.[277] This world is amply reflected by Boccaccio's critical reception, which offers only one explicit response from a female voice.

Women are only one section of society which is under-represented by a history of critical reception. Even in a study such as this one, which has sought to be as inclusive as possible, it is natural that responses are dominated by the educated élite. Beyond private letters and a small number of texts, such as the mercantile *ricordi*, humanists are the only cultural group for which it was possible, and attractive, to document their experience of Boccaccio in written literary compositions. Glimpses of the taste and opinion of the 'illiterati', in other words those that were not educated in Latin, are occasionally possible to discern mediated through the learned responses: for example, in the reference to the vernacular works included by Salutati in his epitaph for Boccaccio, in Manetti's comments in the preface to his biography of Boccaccio, and through San Bernardino's admonitions. Aron Gurevich has explored at length the problems surrounding the recovery of the vernacular culture of the lay majority in the Middle Ages through official clerical sources.[278] He describes the clear separation that exists between the positions of the preacher and his audience: 'the popular mind stands before the author like a target', so that preaching was a means of translating the ideas of the élite into a language comprehensible to all.[279] However, the definition of popular culture itself is problematic and Nancy Caciola warns that the dichotomy between popular and élite is an artificial one that has been created and maintained by historians.[280]

With these cautions in mind, the aim of Part II is to complement the partial history of Boccaccio's reception provided by the critical responses, using a second methodological approach. This focuses on elements of materiality, such as the size, layout, script or font, and decoration, of the handwritten or printed books which contain the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*. These are taken as implicit indications of the social, economic, and cultural status of the reader and producer. Any traces of reading found in the books represent an 'informal' written response, which is separate

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[277] Kolsky, p. 70.
[278] Aron Gurevich, *Medieval Popular Culture: Problems of Belief and Perception*, trans. by János M. Bak and Paul A. Hollingsworth (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
[279] Ibid., pp. 2, 34.
[280] Nancy Caciola, 'Wraiths, Revenants and Ritual in Medieval Culture', *Past and Present*, 152 (1996), 3-45 (p. 5). Gurevich discusses the problem of definition on pp. xv-xvi.

from, and motivated by very different concerns than the critical responses discussed in Part I. In addition, paratexts provide valuable insights into editorial practice and reading patterns.

PART II

MATERIAL AND PARATEXTUAL RESPONSES TO BOCCACCIO

In the second part of this thesis, Boccaccio's autograph manuscripts and books containing the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* form the focus for discussion about readers and owners of Boccaccio before 1520. Three categories of evidence for reception are analysed. The first involves the physical structure and presentation of texts, and includes elements such as the size of the support material and the layout of the text upon the page. Textual features which are additional to the main body of the text conceived by Boccaccio and included by the author of the text or text-object form the second category, and might consist of tables of contents, foliation, or an editorial preface. The third and final category of evidence reflects reading practices directly and concerns visible traces left behind by the reader on the page.

In order to discuss material and paratextual responses I have used published bibliographic material where possible. However, there is limited information available for *De mulieribus*, and existing bibliographies of the *Teseida* and *Decameron* often contain data of little interest for reception studies. Descriptions of marginalia and other marks left in the text by readers, in particular, are frequently overlooked by bibliographers. It would also be misleading and potentially dangerous to discuss materiality without first-hand experience of the primary sources; therefore I have compiled my own descriptions of a sample of books for each of the works in question, and used existing secondary sources to verify the extent to which these samples are representative. My samples are based on the collections held in the John Rylands Library, Manchester, the British Library, London, the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in Vatican City, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, and selected libraries in Oxford, Cambridge, Florence, Venice, Treviso, and Naples. I have provided summarized bibliographic information in tables for easy reference, and only included full bibliographic descriptions based on my own research where these contribute significant new evidence. My primary concern has been to provide bibliographic information that can be used for an interpretation of Boccaccio's reception, thus it should be noted that descriptions are presented in a format consistent with this aim and are not comprehensive.[1]

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[1] In general, I have followed the bibliographic guidelines offered by Philip Gaskell in his *A New Introduction to Bibliography* (Delaware: Oak Knoll Press, 1995), pp. 321-35.

CHAPTER 4

Introduction to Methodology

The aim of this chapter is to clarify what is meant by material and paratextual responses in the context of this thesis, and to consider in brief the general significance of the constituent parts of books on which I have chosen to focus. In the following chapters I shall proceed to employ the terminology outlined here in discussion relating to the reception of Boccaccio's autograph manuscripts, the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*.

4.1 PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

In order to evaluate how materiality reflects the process of dissemination and reception I have selected five core elements which can offer information about those producing and reading Boccaccio's texts and the co-texts found with them: support material, script or type, size, layout, and decoration.[1] These are all features which are consistently relevant to both manuscripts and printed books, and survive largely unaltered in extant exemplars, thereby witnessing the original choices made by authors of the text-object and readers.

4.1.1 SUPPORT

During the late Middle Ages and early Renaissance, scribes and readers had a choice between either parchment or paper as the support material for use in their books. Which material was chosen could depend both on financial circumstances and the perceived status of the text in question. Parchment was generally prized above paper for its durability and its superior writing surface, which was particularly suited for illumination, although it was also costly and time-consuming to prepare.[2] The quality of parchment could vary greatly, depending on the care with which it was made ready for writing, and the age and health of the animal used. Paper had the advantage of being cheaper, because it could be manufactured more quickly with less labour and fewer materials, and was easier to use because it was lighter and came in uniform sizes.[3] The availability of both materials and attitudes towards their use in books also varied over

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[1] Co-texts are discussed further in section 4.2.

[2] Jonathan J. G. Alexander, *Medieval Illuminators and Their Methods of Work* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 35.

[3] See Christopher de Hamel, *Scribes and Illuminators* (London: British Museum, 1992), pp. 8-17 for the production processes and relative qualities of parchment and paper.

time. Although there were paper mills in Italy in the thirteenth century, it was not until the second half of the fifteenth century that developments in the paper industry were such that they were able to contribute to, and support, the arrival of print.[4] Although all the printed editions of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* with which I am concerned used paper, some editions, and presentation copies in particular, were printed on parchment.[5]

4.1.2 SCRIPT/TYPE

The script in which a scribe chose to transcribe a manuscript relates to the producer's or reader's perception of the status of text, and also to the cultural preferences and ability of the scribe. Similarly for print, a hierarchy of founts relates to different types of text, although not all printers would have owned or had access to the range of founts from which it was possible to choose. One of the biggest problems which occurs in relation to the discussion of scripts is the use of terminology, which can differ between palaeographers of different nationalities, and also between individuals. In addition, scribes do not always conform to the palaeographic definitions artificially imposed by historians of script. This can be particularly problematic with non-professional scribes and informal, cursive scripts. James Douglas Farquhar comments: 'until a consensus of opinion is unquestionably reached [on the nomenclature of scripts] [...], it is important that each identification of script be accompanied by clear reference to the standard one is using'.[6] I refer to seven scripts in the course of the ensuing discussion which I have classified according to the following definitions. Broadly speaking, these scripts can be divided into the gothic system and the humanistic system, each of which contains a hierarchy of hands used for distinct purposes.

4.1.2.1 THE GOTHIC SYSTEM OF SCRIPTS

Gothic bookhand, also known as gothic textura or textualis, or *littera textualis*, developed from Caroline minuscule at the end of the twelfth century, and was adopted in Italy at the beginning of the thirteenth century. Lines became more angular, curves were broken up into straight lines, the base of each line received small plinths, and

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[4] See Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing, 1450-1800*, ed. by Geoffrey Nowell-Smith and David Wooton, trans. by David Gerard (London: NLB, 1976), pp. 30-41.
[5] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 10-11.
[6] Hindman and Farquhar, p. 55.

letters were compressed against each other.[7] Fully developed gothic bookhand is characterized by the overlapping of adjacent bows and the 'round' r form attached to letters with bows.[8] It is a difficult script to master and laborious to use, hence it is frequently associated with professional scribes, and religious manuscripts and books of the highest quality.[9] A gothic fount was cut for printed books and commonly used for scholastic books or manuals of canon law.[10]

The variation of gothic bookhand most commonly used in Italy is known as *littera gotica rotunda italiana*.[11] This script does not have any plinths at the bottom of minims, the letters are well separated, ascenders are quite high, and breaks in the upper curves of the 'm' and 'n' are less frequently made.[12] In general it has a broad regulated character.[13] Specific features include an uncial 'd'(curved), a Caroline type of non-closed 'a', a round 'r' (even after letters which do not curve to the left), a 'u' which tends to look like a 'b', a sign which resembles '7' replacing the cursive ligature for 'et', and fused curves.[14]

At the beginning of the thirteenth century a gothic cursive script appeared known as chancery minuscule (*minuscola cancelleresca* or *minuscola diplomatica gotica*). This was mainly used by notaries because it was fast and easy to write, but by the end of the thirteenth century, as the practice of reading and writing spread, documentary scripts also began to be used in books, in particular by non-professional scribes.[15] Some vernacular incunabula were printed in a type fount based on chancery minuscule.[16] Chancery minuscule is linked to the gothic system because it has the same alphabet and sometimes the same linked curves; however, it is characterized by a fluid rotundity and has high ascenders which end in flourishes. Tails of minims which descend below the line (p, q, f, long s) have a flourish to the left.[17] In the fourteenth century, the ascender of the 'd' is bent outwards and downwards and the 'b', 'h', and 'l'

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[7] Robert Marichal, 'La scrittura', in *Storia d'Italia*, ed. by Ruggiero Romano and Corrado Vivanti, 6 vols (Turin: Einaudi, 1973), v, 1267-1317 (p. 1284).
[8] Bernhard Bischoff, *Latin Palaeography: Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, trans. by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín and David Ganz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 130.
[9] Hindman and Farquhar, p. 60.
[10] Febvre and Martin, p. 79 and Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 123-24.
[11] *Littera bononiensis* and *neapolitana* are further Italian regional variations: see G. Cencetti, *Lineamenti di storia della scrittura latina*, ed. by Gemma Guerrini Ferri (Bologna: Patron, 1997), p. 194-96; Marichal, p. 1286; Bischoff, p. 131.
[12] Marichal, p. 1285.
[13] Bischoff, p. 131.
[14] Cencetti, pp. 187-91.
[15] E. Casamassima, *Tradizione corsiva e tradizione libraria nella scrittura latina del medioevo* (Rome: Gela, 1988), pp. 95-99, 126-29.
[16] Febvre and Martin, p. 79.
[17] Marichal, pp. 1286-87.

have a flourish. When the script is rapid and carelessly executed it can be difficult to distinguish between the 'c', 't', and 'e' because they are all formed with a curved base and a horizontal line. Similarly, the 'a' and 'o' can be confused. The 'o' can look like the 'c', 'e', and 't' when the second stroke is made almost horizontal, or when the second line of the 'c', 'e', 't' is rounded and turned towards the bottom. The descenders of the long 's' and 'f' are often doubled. 'C' with a cedilla is often used in place of 'z'. The sign '7' for 'et' can be like a 'z' and must not be confused with this letter which is generally more like a '3'.[18] The difference between thick and thin lines is accentuated.[19]

Outside Italy, later forms of chancery minuscule, in particular, can be referred to as *bastarda*; for example, the script created by ser Francesco di Nardo da Barberino in 1337 for the 'Danti del Cento'.[20] In Italy, however, this term is used more frequently to designate non-Italian scripts which were also based on chancery cursive, but had reached very high levels of technical execution; for example, the script known as 'Bourgouignonne'.[21]

Another documentary script used in Italy in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries is known as *mercantesca*, or mercantile script. The terminology derives from its use in commercial documents and the correspondence of Florentine merchants, although it came to be used all over Italy by the fourteenth century.[22] Literary manuscripts copied by readers such as artisans and shopkeepers, who had attended an *abbaco*, but had little contact with official book culture often used *mercantesca*.[23] According to Gianfranco Orlandelli, *mercantesca* derived directly from a Caroline script, unmediated by chancery script. The oldest examples are distinguished from other documentary scripts by a certain rigidity and an impression of clarity due to the large space between words and the autonomy of each letter or group of letters.[24] The 'f' is written with two strokes of the pen, the 's' is without a loop, the 'g' is still a Caroline type, drawn from above to below, the 'c' is not yet linked to the 'h'.[25] Later, in the fourteenth century, the script becomes more linked, very personal, and therefore very

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[18] Cencetti, pp. 201-04.
[19] Marichal, p. 1289.
[20] Ibid., 1291.
[21] Bischoff, pp. 142-43; Casamassima, pp. 98-99.
[22] Cencetti, p. 206; Elena Cecchi, 'Nota di paleografia commerciale (per i secoli XIII-XVI)', in *Documenti per la storia economica dei secoli XIII-XVI*, ed. by Federigo Melis (Florence: Olschki, 1972), pp. 563-75.
[23] See Armando Petrucci's descriptions of the *libro-zibaldone* in his 'Storia e geografia delle culture scritte (dal secolo XI al secolo XVIII)', in *Letteratura italiana. Storia e geografia*, II (1988), 1195-292 (pp. 1234-37).
[24] Ibid., p. 1288.
[25] Gianfranco Orlandelli, 'Osservazioni sulla scrittura mercantesca nei secoli XIV e XV', in *Studi in onore di Riccardo Filangieri*, 3 vols (Naples: L'Arte tip., 1959), I, 445-60 (p. 453).

different in appearance and hard to read. Some common characteristics include 'f' in the form of an '8', deformation of the 'st' ligature, repeated use of the same abbreviations,[26] long 's' with a loop, and the 'ch' ligature. In its full development *mercantesca* is also characterized by the uninterrupted return of the hand after flourishes to the left under the line.[27]

The term 'semi-gothic' refers to a script where the gothic elements predominate, but there are some humanistic features.[28] It represents a transitional phase which aims to move away from Italian gothic script towards purer Caroline forms, which was instigated by Petrarch, and can exist in bookhand and cursive forms.[29] Petrarch's semi-gothic bookhand has its foundations in scholastic scripts with their short stems, preference for the uncial 'd' with the ascender very short and curved, and wide and spacious letters of rather small dimensions.[30] Breaks in curves have disappeared, and although the script appears compact, single letters are barely touching and each graphic element is distinct. The final minim of the 'm' and 'n' tends to curve. Later forms of Petrarch's script are smaller with taller minims.[31] After Petrarch's death his graphic reforms spread outside his immediate circle of disciples to the Veneto, Lombardy and Florence.[32] This script was characterized by a cursive closed 'a', a closed final 's', a round 'r', and some ligatures.[33]

4.1.2.2 THE HUMANISTIC SYSTEM OF SCRIPTS

The development of humanistic bookhand, also known as *umanistica rotunda*, *littera antiqua*, or *littera antica*, was the natural culmination of Petrarch's first attempts to return to the pure forms of Caroline minuscule. Poggio Bracciolini is credited with having invented the script before he left Florence in 1403. Gothic letters, such as the uncial 'd', round 'r', and final round 's', are eliminated. The abbreviation 'et' is substituted with the ligature '&', and the letters are separated.[34] The ligatures 'ae' and

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[26] Marichal, p. 1288.
[27] Cencetti, p. 207.
[28] De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', p. 395.
[29] Michelle P. Brown, *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts: From Antiquity to 1600* (London: British Library, 1990), p. 126.
[30] Cencetti, p. 231.
[31] Armando Petrucci, *La scrittura di Francesco Petrarca* (Città del Vaticano: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, 1967), pp.74-75. See also Armando Petrucci, 'Libro e scrittura in Francesco Petrarca', in *Libri, scrittura e pubblico nel Rinascimento: guida storica e critica*, ed. by Armando Petrucci (Rome: Laterza, 1979).
[32] Petrucci, *La scrittura*, p. 87.
[33] Cencetti, p. 233.
[34] Marichal, p. 1292.

'oe' are also added.[35] A two-compartmental 'g', an uncial 'a', and the 'ct' ligature are used.[36] Humanistic bookhand spread quickly among other humanists in Florence and other cities in Italy, replacing gothic and semi-gothic bookhands.[37] Many early printed books used a fount modelled on humanistic bookhand, known as roman type. Richardson comments:

> by the time printing was introduced to Italy, this [humanistic script] had become accepted as the norm for literary Latin texts and would therefore have been that which was most familiar and easily legible from the point of view of the sophisticated public at which the early Italian printers were aiming.[38]

At the same time that Poggio was developing humanistic bookhand, his friend Niccolò Niccoli was working on another new script known as humanistic cursive. This was not humanistic bookhand written cursively, but a running script written with a very fine pen; a modification of contemporary gothic chancery script influenced by humanistic bookhand, hence it is sometimes known as *cancelleresca all'antica*.[39] Although it was a cursive script, it was used as a formal book hand with the same elevated cultural connotations as Poggio's counterpart. Humanistic cursive uses the upright 'd', the ligatures 'ct' and '&', and employs a strict separation of letters and words.[40] The lower part of Niccolò Niccoli's 'g' is often large and irregular, the 'ct' ligature has a sweeping connecting stroke, the 'et' ligature is tall, and diphthongs are used extensively.[41] Aldo Manuzio's revolutionary italic typeface, introduced in 1501, was based on humanistic cursive.

4.1.3 SIZE

The size of manuscripts is naturally related to the cost of the support material, and also has implications for the way in which books are read and stored. Large books can be difficult to read without the support of a desk or lectern, and are less likely to be transported frequently from location to location, but allow greater scope for ease of legibility and space for annotation. Small books are portable and easy to read in less formal environments since they can be held in the hand or on the lap. As well as the

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[35] Bischoff, p. 146.
[36] Brown, *A Guide to Western Historical Scripts*, p. 127. See also B. L. Ullman, *The Origin and Development of Humanistic Script* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1960).
[37] Ullman, *The Origin and Development*, pp. 79-89.
[38] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 123.
[39] Marichal, p. 1293; De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', p. 395.
[40] Marichal, p. 1293.
[41] Ullman, *The Origin and Development*, pp. 61-74.

relationship between size and its appeal to individual readers, the dimensions of books can be related to more general trends in reading practice and taste. Early printed books are generally in folio and quarto formats and gradually decrease in size in the sixteenth century.[42]

For both manuscripts and printed books I have given the measurement of the leaves (height x width), bearing in mind that many books are trimmed when they are bound and rebound. Given that individual folios within a book can also vary in size, in each case I have taken three measurements and quoted the size which is most representative of the whole book. I have also noted the format and size of the uncut leaf for the printed exemplars. Based on Petrucci's descriptions of vernacular book models, my definition of a large book measures over 320 mm high, a medium book measures between 240 and 319 mm high, and a small book measures up to 239 mm high.[43]

4.1.4 LAYOUT

The layout of a text is closely related to the way in which it will be read. In Antiquity reading was confined to a very small number of educated people who read and reread the same limited canon of literature. The nature of ancient manuscript presentation reflected the fact that the majority of the population was not encouraged to read because it was a difficult and laborious process. Texts were written without spaces between words, and without other features, such as punctuation and capital letters, which aid recognition of individual words. Scribes may have had little consideration for how presentation would affect reading because they often copied by dictation and might not have understood the sense of what they transcribed.[44] By the twelfth century, however, the growth of universities, preaching, and the spread of written education among the laity led to increased numbers of people desirous to read, which in turn led to changes in the methods of book production. Religious communities, which had held a monopoly on the professional production of books, were forced to share production with the laity, which meant that not only were a greater number of people reading, but different sorts of people with different needs were both reading and writing books.[45] Bringing together the processes of reading and writing led to important changes being made in both the techniques of manuscript production and presentation. The process of reading was

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[42] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 125-29.
[43] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*'.
[44] On the history of the relationship between reading and the layout of text see Paul Saenger, *Space Between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997).
[45] Bischoff, p. 224.

facilitated by the division of the text into different sections marked by rubrics and initials, as well as into separate words. Script was arranged in two columns with the text compressed so that one line corresponded to the quantity of text which could be taken in at a single glance.[46] In the scholarly book, many changes related to the coming together of reading and writing were centred around commentary and gloss. The text was arranged in columns which were positioned towards the centre and top of the page in order to leave the lower and side margins free for annotation and commentary.[47]

The layout of a text is therefore governed by practical considerations, such as the size of the book and the desired width of margins, but these are also related to the manner in which texts are read and the types of intended readers. In the following discussion, I refer principally to the number of columns in which the text is arranged when discussing layout, and it is also my aim to determine whether layout is influenced by, or has any bearing on, other features in manuscripts of Boccaccio. Both manuscripts and printed books are arranged either with the text in a single uninterrupted line across the page, or in two columns. In the former instance, when the text is in prose, I refer to a 'full-page layout', and when the text is in verse, I use the term 'single-' or 'one-column layout'.

4.1.5 DECORATION

The decoration of manuscripts and printed books is often ignored or treated very cursorily by bibliographers, while art historians tend to focus on particular decorative features in isolation from the rest of the text-object. However, decoration can be an extremely useful indication of the reader's status, in both manuscripts and printed editions. Farquhar argues that 'decoration is more responsive to changes in taste than many other aspects of book production'.[48] Ornamentation can be used to embellish a book to make it more appealing to its owner or reader, to increase the status of the book and thereby its owner, and also to facilitate orientation within the text. M. B. Parkes describes how changes in scholastic method in the mid-twelfth century created demand for clearer guides to the organization of texts, which gave rise to rubrics at the beginning of chapters and in the margins outlining topics.[49] The revival of Aristotelian

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[46] Armando Petrucci, 'Reading in the Middle Ages', in Petrucci, *Writers and Readers*, pp. 132-44 (pp. 137-38), and Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', pp. 171-72.
[47] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 172.
[48] Hindman and Farquhar, p. 68.
[49] M. B. Parkes, 'The Influence of the Concepts of *Ordinatio* and *Compilatio* on the Development of the Book', in *Medieval Learning and Literature: Essays Presented to Richard*

logic in the thirteenth century led to increasingly refined methods for dividing up and marking divisions in the text. Stages of an argument were marked with *litterae notabiliores* and paragraph marks, running titles were coloured red and blue, and coloured tables of contents outlined the major topics in the correct order (pp. 119-23). In the fourteenth century, illuminated initials and scholastic tree diagrams were added to enhance the new sequential argumentation.[50] Large initials were used to mark the beginning of each major section in a text, and the earliest book illustrations occur at the beginning of the text to mark its divisions.[51] Mary Carruthers notes that decoration is

> a subspecies of punctuation itself, and thus basic to reading and retention [...]. Manuscript decoration is part of the *painture* of language, one of the gates to memory, and the form it takes often has to do with what is useful not only to understand a text but to retain and recall it too. (p. 226)

Hand-decorated initials and border decoration are often found in printed books, particularly in incunabula, although woodcut initials and illustrations could also be used. Decorative initials are probably the most commonly occurring ornamental features in manuscripts and printed books and their size and decorative qualities represent a hierarchical system, which was also reflected in the cost of the initials.[52] For these reasons, I have based my discussion of decoration principally on the presence or absence of three types of decorative initials which occur most frequently in books of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus*. To my knowledge, no consistent terminology has been devised to refer to different types of initial. I have therefore elected to use the terms 'illuminated initial', 'decorated initial', and 'coloured initial' to describe the three main types of initial that I have found.

At the top of the hierarchy are illuminated initials, which tend to be the largest and most elaborate initials, and also the most expensive. Illuminated initials are defined by the use of gold, in leaf or powdered form, either in the body of the letter shape or in the surrounding decoration. Decorated initials are characterized by decorative flourishes in or around the body of the letter, most commonly executed in blue or red ink with flourishes in a contrasting colour. Some decorated initials are painted and can contain more elaborate decoration, such as the vine-scroll design associated with humanistic texts. Coloured initials are simple letter forms executed in coloured ink,

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William Hunt, ed. by J. J. G. Alexander and M. T. Gibson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), pp. 115-41 (pp. 117-18).

[50] Saenger, pp. 259-60.

[51] Mary J. Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 226.

[52] See Hindman and Farquhar, pp. 71-72.

often by rubricators rather than illuminators. These are usually the smallest initials, and sequences of them frequently alternate in colour between red and blue.

In addition to these three types of initial, historiated initials, containing human or animal figures, occur in smaller numbers and can also be illuminated. Border decoration can be painted or executed in pen and ink, but is usually an elaborate and expensive form of ornamentation, most frequently appearing on the first page of the text, often in conjunction with an elaborate initial. In contrast, rubrication is one of the commonest and cheapest forms of decoration, while some books do not contain any decoration at all. I have used the term 'illustration' to refer to both painted miniatures and pen and ink drawings.

4.2 PARATEXTS AND TRACES OF READING

Gérard Genette developed the term 'paratext' to refer to the 'productions' which accompany a text, such as the author's name, title, preface, footnotes, index, illustrations, and so on.[53] More specifically, these elements are peritexts, since they are located within the bound volume. Paratexts can also exist outside the book and in this instance are referred to as epitexts. These might take the form of interviews or reviews. Genette's definition of a paratext extends further to include not only textual productions, such as those mentioned above, but also iconic and material manifestations. Thus, an illustration or choice of script can also be regarded as a paratext. In this study I use the term 'paratext' in its most common definition to refer to purely textual elements added either by the author, or by one of the subsequent producers of the text-object, such as the scribe, printer, or editor. Under the heading of 'paratexts', and where appropriate, I also discuss the significance of the inclusion of texts by the scribe or printer which are unrelated to Boccaccio's texts. Although technically these are not paratexts, they can nevertheless provide valuable information about Boccaccio's status and the context in which he was considered.

Traces of reading are distinguished from paratexts because they are instigated by the reader rather than by the author of the text-object. Traces can range from an accidental ink blot in the margin to a systematic commentary. Reader interventions are important because they are an explicit sign of the presence of the reader in the text. However, it is not my intention to provide a detailed study of the marks left by readers in manuscripts, which would constitute a study in its own right. Rather, I am seeking to

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[53] See Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), in particular pp. 1-12.

outline the types of responses which are found in manuscripts and printed editions, and which may indicate how a reader approached the text. I have identified five categories of evidence that reveal the presence of the reader and suggest varying approaches to the process of reading and the status of the book.[54]

I have appropriated H. J. Jackson's interpretation of marginalia to define the first category of traces. Thus, the category entitled 'Marginalia' includes 'notes written anywhere in a book, and not merely in the margins', which should 'be distinguished from asterisks, fists [...], exclamation marks, word by word translation, and similar signs of readers' attentions'.[55] However, I have further limited the definition to notes that are related to the text and express a reaction to it, and therefore are distinguished from doodling or the use of blank areas in the manuscript as a convenient writing surface. The presence of marginalia is the strongest indication that a book has been read, or that at least the sections that have been commented on have been read. As Jackson comments, techniques involved in marginalia 'function by forcing the reader to slow down (or stop) and go back over the material', therefore one presumes that the reader has reached a deeper understanding of the text than another reader who has read the text through once and not made any notes.[56]

The second category, 'Marks or Symbols', refers to responses to the text most often found in the margin signalling a relevant section. In manuscripts and printed editions of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* these commonly take the forms of small crosses ('x' or '+'), short horizontal or vertical lines, a pointing hand, or the word 'Nota', either spelled out fully or abbreviated. If more than one line of text is singled out, a vertical line or bracket, either with or without a pointing hand or 'Nota' sign may be used. In some instances, marks and symbols may be used together with marginalia, for example, a word may be underlined in the text and a note written in the margin next to it. When a reader marks a passage with a cross, it is evident that he or she found something remarkable about that section of text, but the full significance of the response often remains a mystery. It might signify agreement or disagreement with the author's sentiments, mark a section of text the reader wished to return to, or signal a connection the reader has made with another text. It is also much easier to date a passage of writing, or even a single word, than it is to date a horizontal line, for

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[54] Ownership notes are discussed together with materiality, since an owner does not necessarily equal a reader.
[55] H. J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), pp. 13-14.
[56] Jackson, p. 87.

example, particularly if there are no further 'clues' within the text. Therefore, it is difficult to be sure that marks in a text were made by a fifteenth-century reader rather than by an eighteenth-century reader, for example. Traces of readership in the text which clearly date from after 1520 have been excluded. In all other cases I have registered interventions, and it cannot always be presumed that marks, symbols, drawings, or ink smudges were made by readers prior to 1520.

The third category is entitled 'Unrelated Notes', and refers to a range of writing which is unconnected with the text, other than being found within the same covers. Readers use the blank surfaces within a text, as well as the leaves which are often left blank at the beginning and end of the text, to transcribe personal information, other texts, or less conscious records of reading and writing practices, such as pen trials, scribbles, or doodles, which may or may not be intelligible to another reader. Unrelated notes cannot necessarily provide information about how the reader read the text, but may suggest which other kinds of literature he or she enjoyed, or offer details about the reader's social and cultural status. The placement of other texts and notes in the blank spaces of a book can also tell us something of the attitude of the reader to the work. A picture can begin to emerge suggesting whether the relative cost of books prohibited a reader from writing in them, or whether, if paper was scarce, the book became the receptacle for all writing purposes, from practising letter shapes to recording a proverb or birth in the family.

The fourth category, 'Illustration', relates to drawings and sketches made by the reader, which are therefore separate from the decoration originally envisaged for the book, and may be a direct response to the text, or entirely unrelated. Illustrations relating to the text can act as a pictorial extension to marginalia, indicating that the reader has engaged with the text on a certain level. Alternatively, illustrations unrelated to the text, like unrelated verbal signs, may indicate that the reader is simply utilizing available space. The fifth and final category covers the corrections and textual variants sometimes noted by readers. Although these traces also fall under my definition of marginalia, I have accorded them a separate category in order to illustrate occurrences of a linguistic nature, which differ substantially from other types of marginalia that frequently occur, such as notabilia.

Having prefaced Part II with a description of the terminology which will be employed, I shall proceed to analyse the material and paratextual elements of Boccaccio's books, beginning with the autograph manuscripts in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

Boccaccio's Autograph Manuscripts

In this chapter I shall consider what the physical structure, presentation, and paratextual elements of Boccaccio's autographs reveal about who he intended or desired to read his works.[1] The study of Boccaccio's intentions adds an additional, but frequently neglected, dimension to the picture of his reception. Results from this chapter can be compared with evidence about the actual readers of Boccaccio's works, which will be discussed in Chapters 6-8, and this research also complements Chapter 1, which analysed Boccaccio's presentation of himself and his projected readers in a textual context.

Since the focus here is the relationship between Boccaccio, the presentation of his works, and their intended readers, I am concerned only with manuscripts copied by Boccaccio which also contain his own works. From the lists of autographs compiled by Evi Ianni and Ginetta Auzzas I have identified eight such autograph manuscripts, containing the following texts, listed in chronological order of composition:[2]

1. The *Zibaldone laurenziano*: ***Epistole*** **I-IV, VI,** ***Allegoria mitologica***, ***Postquam fata sinunt***, ***Faunus***, ***Elegia di Costanza*** (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS 29.8)
2. ***Teseida*** (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Acquisti e Doni 325)
3. ***Trattatello in laude di Dante*** (first redaction), Dante's ***Vita Nuova***, Dante's ***Commedia*** with Boccaccio's ***Argomenti*** in terza rima, 15 ***canzoni*** by Dante (Toledo, Biblioteca Capitular, MS Zelada 104.6)
4. ***Trattatello in laude di Dante*** (third redaction), Dante's ***Vita Nuova***, Guido Cavalcanti's ***Donna me prega*** with gloss by Dino del Garbo, ***Ytalie iam certus honos*** (second redaction), 15 ***canzoni*** by Dante, Petrarch's ***Fragmentorum liber*** (Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Chigiano L. V. 176)
5. ***Genealogia deorum gentilium*** (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS LII. 9)
6. ***Buccolicum carmen*** (Florence, Biblioteca Riccardiana, MS 1232)
7. ***Decameron*** (Berlin, Staatsbibliothek der Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS Hamilton 90)
8. ***De mulieribus claris*** (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS XC sup. 98[1])

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[1] Since the focus rests on Boccaccio's intentions, an analysis of traces of reading is inappropriate in this chapter.

[2] For the dates of these manuscripts see Table 1.

Table 1: *Presentation of Boccaccio's autograph manuscripts*

MS	Date	Size (mm)[3]	Support	Script	Layout	R	II	DI	CI	CCT	CPT	I	BSI
1	1327-34 1339-60s	280 x 207-10	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	Variable	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
2	1340-50	275 x 195-96	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	1 col	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
3	1350s	275-77 x 190	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	Full-page			✓	✓	✓			
4	1359-63	266-70 x 182-86	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	Full-page	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
5	1363-66	350-55 x 243-50	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	2 cols	✓				✓		✓	✓
6	1366-68	160-01 x 115	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	1 col	✓		✓		✓			
7	1370-71	365-72 x 260-65	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	2 cols	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	
8	1370-73	258-60 x 175	Parchment	Semi-gothic bookhand	2 cols	✓		✓	✓			✓	

Key[4]

1 *Zibaldone laurenziano*
2 *Teseida*
3 *Trattatello in laude di Dante* (first redaction)
4 *Trattatello in laude di Dante* (third redaction)
5 *Genealogia deorum gentilium*
6 *Buccolicum carmen*
7 *Decameron*
8 *De mulieribus claris*

[3] The approximate sizes result from the collation of more than one source, which offer different measurements.
[4] A key for the remaining sigla in this table and in the tables that follow is found on p. xii.

5.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

In order to analyse how the physical structure and presentation of the above autographs reflect Boccaccio's intended readers, I have collated bibliographical information found in published sources.[5] A summary of the main elements that will be used as indications for intended readership is given in Table 1. An initial evaluation of this summarized information implies that the majority of the autographs are high quality manuscripts, perhaps destined for readers who could afford luxury parchment manuscripts, and who had also received an education which would allow them to enjoy the literary contents.

All the autograph manuscripts are made of parchment, usually only selected for texts regarded as important and worthy of longevity, because it was more expensive and considered to be more durable than paper. Equally importantly, semi-gothic bookhand is the script of choice for each autograph. This was a script used for formal writing, which was much more laborious to write than a cursive documentary script and thus required more skill.[6] In many of the autographs the script is not only beautifully executed but is also carefully arranged on the page. It is then embellished with decorative features which again reveal a significant investment of thought and care, and add to the aesthetic and economic value of the manuscript.

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[5] Details of all the autographs are found in Auzzas, 'Elenco'; Ianni; *Mostra di manoscritti, documenti e edizioni: Firenze – Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, 22 maggio-31 agosto 1975*, 2 vols (Certaldo: A cura del Comitato Promotore, 1975), I. Information on script is included in A. C. de la Mare, *The Handwriting of Italian Humanists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the Association Internationale de Bibliophilie, 1973), pp. 17-29. Information relating to the *Zibaldone* is also found in Stefano Zamponi, Martina Pantarotto, and Antonella Tomiello, 'Stratigrafia dello Zibaldone e della Miscellanea Laurenziani', in *Gli zibaldoni di Boccaccio: memoria, scrittura, riscrittura. Atti del seminario internazionale di Firenze-Certaldo (26-28 aprile, 1996)*, ed. by Michelangelo Picone and Claude Cazalé Bérard (Florence: Cesati, 1998), pp. 181-258; Virginia Brown, 'Between the Convent and the Court: Boccaccio and a Beneventan Gradual from Naples', in *Gli zibaldoni*, ed. by Picone and Bérard, pp. 307-13. A bibliographical description of the *Teseida* is also found in *Teseida: edizione critica*, ed. by Salvatore Battaglia (Florence: Sansoni, 1938) and Vandelli, 'Un autografo della *Teseide*'. There is a facsimile edition of the third redaction of the *Trattatello*: *Il Codice Chigiano L. V. 176 autografo di Giovanni Boccaccio: edizione fototipica*, ed. by Domenico De Robertis (Rome: Alinari, 1974). A bibliographical description of the *Decameron* is also found in Branca and Ricci, *Un autografo* and Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 211-62.

[6] For a description of Boccaccio's handwriting see Armando Petrucci, 'Il MS. Berlinese Hamiltoniano 90: note codicologiche e paleografiche', in *Giovanni Boccaccio, Decameron: edizione diplomatico-interpretativa dell'autografo Hamilton 90*, ed. by Charles S. Singleton (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), pp. 647-61 (pp. 652-53); Pier Giorgio Ricci,'Svolgimento della grafia del Boccaccio e datazione del codice', in Branca and Ricci, *Un autografo*, pp. 49-67.

5.1.1 THE INFLUENCE OF PUBLICATION METHODS

This initial assessment implies not only educated and wealthy ideal readers, but also that these manuscripts be distinguished from drafts or working copies which are not intended to be read by anyone other than the author. It is only viable to consider evidence for Boccaccio's intended readership if he did indeed wish his manuscripts to read by a public. Thus, autographs can be included in this study if they were distributed to individuals, but also if they did not leave Boccaccio's ownership and yet served as exemplars, thereby participating in the diffusion process.

A closer investigation of the physical construction of the autographs indicates that the *Zibaldone laurenziano* might in fact have never been intended for publication, and must therefore be excluded from this discussion. There are significant variations in the quality of the script, the size of the written space, and the ruling, and, unlike any of the other above autographs, two-thirds of the *Zibaldone* is palimpsest. The collation was obviously not considered carefully, since the manuscript is made up of irregular gatherings containing bifolia and single leaves, and the absence of original catchwords suggests that the individual leaves of the manuscript were loose for a long time and did not have a definitive order. Although there is a degree of decoration present which one might not expect to find in a manuscript designed for personal use, Ianni comments that: 'l'ornamentazione del codice è povera; mancano le iniziali gotiche ornate presenti negli altri autografi'.[7] The catalogue *Mostra di manoscritti* pronounces that: 'par certo che il manoscritto, vivente il Boccaccio, non lasciò mai il suo scrittoio'.[8]

The autograph manuscripts containing redactions of the *Trattatello* are also miscellanies like the *Zibaldone*, but there is little evidence to indicate that they were designed as working copies or drafts. The two extant versions of the text are commonly referred to as the first and third redactions respectively, although both Ricci and Paolazzi have argued that the third redaction is in fact likely to be the second. The final redaction is not represented by an extant autograph, although there are over twenty manuscript witnesses.[9] Although the extant autographs may not represent Boccaccio's final wishes, this does not presuppose that each of the autographs was originally intended for publication and transcribed as an exemplar, before being revised at a later date. The selection of texts included in each manuscript is not fragmentary, but deliberately comprises a compendium of works of the two authors Boccaccio most

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[7] Ianni, p. 103.
[8] *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 121.
[9] Paolazzi, 'Petrarca, Boccaccio', pp. 231-35; Ricci, 'Le tre redazioni' in *Studi sulla vita*, pp. 67-83; *Trattatello*, pp. 426-30.

admired. The manuscript containing the third redaction of the *Trattatello* is made up of three separate sections, which might suggest that the manuscript was not originally intended to be published as a whole. Some scholars even argue that this manuscript was originally linked to MS Chigiano L. VI. 213, which contains Boccaccio's transcription of Dante's *Commedia*.[10] However, separation would not have prevented Boccaccio from using the manuscript as an exemplar for his own use. The text of both redactions of the *Trattatello* contains some notes, additions, and variations, but these are not extensive enough to interfere with the general appearance of a fair copy. The script in both manuscripts is carefully executed and both manuscripts contain decorative initials of a consistently high quality. The layout of the third redaction of the text does vary in the section containing Guido Cavalcanti's *Donna me prega*, but the quality of execution is not altered. In addition, the parchment used in this manuscript has been described as being of an excellent quality, and it is highly unlikely that this would have been chosen for a draft or working copy.

The high quality of the remaining five autographs has led many critics to suggest that they were designed with publication in mind. The *Teseida* is described in *Mostra di manoscritti* as '[una] copia forse di dedica' (I, 33), the autograph of *De mulieribus* is referred to as 'l'accurata copia a buono – verosimilmente, nell'intenzione dell'autore-copista, esemplare di presentazione' (I, 79), and Zaccaria describes it as 'una bella copia (forse un esemplare da offrire in dono)'.[11] The quality of the presentation of the autograph of the *Decameron* led Branca to conjecture that it was a fair copy prepared for an illustrious person.[12] It is noteworthy that these remarks also comment on the type of publication method which may have been used and which would have influenced the presentation of the manuscript, namely formal publication via presentation or dedication to an individual. It is extremely difficult to verify the publication method used, however. For instance, the presence of a dedication might be a witness to formal publication, but unless there is additional evidence, such as an ownership note, it is virtually impossible to establish whether this manuscript is the actual autograph which was copied for the dedicatee, or whether it is another copy of the work with the dedication included.

It is also important to remember that the process of transcription and publication is by no means straightforward, and factors can intervene which prevent a manuscript

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[10] Ricci, 'Le tre redazioni', pp. 72-73.
[11] Giovanni Boccaccio, *De mulieribus claris*, ed. by Vittorio Zaccaria, in *Tutte le opere*, X (1967), 459.
[12] Branca and Ricci, *Un autografo*, pp. 17-18.

from actually reaching its public. This appears to have been the case with several of Boccaccio's autographs. The *Teseida* is the only manuscript containing a dedication miniature, suggesting that Boccaccio's original intention was to publish the finished work formally, and yet the manuscript probably did not reach its destination. Its decorative schema remains incomplete, with thirty-six blank spaces for additional miniatures or illustrations. This led Vandelli to comment that this is:

> una copia a pulito che l'autore ebbe a tenere presso di sé [...] anche se il primo pensiero del Boccaccio nell'accingersi a preparar questo esemplare della sua opera era stato probabilmente di presentarlo a Fiammetta a cui l'opera era dedicata.[13]

It is also likely that Boccaccio kept the autograph of *De mulieribus* with him, since it contains enough corrections to constitute a new redaction of the text.[14] No evidence has come to light to suggest why the miniatures in the *Teseida* were never completed or why the autograph of *De mulieribus* never left Boccaccio's library, but the circumstances surrounding the preparation of the autograph of the *Genealogia* are more clearly documented. The autograph of the *Genealogia* was the very manuscript which Boccaccio was persuaded to lend to Ugo da Sanseverino in 1371, and which was not returned to him until after the spring of 1372. Once the manuscript was in his possession again Boccaccio began to revise the work.[15] In a letter to Pietro da Monteforte, written in 1372, Boccaccio explains that he had not set out to publish this manuscript: 'portaveram, fateor, librum hunc de quo sermo [...] non adhuc ut illum emicterem' [I confess I had brought this book about which I speak [...] not that I might send it forth thus far]. However, Boccaccio then qualifies this statement by saying that he had intended to remove some unsuitable notes and add decoration where necessary: 'amovere ab eo quasdam notas [...] et, si possem, decentiori ornatu aliquo venustare eum' (*Ep.* XX, p. 678) [remove from it certain notes [...] and, if I can, decorate it more properly with some ornament]. Although the possibility that Boccaccio was referring to linguistic decoration alone cannot be discounted, the blank spaces and guide letters for ornate initials in the manuscript suggest that the original aim may have been to publish

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[13] Vandelli, p. 65. It should be noted that it is no longer plausible to consider Fiammetta a probable recipient for the *Teseida* (see Introduction, n. 36).
[14] For a discussion of the redactional phases of *De mulieribus* see Zaccaria, 'Le fasi redazionali'; Ricci, 'Le fasi redazionali', pp. 125-35; Guglielmo Zappacosta and Vittorio Zaccaria, 'Per il testo del *De mulieribus claris*', *StB*, 6 (1971), 239-70.
[15] Guido Martellotti, *Le due redazioni delle 'Genealogie' del Boccaccio* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1951); Pier Giorgio Ricci, 'Contributi per un'edizione critica della *Genealogia Deorum Gentilium*', in Ricci, *Studi sulla vita*, pp. 189-225; *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 81. See also section 1.4.

the autograph only when Boccaccio was content with both the textual accuracy and the physical ornamentation of the manuscript.

The autograph of the *Decameron* has attracted much attention from scholars, who have often emphasized its high quality and the fact that this is the largest of all eight autographs.[16] The description given in the Laurenziana's catalogue, however, is more restrained, describing this autograph as 'probabilmente declassata da esemplare di dedica (o quanto meno destinato alla diffusione) a copia di lavoro',[17] and Petrucci notes that there are variations in ink, size of script, and placement of the script on the lines.[18] Alternative readings given in the margins also suggest that Boccaccio decided to retain the manuscript for his own use. Pastore Stocchi discusses these features and interestingly concludes that transcription of this manuscript cannot have been with a reader in mind, although he admits that the manuscript may well have passed into the public domain at a later stage.[19] Given the generally high quality, and in particular the size of this manuscript, I would argue, however, that it is more likely to have been begun with publication in mind, although it might never have reached its intended recipient. A change in the original intention to publish this autograph does not diminish its importance for this study, since there is enough remaining evidence to infer for whom it might have been initially destined.

5.1.2 INTENDED READERSHIP

Having ascertained that seven of Boccaccio's manuscripts are of a high quality, and were at least intended at some point for publication, it is necessary to consider in more detail who the intended recipients might have been. Petrucci has identified a book model written in a formal bookhand which appealed to buyers of high quality manuscripts. He refers to this large format (320 – 400 mm high) parchment book as the *libro da banco*, or desk-book, since it required a fixed surface for support whilst reading.[20] The text was arranged in two columns so that one line could be taken in at a single glance, leaving large margins free for annotation and commentary. The *libro da banco* was designed for an educated elite, who had the ability, as well as the inclination, to devote themselves to meditative study. Originally intended as a container for Latin texts, primarily scholastic in nature, the *libro da banco* model began to be imitated for

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[16] For example, see Branca and Ricci, *Un autografo*, pp. 17-18.
[17] *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 49.
[18] See Petrucci, 'Il MS. Berlinese Hamiltoniano 90', pp. 656-59.
[19] Pastore Stocchi, p. 142.
[20] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 171.

texts written in the *volgare* as the vernacular increasingly came to be used as a literary language in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. These books appealed to a wider range of readers, but were always professionally transcribed and commissioned by those that were accustomed to contact with this traditional format in their professional lives.[21] The *libro da banco* must thus be distinguished from book models such as the *libro-registro*, or register-book, and *libro-zibaldone*, or hodgepodge book, which were primarily produced by readers for themselves. These books are characterized by the use of paper and cursive scripts.[22]

Only two of the seven autographs meet the size requirements for a *libro da banco*. The autograph of the *Decameron* is the largest, measuring between 365 and 372 mm high, while the autograph of the *Genealogia* follows close behind, measuring between 350 and 355 mm high. Pastore Stocchi notes that even amongst all the autographs written by Boccaccio, in other words, including those which do not contain works by himself, the autograph of the *Decameron* is significantly larger.[23] The majority of the autographs are of medium size, and this appears to be borne out also in this sample of seven manuscripts. The two redactions of the *Trattatello*, the *Teseida*, and *De mulieribus* fall within 258 and 275 mm in height. The first three of these are currently extremely close in size to each other, and it is possible that all four began life with the same measurements, having since been trimmed down by varying amounts during binding. Measuring *c.* 160 mm high, the autograph of the *Buccolicum carmen* is clearly the furthest away from a *libro da banco*.

If Boccaccio did indeed prefer to produce manuscripts of medium size, this makes the decision to produce two much larger, and one much smaller manuscript, more significant. Pastore Stocchi refers to the *Genealogia* as 'il capolavoro umanistico del Boccaccio, l'impresa più ambiziosa della sua maturità' (p. 139). The large size of the autograph manuscript indicates that Boccaccio did consider it an important and serious work. Its classical and mythological contents required at least a target audience familiar with Latin. The wide margins provide space for annotation and commentary for learned readers using the work as a sourcebook for their own literary endeavours. A large manuscript establishes a different kind of relationship with its reader than a smaller, more portable volume, restricting the reader to an environment equipped with an appropriate reading surface. This confers to the volume a certain status, which in

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[21] Armando Petrucci, 'Storia e geografia', p. 1224.
[22] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', pp. 181-89.
[23] Pastore Stocchi, pp. 138-39.

turn means the reader has to consider carefully its storage. The reader who can afford, and desires to possess a large tome, might already possess a number of books.

Petrucci has also noted the similarities in physical appearance between the autograph of the *Genealogia* and *Decameron*,[24] and yet there are obvious disparities in content. Among the three works which form the main focus of this research, the materiality of the *Decameron* autograph is the most at odds with the manner in which Boccaccio presents himself in the text. In comparison with the *Teseida* and *De mulieribus*, there is also a greater length of time between the composition of the text and the transcription of the autograph manuscript for the *Decameron*. The size of the autograph suggests that Boccaccio attached no little degree of importance to the *Decameron* in his old age, allowing critics to claim that Boccaccio's earlier negative comments about the *Decameron* in the epistle to Mainardo Cavalcanti must be treated as traditional antiphrastic remarks.[25] Branca has argued that the *Decameron* was extremely popular among merchants and 'copisti per passione', and it is also well-documented that a contemporary representative of the highly educated literary elite, such as Petrarch, was less than enthusiastic about much of this work.[26] The presentation of the autograph therefore suggests that Boccaccio was attempting to alter the course of the *Decameron*'s *fortuna* and encourage a literary appreciation of his work. With reference to the critical response to Boccaccio witnessed by the Strozzi fragment, Branca writes: 'queste pagine e questo augurio non dovettero, probabilmente, restare ignote [...] all'autore del *Decameron*'.[27] It does not necessarily follow that Boccaccio would be unhappy about merchants reading the *Decameron* for pure enjoyment, but he may have been concerned that its reputation as mercantile literature was preventing other, more distinguished, readers from approaching the work. Branca suggests that other high quality exemplars of the *Decameron* transmitted by Boccaccio did not survive because vernacular works were not left to the library of Santo Spirito after his death.[28] Even if this exemplar were a presentation copy and therefore unique, it is still a witness to Boccaccio's high regard for his own work.

The presentation of the autograph suggests that comments about the intended readers for the *Decameron* made by the authorial persona should not be taken at face

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[24] Petrucci, 'Il MS. Berlinese Hamiltoniano 90', p. 655.
[25] Branca, 'Per la storia del testo', p. 428.
[26] See, for example, Branca, 'Copisti per passione', pp. 69-83. For Petrarch's comments see section 2.1.
[27] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 180. For discussion relating to the Strozzi fragment, see also section 3.1.
[28] Branca, 'Per la storia del testo', pp. 423-24.

value. The large size, formal bookhand, and two-column layout do not reflect the impression given in the text that the *Decameron* is a book about love, unsuited and not written for educated scholars. Like the rather ambiguous defence presented in the introduction to Day IV and conclusion, the juxtaposition between the text and its presentation serves to highlight the controversial nature of the *Decameron* and the continual playful tone its author exhibited towards reader expectations.

The *Buccolicum carmen* is a work in Latin which has prestigious antecedents: Boccaccio drew inspiration from Dante and Giovanni del Virgilio's correspondence in Latin hexameters, from Petrarch's *Argus*, and Virgil's *Eclogues*. Petrarch also produced his own *Bucolicum carmen*, which Boccaccio had read by 1359. Like the *Genealogia*, the content of the *Buccolicum carmen* is likely to have appealed to the literati. It is interesting, therefore, that neither the *Buccolicum carmen* nor *De mulieribus*, which also drew on classical sources, resemble the *Genealogia* in size. Instead, both works are smaller than any of the autographs written in the vernacular. Choices relating to size are closely linked to the nature of the support. I have already noted that all seven autographs are written on parchment, but the quality of parchment selected for each manuscript can vary greatly. Bearing in mind that it is more difficult to provide objective information about the quality of the support material than it is to measure it, a problem that is increased when the descriptions of each autograph are provided by different sources, and quality of parchment is often ignored or accorded cursory attention in bibliographical descriptions, it appears that the parchment used for the autographs of the *Buccolicum carmen*, *De mulieribus*, and the third redaction of the *Trattatello* is of significantly higher quality than that used for the remaining autographs.[29] It is possible, therefore, that there is a correlation between size and quality of parchment, suggesting that economics may have been a determining factor in the choice of support material. Although Boccaccio appears to have consistently directed his texts at highly educated readers, perhaps in some cases he was willing to sacrifice certain aspects of presentation in order to retain a large size, while in other cases he preferred to purchase a small quantity of superior quality parchment. Perhaps only because the *Decameron* has attracted the most detailed scrutiny, Petrucci was led to argue that because of its inferior parchment this work was of mediocre quality in relation to the other autographs.

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[29] I have been unable to obtain any information relating to the parchment in the first redaction of the *Trattatello*.

Boccaccio chose to arrange the text of both the *Genealogia* and *Decameron* in two columns. A bi-columar layout could be selected for a number of different reasons. Less formal manuscripts which imitated documentary models, such as account books, might employ a two-column layout, whilst scholarly texts modelled on the *libro da banco* format were also arranged in two columns. Given that the autographs of both the *Genealogia* and *Decameron* are large format, parchment manuscripts written in semi-gothic bookhand, the two-column layout would appear to reflect the typical format of the *libro da banco* in this instance. However, the division of text in this manner also has its roots in practicality, since it is easier for the eye to follow shorter lines of text. It is not necessary to divide the text of the *Buccolicum carmen* in this way, since the lines are already shortened by the size of the manuscript, and indeed columns with only one or two words per line can actually be more difficult to read. It is therefore quite striking that the second smallest autograph, that of *De mulieribus*, has a layout of two columns. Boccaccio may have wished to retain an echo of the *libro da banco* format in order to emphasize the importance of the work, whilst choosing a small format. It is also possible that *De mulieribus*, which was dedicated to a lady, and whose subject matter is solely the female sex, might have been designed to appeal to a female reader less inclined to study the text at a desk and more likely to read for pleasure, perhaps with the book on her lap.

Choice of layout may be connected not only to the size of manuscripts, but also to whether the text is written in prose or verse. *De mulieribus*, the *Decameron*, and the *Genealogia* are all prose works and are all arranged in two columns, while the *Buccolicum carmen* and *Teseida* are written in hexameters and *ottava rima* respectively, and arranged in one column. The two redactions of the *Trattatello* at first appear to negate this theory, because they are prose works arranged in a full-page layout, but they differ from the other autographs since they are positioned together with other texts. These additional works are almost all written in verse, hence continuity of format would be disrupted if the layout changed between one and two columns. The texts by Dante in particular exert additional influences on the presentation of the autographs, since these are essentially the focus of these manuscripts. Boccaccio's *Trattatello* is a preface to the collection of works, designed both to commemorate Dante and to ensure the circulation of his works. As the producer of a virtual sepulchral monument, Boccaccio may have been influenced by the epigraphic tradition, where inscriptions are normally presented in a full-page layout.

The *Trattatello* is written in the vernacular in order to uphold the same principles about the status of the *volgare* that Dante expounded. The compendium of works would therefore be accessible to a wider range of readers than one of Boccaccio's Latin works. If Boccaccio intended to promote Dante it would also not be in his interests to alienate readers by producing large *libri da banco*. Hence both redactions are of very similar medium-size dimensions, with a written space and margin width which is virtually identical, and each autograph has been decorated according to the same criteria. Ricci comments that in the third redaction Boccaccio intentionally made his work more accessible to those accustomed only to reading in the vernacular by removing any Latin titles, outbursts of erudition, and insistence on abstruse concepts.[30]

All seven autographs contain a comprehensive system of decoration, which includes rubrication, a hierarchy of decorated and coloured initials at significant divisions, coloured paragraph marks, and coloured initials in the text. This serves to increase the status of the manuscripts, adding to the aesthetic value but also orientating the reader. In this sense there is a close relationship between the text and the manner in which it is decorated. The connection between one aspect of the decorative schema – the rubrics – and the contents of the text is made explicit in the conclusion to the *Decameron*:

> niun campo fu mai sì ben coltivato, che in esso o ortica o triboli o alcun pruno non si trovasse mescolato tra l'erbe migliori. [...] chi va tra queste [novelle] leggendo, lasci star quelle che pungono e quelle che dilettano legga: elle, per non ingannare alcuna persona, *tutte nella fronte portan segnato quello che esse dentro dal loro seno nascose tengono* [my italics] (p. 962).

The selective reading which Petrarch seems to have employed is advocated by the figure of the Author and aided by the summaries preceding each *novella*, which in turn are rubricated, facilitating the reading process further. The ability to move with ease around the text, which was also of particular use to readers studying the text, is rendered more convenient in the *Teseida*, through both the text and its ornamentation. A summary of the contents is provided at the end of the dedication, followed by a shortened summary of the entire plot in a sonnet, each book is prefaced by a sonnet summarizing its contents, and rubrics interspersed among the octaves provide further guidance. Colour is employed to make the sonnets more visible: each has its own system of decorative initials and coloured paragraph marks. That Boccaccio was highly conscious of the significance of the relationship between the material support and the

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[30] *Trattatello*, p. 427.

content of a text for the reader is clear from comments made in the final book of the *Fiammetta*. Addressing the book itself, Fiammetta comments on the appropriateness of the text's modest appearance in relation to its low, elegiac style:

> 'non ti sia cura d'alcuno ornamento, sì come li altri sogliono avere: cioè di nobili coverte di colori varii tinte e ornate, o di pulita tonditura, o di leggiadri minii, o di gran titoli: queste cose non si convengono alli gravi pianti li quali tu porti: lascia e queste e li larghi spazii e li lieti inchiostri, e le impomiciate carte alli libri felici; a te si conviene d'andare rabbuffato, con isparte chiome e macchiato e di squalore pieno'.[31]

A similar horticultural analogy to that employed in the *Decameron* is made for the process of reading *De mulieribus*. In the dedication Boccaccio informs Andrea Acciaiuoli that: 'et esto nonnunquam lasciva comperias immixta sacris – quod ut facerem recitandorum coegit oportunitas – ne omiseris vel horrescas; quin imo perseverans, uti viridarium intrans, eburneas manus, semotis spinarum aculeis, extendis in florem, sic, obscenis sepositis, collige laudanda' [you will find, at times, that an appropriate recital of the facts has compelled me to mix the impure with the pure. Do not skip over these parts and do not shy away from them, but persevere in your reading. As on entering a garden you extend your ivory hands towards the flowers, leaving aside the thorns, so in this case relegate to one side offensive matters and gather what is praiseworthy] (pp. 4-5). In this case, readers are not encouraged to be selective about what they read, but about the manner in which they assimilate the fruits of their reading. Accordingly, therefore, there are no rubricated summaries at the beginning of each biography, but only rubricated titles indicating the appropriate name of the woman whom the biography concerns.

Some autographs also contain illustration. The coloured pen drawings of genealogical trees in the *Genealogia* are clearly related to the content of the text.[32] Other details appear to reflect Boccaccio's enjoyment of illustration, such as the drawings which mark additions and corrections to the text of the *Genealogia,* and which decorate the catchwords in *De mulieribus*. The catchwords in the *Decameron* framed with characters from the *novelle* may have some function beyond the purely decorative,[33] but the manuscript of the *Teseida* is the only autograph to contain a

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[31] *Elegia di madonna Fiammetta*, ed. by Carlo Delcorno, in *Tutte le opere*, V. ii (1994), 1-412 (p. 186).

[32] Boccaccio's trees were influenced by the 'arbor iuris', circle-and-line genealogical charts, and Jesse trees, and may also have been similar to material by Paolo da Perugia (see Ernest H. Wilkins, 'The Genealogy of the Genealogical Trees of the *Genealogia deorum*', *Modern Philology*, 23 (1925), 61-65).

[33] Branca argues that the portraits act as visual 'richiami' in *Boccaccio Medievale*, pp. 400-06.

miniature, as well as spaces which represent an incomplete cycle of illustrations. This type of manuscript was clearly designed for an individual who could appreciate and afford a rich cycle of miniatures. A wealthy member of court, either male or female, might value a highly illustrated manuscript which enhances enjoyment of the contents, over a large format manuscript with wide margins, since the recipient might be more likely to have the book read to them than spend time studying and annotating the text.

5.2 PARATEXTS

Both autograph manuscripts containing redactions of the *Trattatello* also contain texts which are the work of other authors, with the exception of the *carmen Ytalie iam certus honos* authored by Boccaccio in Chigiano L. V. 176. These compilations illustrate that Boccaccio viewed the *Trattatello* in a fundamentally different manner from the majority of his works, which stand as independently-functioning texts. In the autograph manuscripts, the *Trattatello* operates not only as a biography for Dante, but also as an introduction to a compendium of his works, selected by Boccaccio as a homage to his literary ancestor. The manuscript containing the first redaction of the *Trattatello* is dated to the 1350s, when Boccaccio's personal friendship with Petrarch was in its early stages. Significantly, however, the autograph which includes the third redaction of the *Trattatello* was written over a period of years stretching from the late 1350s to the mid 1360s, when Boccaccio was involved in the composition of several encyclopedic and historical works in Latin under the influence of Petrarch. The presence of Dante is somewhat diluted in this second manuscript compilation through the addition of a *canzone* by Cavalcanti, and poetry by Petrarch.

The autograph of the *Teseida* features a paratext, which is unique to this text: the presence of a commentary in the margins, and occasionally between lines of text. Gloss and commentary play a key role in the process by which readers could respond to a work, authorizing it through their interaction, but at the same time overshadowing the identity and status of the author. While for modern readers primary authority over a text resides with the author, for a medieval reader, authority rests within the text itself, and the author has no more claim to it than a reader. This allows readers greater freedom to interact actively with a text and claim it for their own.[34] Susan Noakes comments that Boccaccio's decision to include his own commentary in the autograph of the *Teseida* identifies him as an author who 'plays an important role in the articulation of a view of the reader as someone whose readings threaten to displace the author's, a projected

being with whom the author must struggle for control of the text'.[35] Carruthers highlights two goals which Boccaccio is trying to achieve as the result of this consciousness:

> Boccaccio is both the originator of his text, and its reader; his own commentary invites commentary from others [...] Evidently, Boccaccio considered the heart of the process of making literature to be not the production of a beautifully written out 'final' text, but the unending collocation which the author-text conducted with its readers in the margins, the 'background' for memory. By giving his new work all the trappings of a glossed book, Boccaccio was claiming for it the immediate institutional status of an *auctor*.[36]

Knowing that his readers will react to the text, Boccaccio pre-empts them by providing a model for this reaction within the text itself. The commentary and gloss are an invitation to readers to add their own notes, but are also a more subtle incitement to read in a particular manner prescribed by Boccaccio. This is extremely important because it indicates that Boccaccio was certainly concerned about who read his texts and how.[37]

As well as encouraging careful, considered, meditative reading associated with deep thought and study, the commentary and gloss serve to authorize the *Teseida*. Only works that have been accepted by a community of readers, usually over time, can be classed as *auctores*, and thus this status is normally accorded to Latin works. Boccaccio was well aware of the association between commentary and more 'serious' works of literature, because he notes in *Genealogia*, XV. 6 that an established commentary tradition had built up around texts on law, philosophy, and medicine, for example, while readers of poetry were usually denied such aids.[38] As Boccaccio's authorial persona in the text had suggested, it was particularly important that the *Teseida* achieved the same

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[34] See Carruthers, pp. 189-220 for a detailed description of the process of authorization.
[35] Noakes, *Timely Reading: Between Exegesis and Interpretation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 96. Boitani remarks that the gloss shows Boccaccio's self-consciousness of the work as an intellectual (p. 6).
[36] Carruthers, p. 218.
[37] See also *Medieval Literary Theory and Criticism c. 1100 - c. 1375: The Commentary Tradition*, ed. by A. J. Minnis and A. B. Scott (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 375. Minnis and Scott agree that the glosses are designed to encourage the reader and underline how the work should be read.
[38] *Genealogia*, XV. 6: 'habent enim civiles et canonice leges preter textus multiplices, hominum nequitia semper auctos, apparatus suos a multis hactenus doctoribus editos. Habent phylosophorum volumina diligentissime commenta composita. Habent et medicinales libri plurimorum scripta, omne dubium enodantia. Sic et sacre lictere multos habent interpretes; nec non et facultates et artes relique glosatores proprios habuere, ad quos, si oportunum sit, volens habet, ubi recurrat, et, quos velit, ex multis eligat. Sola poesis, quoniam perpaucorum semper domestica fuit, nec aliquid afferre lucri avaris visa sit, non solum per secula multa neglecta atque deiecta, sed etiam variis lacerata persecutionibus a se narrata non habet!' (*Genealogie deorum gentilium libri*, ed. by Vincenzo Romano, 2 vols (Bari: Laterza, 1951), I, 764).

level of acceptance as an *auctore* because the work was modelled on two Latin texts, Virgil's *Aeneid* and Statius' *Thebaid*, and specifically designed to be the first vernacular epic Dante had pointed out was lacking in *De vulgari eloquentia*. According to Robert Hollander, 'to herald the rebirth of an epic in a modern tongue it was only fitting that the instant classic be born "cum commento"'.[39] The *Thebaid* was also surrounded by commentary,[40] and so it will have seemed natural to surround the vernacular epic with a similar apparatus. Although many critics have discussed how Boccaccio assigned status to his poem with the commentary, only Jeffrey T. Schnapp has related this to the reader. He argues that the *Teseida* represents two of Boccaccio's worries: how to carve out a space for vernacular poetry after Dante and then how to create an identity for the new vernacular author which protects him from the 'inevitable contagiousness of mercantile values'.[41]

Directions for reading within the text, including the dedication to *Fiammetta*, as well as in the commentary, form two complementary sides of the same combative strategy. This unified approach may stem from the fact that the autograph manuscript of the *Teseida* was transcribed within a decade of the composition of the text. Thus, unlike with the *Decameron*, it is impossible to determine whether Boccaccio changed his initial attitude towards the *Teseida* later in life.

5.3 CONCLUSION

It appears that Boccaccio produced a set of high quality autographs which were generally designed for readers with an advanced level of education, who would have been capable not only of assimilating the contents of his works with sensitivity, but also providing their own responses in the margins. Of the three main texts under discussion, the physical structure of the *Teseida* and the presentation of its text are most synonymous with the manner in which Boccaccio chose to frame his authorial image and intended readers in a textual context. The appeal to readers who are both erudite and interested in entertaining narrative is conveyed via the commentary and the (incomplete) cycle of miniatures. The scholarly qualities of *De mulieribus* are transmitted by Boccaccio in both the text and its presentation, and yet the text is not

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[39] Hollander, 'The Validity of Boccaccio's Self-Exegesis in his *Teseida*', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, 8 (1977), 163-83 (p. 168).
[40] See Anderson, 'Boccaccio's Glosses' and David Anderson, 'Which are Boccaccio's Own Glosses?', in *Gli zibaldoni*, ed. by Picone and Bérard, pp. 327-31 for a discussion regarding which sources Boccaccio actually used.
[41] Jeffrey T. Schnapp, 'Un commento all'auto commento nel *Teseida*', *StB*, 21 (1991-92), 185-203 (p. 189).

imposing in its physical dimensions and remains accessible to the small number of female readers who might express an interest. The material and presentational features of the autograph of the *Decameron* are perhaps the most at odds with suggestions for readers and methods of reading made in the text, although it is clear that none of the material and paratextual elements displayed by the above autograph manuscripts, not least the *Decameron*, resemble *libri-registri* or *libri-zibaldoni* compiled by 'copisti per passione' or even low quality 'copisti a prezzo'. I will go on to evaluate the apparent discrepancy between projected reception and historical reality in the following chapters, beginning with the *Teseida* in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6

Teseida

The aim of this chapter is to describe the physical structure and presentation of manuscripts and printed editions containing the *Teseida*, together with paratexts and traces of reading, in order to discuss evidence relevant to the reception of this work before 1520. The chapter proceeds chronologically, beginning with an analysis of manuscripts of the *Teseida* and their relationship to the autograph, before considering the printed editions. Salvatore Battaglia studied the textual relationship between approximately thirty manuscripts for his edition of the *Teseida* in 1938, and proposed that these exemplars stemmed from the extant autograph, but on the basis of scribal variants they could be divided into two families, each with two subsets.[1] Very little work has been done since on the manuscript tradition, although William Coleman and Edvige Agostinelli have continued to work on variant commentaries, and suggest that there must have been at least one other autograph of the *Teseida*, which differed from the extant autograph in terms of the presentation of glosses, drawing spaces, and paragraph marks.[2] Given that it is impossible to know what any other autograph may have looked like, I am not suggesting that the presentation of subsequent manuscripts of the *Teseida* was directly influenced by Boccaccio's extant exemplar. Rather, I am interested in evidence that indicates any similarities or differences between the form chosen by Boccaccio for his work in the extant autograph, and the forms adopted by subsequent copyists. Discussion of both the manuscripts and printed editions opens with an evaluation of the presentation features, followed by the paratexts and traces of reading.

6.1 MANUSCRIPTS OF THE *TESEIDA*

Agostinelli has published the most comprehensive descriptive catalogue of manuscripts of the *Teseida*, which includes details of sixty-two extant manuscripts and seventeen references to manuscripts that are now lost.[3] Although I refer to Agostinelli's catalogue

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[1] *Teseida*, ed. by Battaglia, in particular, pp. XLVI-LXXVIII.
[2] I am grateful to William Coleman for discussing this research with me in private correspondence.
[3] Edvige Agostinelli, 'A Catalogue of the Manuscripts of *Il Teseida*', *StB*, 15 (1985-86), 1-84. Branca has subsequently noted an additional extant manuscript and five lost manuscripts in *Tradizione*, II, 42. Ten manuscripts of the *Teseida* (NO, VzQ, Ma, M^4, Pr^2, Bg, Ch, MT, Cm,

in the following discussion, my analysis is based primarily on a sample of twenty-six manuscripts that I have viewed in person.[4] The information relating to this sample, which is presented in the following tables and forms the majority of the ensuing discussion, was compiled in line with criteria relevant to this research on the reception of Boccaccio. In particular, I have noted details of traces of reading and placed a greater emphasis on decorative features, for which Agostinelli does not always provide sufficient detail or consistent terminology.

Only one of the twenty-six manuscripts in my sample does not contain the full text of the *Teseida*. M^7 consists of two manuscript miscellanies, the second of which includes a fragment of the *Teseida* on fols 245-46 (foliated 79^r-80^v in the second manuscript). It is naturally impossible to gain as much information from this fragment as from other manuscripts, but the text is long enough to provide adequate details on script, layout, and decorative features. There are five manuscripts in the sample which also include texts other than the *Teseida*, ranging from one short sonnet to longer works by more than one author. These are M^1, Pn, R^2, R^5, and V^3. In two instances versions of the *Teseida* were transcribed by more than one scribe. F was written by four scribes and P^2 by three scribes. P^2 and P^3 were also worked on by two rubricators. Seven manuscripts are dated within the work by a scribe: M^2, M^6, Pn, R^3, R^5, V^1, and V^4. I have attributed approximate dates to the remaining nineteen manuscripts based on the details given by Agostinelli. Eight manuscripts in my sample can be attributed to specific cities or regions within Italy, with the large majority apparently copied in Tuscany.[5] M^2, M^4, Pn, Pr, and R^1 are linked with Florence, and R^5 with Pisa. Pr^2 was probably copied in the Veneto, while Pr^1 is linked with Naples. Among the manuscripts described by Agostinelli, provenance is attributed to only sixteen of the fifty-six manuscripts copied before 1520. Of these, twelve were copied in Tuscany.

In order to determine whether my sample of twenty-six manuscripts is representative, I have divided the fifty-six manuscripts dated before 1520 described by Agostinelli into the same categories in which I shall analyse my own sample, and compared the data in Tables 2-6.[6] Agostinelli classified many scripts as 'cursive'. In order to distinguish between very different types of cursive script, such as humanistic

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Re) are also described, with some photographic reproductions, in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II. There is an additional description of M^4 in *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 35.

[4] Details of these twenty-six manuscripts are found in Appendix I. Unless otherwise stated, throughout the thesis I have retained the sigla for manuscripts used by Branca.

[5] Based on the information provided by Agostinelli and in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II.

[6] I have not been able to include data on decoration because Agostinelli is not consistent in her terminology.

cursive and chancery minuscule, and make a comparison with scripts in my sample, I have redefined Agostinelli's cursive scripts according to the criteria described in Chapter 4.[7] The proportion of manuscripts distributed within each category is consistent across the two samples for each presentational feature and for the date, and in this manner my sample of twenty-six manuscripts can be said to be representative. A proportional correlation between the two samples also exists in Tables 7-9, which illustrate the relationship between support and each of the remaining presentational features. Particular care must, however, be exercised regarding the parchment manuscripts in my sample, since it would be misleading to generalize from the presentation features of only two exemplars.

Table 2: *Support in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

Support	Parchment	Paper
% of MSS in sample of 56	12.5	87.5
% of MSS in sample of 26	8	92

Table 3: *Script in MSS of the 'Teseida'* [8]

Script	GB	SGB	HB	CM	M
% of MSS in sample of 56	5	13	13	43	27
% of MSS in sample of 26	0	15	8	58	23

Table 4: *Size in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

Size	Large	Medium	Small
% of MSS in sample of 56	11	82	7
% of MSS in sample of 26	8	92	0

Table 5: *Layout in MSS of the 'Teseida'* [9]

Layout	1 column	2 columns
% of MSS in sample of 56	69	31
% of MSS in sample of 26	58	42

[7] To help me do this, William Coleman very kindly supplied me with reproductions of hands from the relevant manuscripts.
[8] Where manuscripts are written by more than one scribe, using different scripts, I have selected the hand of the scribe who transcribed the majority of the text to represent the manuscript. A key to the abbreviations found in this table and throughout the thesis is included on p. xii.
[9] Lo cannot be included in this table because there is no information available for its layout. I have supplied information on the layout of L^3 and Ar, which is missing in Agostinelli's catalogue, using a microfilm and photocopy of a page from the manuscript supplied by William Coleman, respectively.

Table 6: *Dates attributed to MSS of the 'Teseida'*

Date	14th century	14th-15th century[10]	15th century
% of MSS in sample of 56	4	7	89
% of MSS in sample of 26	0	4	96

Table 7: *Relationship between script and support in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

	Script	GB	SGB	HB	CM	M
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 56	4	12	10	45	29
	% of MSS in sample of 26	0	17	4	58	25
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 56	14	14	29	29	14
	% of MSS in sample of 26	0	0	50	50	0

Table 8: *Relationship between size and support in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

	Size	Large	Medium	Small
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 56	6	88	6
	% of MSS in sample of 26	4	96	0
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 56	43	43	14
	% of MSS in sample of 26	50	50	0

Table 9: *Relationship between layout and support in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

	Layout	1 column	2 columns
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 56	69	31
	% of MSS in sample of 26	58	42
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 56	71	29
	% of MSS in sample of 26	50	50

6.1.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

6.1.1.1 PAPER MANUSCRIPTS

In order to draw out physical and presentational patterns, which indicate how and by whom the *Teseida* was read, I shall discuss groups of codices which are characterized by similarities in presentation features, beginning with the support material used. As Table 2 illustrates, one of the most striking features of *Teseida* manuscripts is the predominant use of paper. Only two manuscripts were copied on parchment, suggesting that the majority of owners and readers of the *Teseida* were either not particularly wealthy, or did not value the text sufficiently to consider that it warranted parchment. In this matter, therefore, the majority of owners and readers of the *Teseida* did not follow the model of the extant, parchment, autograph manuscript. Vernacular book models described by Petrucci that were written on paper include the *libro-registro* and

[10] Manuscripts that have been dated to the period which spans two centuries, in other words, from *c.* 1375 to *c.* 1425.

libro-zibaldone. Both of these were roughly executed simple manuscripts usually copied by readers who had only basic levels of literacy.[11]

In terms of the presence or absence of decorative features, the paper manuscripts of the *Teseida* also adhere to Petrucci's descriptions of the *libro-registro* and *libro-zibaldone*, which are characterized by very simple decoration or a lack of ornamentation altogether. Decoration of the *Teseida* generally comprises coloured initials, which were less expensive than illuminated initials and could be executed by a rubricator rather than by an illuminator, or even by the reader-copyist using coloured ink. R^4 does not contain any ornamentation beyond initials in black ink which were probably executed by a later owner or reader who filled in the blank spaces for initials originally left, indicating that decoration was important for textual orientation as well as aesthetics. There are, however, a significant number of manuscripts for which their owners and readers did not commission any decorative initials, and nor were the spaces filled by subsequent owners or readers. The blank spaces intended for initials could still act as markers in the text, but suggest that readers were less concerned with orientation and perhaps preferred to proceed through the text in the linear fashion characteristic of leisurely reading, rather than jump from section to section according to the dictates of learned enquiry. Parkes has illustrated how demands from scholarly readers resulted in the more complex and efficient organization of texts, focused around divisions in the text marked with ornamentation.[12]

Table 10: *Relationship between support and decoration in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

Decoration	II	HI	DI	CI	BSI	BD	I	R
No. of Paper MSS	3	1	8	13	11	4	2	16
No. of Parchment MSS	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1

Table 10 suggests that the most basic forms of ornamentation are linked to the nature of the support, since neither of the parchment manuscripts contains either coloured initials or blank spaces for initials. Support and decoration provide the central axes around which I have organized the manuscripts. Table 11 contains details of all the presentation features under discussion for the paper manuscripts of the *Teseida*.

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[11] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', pp. 181, 187-89.
[12] Parkes, 'The Influence of the Concepts', pp. 115-41.

Table 11: *Presentation of paper MSS of the 'Teseida'*

	MS	Date	Script	Size (mm)	Layout	II	HI	DI	CI	BSI	BD	I	R
Type 1	Pr^2	1400-1449	Chancery minuscule	282 x 190	1 col	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
	T	1400-1449	Humanistic bookhand	296 x 217	1 col	✓			✓		✓		✓
	R^5	1481	Chancery minuscule	291 x 210	2 cols	✓			✓		✓		✓
Type 2	R^3	1411	Chancery minuscule	291 x 218	2 cols			✓	✓		✓		✓
	M^3	*c.* 1440	*Mercantesca*	294 x 219	1 col			✓	✓				
	P^1	1440s	Chancery minuscule	282 x 204	1 col			✓	✓				✓
	F	1400-1449	*Mercantesca*	294 x 218	1 col			✓	✓			✓	✓
	V^2	1400-1449	Chancery minuscule	292 x 197	1 col			✓					✓
Type 3	P^2	*c.* 1390-1410	*Mercantesca*	275 x 218	1 col			✓	✓				✓
	R^2	*c.* 1400	*Mercantesca*	295 x 215	1 col					✓			
	M^2	1402	Chancery minuscule	290 x 225	2 cols					✓			
	Pn	1422	*Mercantesca*	296 x 220	2 cols				✓	✓			✓
	R^4	1400-1425	Chancery minuscule	291 x 208	1 col					✓			
	Pr^3	*c.* 1430	Semi-gothic bookhand	279 x 206	2 cols				✓				✓
	Vz	1425-1449	*Mercantesca*	287 x 205	2 cols				✓				
	P^3	1400-1449	Chancery minuscule	279 x 201	1 col				✓	✓			✓
	Pr^1	1400-1449	Semi-gothic bookhand	275 x 208	2 cols		✓		✓				✓
	R^1	1400-1449	Chancery minuscule	292 x 220	2 cols				✓				
	M^6	1458	Chancery minuscule	313 x 216	2 cols					✓			✓
	V^4	1462	Semi-gothic bookhand	281 x 213	1 col					✓			
	V^1	1469	Semi-gothic bookhand	280 x 200	1 col					✓			✓
	M^4	*c.* 1470	Chancery minuscule	294 x 215	1 col					✓		✓	✓
	M^7	1400-1499	Chancery minuscule	285 x 205	1 col					✓			✓
	V^3	1450-1499	Chancery minuscule	328 x 227	2 cols					✓			

The exemplars are divided into three types based on the presence or absence of decorative initials:[13]

- TYPE 1 MANUSCRIPTS contain illuminated initials
- TYPE 2 MANUSCRIPTS are distinguished by decorated initials that are professionally executed
- TYPE 3 MANUSCRIPTS include decorated initials executed by non-professionals, coloured initials, or blank spaces unfilled by initials.

The division of paper exemplars of the *Teseida* into three types once more highlights the predominance of simply-decorated manuscripts, and the lack of continuity between the presentation of the autograph manuscript with its competently executed decorated initials and the large number of subsequent Type 3 codices.

However, the lack of ornamentation in many manuscripts should not overshadow the small number of illuminated paper exemplars which reveal that some owners may have been wealthy and attributed significant status to the *Teseida*. There are three illuminated paper exemplars in my sample and four other illuminated paper manuscripts described by Agostinelli (Ch, Ma, MT, and VzQ). Bg in Agostinelli's sample also includes historiated initials. R^5 and Pr^2 in my sample both contain a coat of arms in the lower border and all three Type 1 manuscripts feature border decoration on the opening page, but the decoration in these paper manuscripts is not the most expensive or of the highest quality. In R^5 and T decorative flourishes linked to the illuminated initial fill the left-hand margin, which constituted the most basic and the cheapest type of border decoration.[14] Pr^2 has three decorative borders and contains the only example of historiated initials among the *Teseida* manuscripts, but the quality of the decoration is fairly crude. With reference to the historiated initials in this manuscript, Susy Marcon writes 'i colori sono intensi, il disegno approssimato. Il disegno iniziale è aggiunto in seguito, da mano non abile'.[15]

According to Petrucci, *libri-zibaldoni* do not contain 'any real ornamentation beyond simple pen designs'.[16] F and M^4 both contain illustrations in pen and ink of very different typologies and qualities. Scribes in F marked the beginning of each book with a pen and ink drawing of a pointing hand and sleeve, and sometimes included a

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[13] See also section 4.1.5.
[14] Hindman and Farquhar, p. 77.
[15] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 246.
[16] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 187.

pomegranate in red and brown ink, and the profile of a head.[17] These seem to function as orientation devices and verge on the character of elaborate doodles. In contrast, M^4 contains three pen and ink drawings with watercolour washes illustrating scenes from the *Teseida*. Four additional blank spaces in the manuscript suggest that the decorative programme was originally intended to be more comprehensive. The quality of these illustrations has led them to be attributed variously to Leonardo da Vinci and Botticelli, although they are now thought more likely to be the hand of an artist such as Apollonio di Giovanni, who worked as a painter of *cassoni* as well as a book illustrator.[18] Although of a high quality, these illustrations do not approximate the painted miniature included at the beginning of the autograph manuscript, either in content or style. There is only one other extant manuscript (NO) described by Agostinelli which contains illustrations of scenes from the *Teseida*, again executed in ink and watercolour. Like M^4, NO is a paper manuscript copied in Florence, dating from the middle of the fifteenth century, and although its illustrations have a strong stylistic and typological relationship with M^4, they were conceived on a more comprehensive scale.[19] NO contains thirty-five illustrations, including a dedication scene, which together with some similarities in the placement of illustrations, paragraph marks, and capitalizations, has led Agostinelli to hypothesize that this manuscript was based on the extant autograph manuscript, or another, lost autograph manuscript.[20] However, Maria Grazia Ciardi Dupré dal Poggetto has rejected this thesis and emphasized the Renaissance qualities of the illustrations.[21]

Tables 7 and 11 show that in terms of script the majority of manuscripts of the *Teseida* does not follow the example of the autograph manuscript, which was written in semi-gothic bookhand, but was transcribed using cursive hands. Semi-gothic bookhand is used in only a small proportion of subsequent exemplars, while no manuscripts in my sample contain gothic bookhand, which was used in only four per cent of manuscripts overall. Chancery minuscule is the script of choice in paper manuscripts of the *Teseida*, and could be used by both professional and non-professional scribes. It appears in 'libri-registri di lusso' (deluxe register-books), which were professionally produced parchment manuscripts containing some miniatures, and also in *libri-registri* and *libri-*

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[17] Agostinelli attributes the hand and sleeve drawings to scribe A, and the pomegranates and heads to scribe D (p. 31).
[18] For reproductions of the illustrations accompanied by descriptions see *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 130-32.
[19] See ibid., 34-37, 99-103.
[20] Agostinelli, p. 46.
[21] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 34.

zibaldoni, which were both written by readers for themselves.[22] The quality of the chancery minuscule used in some manuscripts of the *Teseida* suggests that these exemplars were copied by professional scribes, or copyists with some connection to official written culture. The manuscripts which contain a very regular chancery minuscule resembling a bookhand are M^4, M^6, M^7, Pr^2, P^1, and R^3. However, these are all paper manuscripts containing varying degrees of ornamentation, but none including miniatures.

Despite differences in quality between the *libro-registro di lusso*, *libro-registro*, and *libro-zibaldone*, each model is characterized by an association with mercantile and artisanal classes. *Mercantesca* is the second most commonly used script in paper manuscripts of the *Teseida*, and there is significant overlap between characteristics belonging to the chancery minuscule and *mercantesca* scripts in several codices, in particular M^2, M^3, V^2, V^3, and Vz.

The versatility of chancery minuscule is reflected in its distribution across manuscripts containing differing qualities and quantities of decoration. In contrast, other scripts seem to be more firmly related to decorative features. Hence the only example of humanistic bookhand is found in a Type 1 manuscript, the majority of manuscripts written in *mercantesca* are Type 3 codices, and semi-gothic bookhand is only found among the Type 3 manuscripts in my sample. None of the book models defined by Petrucci suit the description of a paper manuscript with minimal decoration written in semi-gothic bookhand.

F and P^2 were written by more than one scribe. The composition of both exemplars reflects the habits of the new class of vernacular scribes and readers, who Petrucci describes were '"free to write" [...] outside the bounds of the language-institution of official culture', and who produced paper manuscripts written in cursive scripts, inspired by documentary models.[23] Four scribes completed the transcription of F over a period of time: scribe A transcribed fols 2-122^r, scribe B copied fols 122^v-123^r, scribe C added to fol. 123, while scribe D added the introductory sonnets and their rubrics, and made some additions in red ink. From the length of sections of text which were completed by each scribe it does not appear that the manuscript was originally intended to be written by more than one professional scribe, for example in a scriptorium. Rather, the copyists may have been members of the same family, and added to the *Teseida* much as they would have been accustomed to add to a family log

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[22] For a description of the *libro-registro di lusso* see Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', pp. 183-86.
[23] Ibid., p. 178.

book or book of memoirs over a number of years. In contrast, P^2 was completed by three scribes, each of whom took a number of leaves corresponding to a number of quires, indicating that this manuscript may have been transcribed professionally, although it is not clear why each scribe used a different exemplar.

Table 8 shows that almost every paper manuscript of the *Teseida* is of a medium size, with only a minority diverging from these measurements. My sample contains no small-sized exemplars and only one large-sized manuscript, which measures 328 mm high and therefore only 15 mm more than the highest manuscript in the medium category. Among the medium-sized manuscripts there is a range of only 40 mm in height and 35 mm in width, and between many manuscripts there is a difference of only millimetres. Allowing for later trimming, many manuscripts may have been even closer in size originally. Such a degree of homogeneity was possible because of the standard sizes in which paper was manufactured. The homogeneity of choice, which begins with Boccaccio himself, is impressive, however, because it is hard to believe that scribes did not have access to a wider range of sizes of paper over more than a century of copying. The *libro-registro* and *libro-zibaldone* both tended to be medium-sized, creating a book with a convenient-sized space for transcribing the text, but which was less bulky than small-sized exemplars. A medium-sized manuscript could be read both informally on a lap, and at a desk, where the scribe could leave adequate margins for annotation and glossing.

As in the autograph manuscript, there seems be a preference for a single-column layout in manuscripts of the *Teseida*, which is more marked in parchment codices. In terms of the correlation between layout and other presentation features, my sample suggests that diversity in layout is most likely to be related to simple or roughly-executed decorative features, although the homogeneity in size makes it impossible to determine whether there is a link between size and layout. Petrucci notes that there is a correlation between the humanistic book – written in humanistic script, of medium size, and with humanistic ornamentation – and a full-page layout.[24] T conforms to this model, suggesting that at least one manuscript of the *Teseida* appealed to a humanist. Table 12 indicates that there are no other significant relationships between layout and script in paper manuscripts.

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[24] Ibid., p. 196.

Table 12: *Relationship between layout and script in paper MSS of the 'Teseida'*

Script	HB	SGB	CM	M
No. of MSS with 1-Column Layout	1	2	7	4
No. of MSS with 2-Column Layout	0	2	6	2

Although Type 3 manuscripts of the *Teseida* are unified by their lack of decoration or the generally low quality of those decorative features that are included, there is still significant variation in the skill and care with which these exemplars have been executed. Looking more closely at details such as ruling, the placement of the written space on the page, and the positioning of the script within the written space, it seems that a subset of Paper Type 3 manuscripts could be formed, based on the presence of blank spaces for initials, regularity of script, consistency of layout, and wide margins. M^4, M^6, M^7, R^4, V^1, V^3, and V^4 belong to this category and were probably transcribed by professional scribes, or by educated readers such as notaries or scholars for themselves, perhaps because they were interested in the text without regarding it highly enough to include decoration.

Almost all extant manuscripts of the *Teseida* date from the end of the fourteenth century, or from the fifteenth century. The dearth of sixteenth-century manuscripts might be explained by the demand for printed exemplars in this period, but the lack of early manuscripts is surprising given that the *Teseida* was probably composed towards the end of the third decade of the fourteenth century, and the extant autograph manuscript dates from the fourth decade. The evidence presented in Chapter 3 indicates that the *Teseida* was relatively well known in the fourteenth century and it is possible that many books were simply read to pieces. Neil Harris, discussing early printed books, writes that: 'most of the palaeotypic relics jealously conserved in modern libraries are books that weren't read at the time and aren't read today either'.[25] He argues that the books most likely to survive are Latin texts, while vernacular texts were avidly read. If the earliest produced manuscripts resembled those surviving from the fifteenth century described above, it is reasonable to suggest that these books were considered of little value to learned culture, and were therefore not preserved, although this argument fails to explain why so many paper manuscripts survive from the fifteenth century. Most extant exemplars of the *Teseida* were transcribed in the first half of the fifteenth century, with all Type 2 manuscripts falling within this period. Manuscripts written in chancery minuscule and semi-gothic bookhand appear in equal measure in

[25] Neil Harris, 'Marin Sanudo, Forerunner of Melzi. Parte I', *La bibliofilia*, 95 (1993), 1-37 (p. 19).

both the first and second halves of the century, although there may be a correlation between *mercantesca* script and the first half of the fifteenth century.

6.1.1.2 PARCHMENT MANUSCRIPTS

There are only two parchment manuscripts of the *Teseida* in my sample, and they are high quality exemplars written on good quality support material (see Table 13). The decoration in Pr was professionally executed to a high standard, with the border decoration on the opening folio covering four margins, and including birds, animals, and a coat of arms. A decorated border with birds, animals, insects, and putti also features at the beginning of each book, and the illuminated initials are set against the vine scroll background typical of humanistic books. Ciardi Dupré dal Poggetto comments: 'il fatto che esistano molte opere boccacciane decorate "a bianchi girari" è a mio avviso sintomo sicuro del fatto che il Boccaccio fu sentito dagli umanisti sullo stesso piano dei "classici"'.[26] According to Petrucci: 'by the second half of the Quattrocento [when Pr was transcribed] the humanistic book assumed practically throughout Italy the double function of private deluxe book for cultivated nonprofessionals and of courtly book for and in princely libraries'.[27] Thus, the owner of Pr undoubtedly accorded the *Teseida* a high status, and was probably wealthy and socially prestigious.

Table 13: *Presentation of parchment MSS of the 'Teseida'*

	MS	Date	Script	Size (mm)	Layout	II	DI	BD	R
Type 1	Pr	1450-1499	Humanistic bookhand	259 x 172	1 col	✓		✓	✓
Type 2	M^1	1400-1449	Chancery minuscule	365 x 244	2 cols		✓		

There is other evidence relating to manuscripts described by Agostinelli to suggest that the *Teseida* was popular at court. CaM had a courtly provenance and initial destination: it was commissioned in Ferrara by Alberto d'Este as a gift for Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, on the occasion of the assumption of the dukedom of Ferrara by Ercole I d'Este in 1471.[28] This is another parchment manuscript with illuminated initials and border decoration on the opening folio. Like Pr, CaM is written

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[26] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 39.
[27] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 198.
[28] Agostinelli, pp. 9-11. CaM is also described with a reproduction of fol. 1^r in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 301-03, although here it is labelled Cm.

in humanistic bookhand, although it is of a large size, and the initials are not decorated with the vine scroll design. An earlier parchment illuminated manuscript of the *Teseida* (MA) was probably also commissioned in Ferrara by Guarino da Verona, who was tutor to Leonello d'Este.[29] Cristina Montagnani considers MA to be a dedicatory manuscript for Leonello's father Niccolò.[30] This is another large manuscript, copied in semi-gothic bookhand.

The decoration in M^1 is less extravagant, but is also of a high quality and professionally executed. This parchment manuscript is more like the *libro-registro di lusso*, which was professionally produced for rich mercantile, artisan, and professional classes. M^1 is also the only manuscript in my sample which resembles the autograph in terms of support and decorated initials, although there are no miniatures, and it does not follow Boccaccio's model in terms of script, size, or layout. The humanistic bookhand used in Pr is jointly the most popular script for parchment manuscripts of the *Teseida* (see Table 7), suggesting that a reasonable number of humanists were interested in the work, perhaps attracted by its classical elements. Chancery minuscule is also used in a significant number of exemplars. The chancery minuscule in M^1 is of a very high quality, written by a professional scribe. The parchment manuscripts significantly distinguish themselves from the paper codices in terms of their size. As Table 8 demonstrates, almost half of all extant parchment manuscripts of the *Teseida* are large-sized, and M^1 is significantly taller than the largest paper manuscript, V^3. The size of M^1 is therefore consistent with the *libro-registro di lusso*, which typically measures between 320 and 370 mm high, while the medium size of Pr accords with the humanistic model. The relatively high proportion of parchment manuscripts written in humanistic bookhand may account for the prevalence of exemplars containing text arranged in a single-column layout. Pr conforms to this model, as do all the other manuscripts written in humanistic scripts described by Agostinelli, except for RL^1. The two-column layout of M^1 in my sample might be explained by the large size of this exemplar. The large paper manuscript in my sample, V^3, has a layout of two columns, although, of the two other large manuscripts described by Agostinelli which are not written in humanistic bookhand, only one has a two-column layout (L^2).

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[29] MA is described by Agostinelli on pp. 42-43.
[30] Cristina Montagnani, 'Il commento al *Teseida* di Pier Andrea de' Bassi', in *Studi di letteratura italiana offerti a Dante Isella* (Naples: Bibliopolis, 1983), pp. 9-31 (p. 13).

6.1.2 SCRIBES AND OWNERSHIP

The evidence in Table 14 suggests that transcription of the *Teseida* was generally executed by non-professional scribes. Two colophons indicate clearly that some readers copied the work for their own purposes. Fruosino, the scribe of R^5, specifically states that he has written 'per piacere', while Nofri Bischeri, the scribe of Pn, notes that he owns the book: 'e suo è'. There is no evidence that either Fruosino or Nofri transcribed other works listed in major catalogues, suggesting either that they did not own other books, or at least only felt moved to transcribe the *Teseida* for themselves.[31] These are scribes that Branca would label 'copisti per passione'.

Table 14: *Evidence for scribes of the 'Teseida'*

MS	MS Type	Scribe	Colophon
R^5	Paper 1	Fruosino di Lodovico di Cece da Verrazzano	Compiessi di scrivere questo di xxvii di luglio 1481 per me fruosino di lodovico di cece da verazano sendo Kastellano del palazotto di pisa per piacere.
P^1	Paper 2	Antonio di Dato Pucci	Qui finiscie I Libro del teseo iscritto e chopiato per me Antonio di dato pucci tintore.
R^3	Paper 2	Giovanni Tolosini	Copiato di mano di Giovanni Tolosini cominciato a di vi di giennaio 1411.
M^2	Paper 3	Andrea di messer Bindo de' Bardi	Qui finiscie il dodecimo libro di teseida delle nozze demilia iscritto e conpiuto per me andrea di messer bindo di bardi 1402 a di due di gennaio mille quatrociento due.
Pn	Paper 3	Nofri di Giovanni di Nofri Bischeri	Qui finiscie il dodecimo e ultimo libro del teseida damore ischritto e finito nel 1422 per nofri di giovanni di nofri bischeri da firenze e suo e.
V^4	Paper 3	Niccolò di ser Marco	Ultima die Aprelis 1462. Perfeci hunc librum Ego Nicolaus Ser Marci.

Both Branca and Petrucci suggest that manuscripts copied by readers for themselves are characterized by simple ornamentation, such as that found in Pn, although R^5 contains an illuminated initial and border decoration on the first folio, including the Verrazzano coat of arms, indicating that the castellano may have commissioned some professional

[31] Their names do not appear in Bénédictins du Bouveret, *Colophons des manuscrits occidentaux des origines au XVI^e siècle*, 6 vols (Fribourg: Editions universitaires, 1965-82); De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes'; Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 435-1600 in Oxford Libraries* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Andrew G. Watson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts c. 700-1600 in the Department of Manuscripts, The British Library*, 2 vols (London: British Museum Publications, 1979); P. Robinson, *Catalogue of Dated and Datable Manuscripts in Cambridge Libraries, c. 737-1600* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1988).

ornamentation, albeit at a basic level.[32] These differences in decoration highlight the fact that readers copied manuscripts for themselves for different reasons, which were not always linked to wealth. Ezio Levi identifies the scribe of M^2, Andrea de' Bardi, as the author of a sonnet, and suggests that he may have been a neighbour of Boccaccio.[33] Although Andrea de' Bardi does not reveal his motivations for writing, he may also have been a 'copista per passione', or a low quality professional scribe, since M^2 is written in an irregular chancery minuscule, and is lacking in ornamentation, including rubrication. Cursi argues that it is:

> più che probabile [...] che nell'enorme insieme di codici cartacei, di formato medio o medio-piccolo, privi di rigatura e ornamentazione, scritti in tipologie grafiche cancelleresche o mercantesche, conservati nelle nostre biblioteche, si nasconda un certo numero di esemplari prodotti da copisti professionisti o semi-professionisti che trascrivevano a prezzo.[34]

Both P^1 and R^3 were copied by scribes whose names also appear in other manuscripts containing different works.[35] Antonio di Dato Pucci identifies himself as a 'tintore', or dyer, in all his manuscripts and is unlikely to have copied manuscripts in any professional capacity, but may have owned a small private library like the Benci family.[36] V^4 is most likely to have been written by a scribe accustomed to writing professionally and educated at least in the rudiments of Latin. The copyist identifies himself as the son of a notary and prepared a well-executed exemplar written in semi-gothic bookhand. It is equally possible that Niccolò di ser Marco copied on commission, or for himself. The copying of the *Teseida* seems to reflect the typical situation for texts in the *volgare*. According to a survey of fifteenth-century scribes of the vernacular carried out by Petrucci, of the 230 scribes investigated, 213 were non-professionals, of which 18 were members of the religious, 13 were notaries, and the remainder not 'professionals of the pen'.[37]

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[32] For Branca's comments in relation to mercantile manuscripts see *Tradizione*, II, 199.
[33] Ezio Levi, 'Adriano de' Rossi', *GSLI*, 55 (1910), 237-65 (p. 239).
[34] Marco Cursi, 'Ghinozzo di Tommaso Allegretti e altri copisti "a prezzo" di testi volgari', *Scrittura e civiltà*, 23 (1999), 213-52 (p. 215).
[35] Bénédictins, I, 131.
[36] See Giuliano Tanturli, 'I Benci copisti: vicende della cultura fiorentina volgare fra Antonio Pucci e il Ficino', *SFI*, 36 (1978), 197-313.
[37] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 199.

Table 15: *Evidence for ownership of MSS of the 'Teseida'*

MS	MS Type	Owner	Evidence for Ownership
Pr^2	Paper 1	Matteo di Pietro da Siena	Iste liber est Mattei de Senis filii egregii ac provide viri domini Petri de Senis merchatoris permanentis in contrata sancti Mattei concortinis. (fol. 133^v)
T	Paper 1	Girolamo Peccorali	P. Hieronimus Peccoralius Presbyterus Sacrista Nunc Plebanus Ste Marie de … (fol. 1^r)
F	Paper 2	Benedetto di Mariano	Questo libro e di Benedetto di Mariano ...pi chello chonpro lira una soldi ii. (fol. 1^r)
M^3	Paper 2	Francesco Quirini?	n° 1628. (fol. 1^r) [Written in the same hand as a number in M^4]
R^3	Paper 2	Matteo di Bartolo	Matteo di Barrtolo Galigaio (fol. I^v)
		Guido de'Rizzi	?Guido de' Rizi (fol. II^r) [erased]
		Giuliano de' Ricci	Giuliano de' Ricci (fol. II^v) [written in reverse]
M^4	Paper 3	Aldo Manuzio?	Aldus Manutius Romanus Don. Rmo.
		Francesco Quirini?	Monsignor Francisco Quirino
		Francesco Cinozzi	Francesco Cinozzi (fol. 132^v)
Pr^1	Paper 3	Angilberto del Balzo, Duke of Nardò and Count of Ugento	Io Conte de Ducento. (fol. 1^r)
		Ferdinand I of Naples	Library number (fol. 1^r)
Pr^3	Paper 3	Girolamo Sanseverino, Prince of Bisignano	princ. (fol. 2^r)
R^2	Paper 3	Domenico Orcolazo	Domenicho Orcolazo (fol. 58^v)
M^1	Parchment 2	Antonio and his brothers	Iste liber est …Antonii de …eiusque fratrum. (fol. III^r) [partly erased]

Table 15 shows that the *Teseida* was owned by almost every level of literate society. Among the non-professional classes, R^3 belonged to a shoemaker and Pr^2 to a member of a mercantile family. Pr^1 and Pr^3 belonged to noblemen in Naples, and Pr^1 subsequently passed into a royal library,[38] while M^3 and M^4 may have belonged to Francesco Quirini, who was probably a Venetian noble.[39] It has been suggested that Quirini was given M^4 by the scholar and printer, Aldo Manuzio, although there is doubt over the authenticity of Manuzio's name found in the manuscript.[40] A copy of the *Teseida* was even owned by a parish priest (T). Based on the quality of ornamental features contained in the codices in Table 15, but bearing in mind that it is extremely

[38] The Duke of Nardò was imprisoned in 1487 after being involved in an uprising against Ferdinand I, and his goods confiscated. See A. Ryder, 'Ferdinando I (Ferrante) d'Aragona, re di Napoli', in *DBI*, XLVI (1996), 174-97 (p. 184). Agostinelli has identified a number on fol. 1^r which corresponds to the King's library (p. 50).

[39] Lauro Quirini (*c.* 1420-*c.* 1475-79) was a well known Venetian humanist. See Margaret L. King, *Venetian Humanism in an Age of Patrician Dominance* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 419-21; and also ibid., pp. 421-22 for details of Lauro's brother, Taddeo Quirini.

[40] See Agostinelli, pp. 26-27.

difficult to ascertain which owner was responsible for the decoration included in each manuscript, it seems that the scholars and noblemen who owned the *Teseida* did not attach much importance to it as a status symbol, preferring to leave their exemplars largely undecorated. In contrast, the merchant and priest favoured illuminated copies.

The evidence for ownership also reveals that R^3 stayed within the same family, while M^1 was jointly owned by members of the same family. F contains rare information on the price that was paid for a copy of the *Teseida* by one Tuscan owner.[41] The value of coinage could vary from area to area, and over time, but it is estimated that the Florentine florin had a value of approximately 5.5 lire in 1471.[42] Vespasiano da Bisticci, a fifteenth-century Florentine *cartolaio*, sold paper manuscripts for 2.5 or 3 florins, which could have been a week's wages for a reasonably wealthy reader.[43] The price of F, at 1 lira 2 soldi, would therefore have been affordable to a considerable proportion of the population. This manuscript is written in mercantile script and contains some decorated and coloured initials, as well as amateurish drawings marking the beginning of each book. In contrast, the paper illuminated manuscript Ch, which is described by Agostinelli, has the price 'scudi 20' written on the inside front cover by a fifteenth-century hand.[44] The provenance of the manuscript has not been ascertained, but in general the scudo was roughly equivalent to the Florentine florin or the ducat used in Milan, Rome, and Venice. A high quality parchment manuscript with illumination and a binding could cost 25.9 ducats, and therefore, although the Type 1 manuscript Ch was written on paper, it could probably have been afforded only by the very wealthy.[45]

6.1.3 PARATEXTS

Commentaries are the principal type of paratext found in manuscripts of the *Teseida*. Twenty-seven per cent of my sample contains commentaries composed before 1520 compared with thirty per cent of manuscripts described by Agostinelli.[46] Thus, Boccaccio's desire for authorization of the *Teseida* through commentary was fulfilled in approximately one third of the manuscripts transcribed after the extant autograph manuscript. The existence of commentaries indicates that owners and readers of these manuscripts were familiar with this scholarly apparatus and interested in the deeper

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[41] According to Agostinelli, the owner was Florentine (p. 31).
[42] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. xi.
[43] Ibid., p. 113.
[44] Agostinelli, p. 11.
[45] See Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 113.
[46] In addition, Pr^2 contains short notes by an anonymous reader rather than an extended gloss.

understanding of the text they could gain through it. The manuscripts in Table 16 date from the end of the fourteenth century to the end of the fifteenth century, suggesting that the appeal of the commentated *Teseida* was long-lived. Comparatively speaking, a high proportion of manuscripts date from the second half of the fifteenth century, which may anticipate or reflect humanists beginning to apply principles usually reserved for classical texts to vernacular works.

Table 16: *MSS of the 'Teseida' which include commentaries*

MS	Type	Commentary Author	Script	Size	Layout	Date
M^4	Paper 3	Boccaccio	Chancery minuscule	Medium	1 col	*c.* 1470
P^2	Paper 3	Boccaccio	*Mercantesca*	Medium	1 col	*c.* 1390-1410
Pr^1	Paper 3	Anon.	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 cols	1400-1449
R^2	Paper 3	Boccaccio	*Mercantesca*	Medium	1 col	*c.* 1400
V^1	Paper 3	Boccaccio	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	1 col	1469
V^3	Paper 3	Pietro Andrea de' Bassi	Chancery minuscule	Large	2 cols	1450-1499
V^4	Paper 3	Pietro Andrea de' Bassi	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	1 col	1462

Although Boccaccio's desire for authorization was realized, his attempt to guide interpretation of the *Teseida* through his own commentary was not entirely successful, even among the commentated manuscripts, since two other authors composed commentaries. An anonymous commentary is found in only one extant manuscript of the *Teseida* (Pr^1), but Pietro Andrea de' Bassi's interpretation of the text appears to have been well received and exists in five manuscripts.[47] De' Bassi was a courtier in Ferrara, first serving Niccolò III d'Este, and subsequently Niccolò's son, Leonello.[48] In the dedication to Niccolò III, de' Bassi claims that he compiled the commentary, which G. Orlandi dates to the beginning of the 1420s,[49] at the request of the Marquis:

> ritrovandossi alchun a li quali le historie poetice non sono cussì note come a vuy, vi ha piazuto commandare a mi, Pietro Andrea de i Bassi, vostro antiquo e fidele famiglio, dechiari lo obscuro texto del ditto *Theseo*, facendo a quello giose per le quale li lecturi possano cavare sugo de la loro lectura, el quale texto per la obscurità de le fictione poetice è difficile ad intendere.[50]

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[47] MA, CaM, Ch described by Agostinelli, as well as V^3 and V^4 in my sample. MA is labelled 'M' by Montagnani.

[48] For biographical information on de' Bassi see G. Bertoni, 'Pietro Andrea Basso', *GSLI*, 78 (1921), 142-46 and Orlandi, 'Intorno alla vita'.

[49] Orlandi, p. 296.

[50] An extract from the text of the dedication is included in Appendix II.

The primary intention was therefore a practical one, inspired by readers who found Boccaccio's 'chiuso parlare' difficult to interpret, rather than by readers with an interest in the scholastic tradition. Montagnani reveals that de' Bassi was familiar with Boccaccio's commentary, but drew on it only in a limited fashion, preferring to focus on mythological glosses derived largely from the *Genealogia*.[51] The interest in classical sources combined with the desire to read for pleasure suggests that de' Bassi's readership resembled that envisaged by Boccaccio.

The origin of de' Bassi's commentary and his dedication to Niccolò III are clearly linked with Ferrara and aimed at a primarily courtly readership. As I have already noted above, MSS CaM and MA, which contain de' Bassi's commentary, both originated in Ferrara and are also closely linked with the Este family, suggesting that the commentary was popular in that city. Ch, which includes the commentary, was also copied in northern Italy, and all three are high quality illuminated manuscripts which might have appealed to courtly readers. V^3 and V^4 in my sample are both written on paper and contain very little decoration, although they are both well-executed. The commentary contained in V^3 is much reduced compared with that in MA, which contains the most complete version of the text, but it retains many similarities, including the dedication to Niccolò d'Este. In contrast, V^4 was clearly transcribed for a reader who had no links with Ferrara, since the dedication is missing and de' Bassi's language altered to be more like Tuscan.[52]

Commentated manuscripts of the *Teseida* evidently also appealed to noblemen outside Ferrara. Pr^1, which contains an anonymous commentary, belonged to the Duke of Nardò, while M^4, containing Boccaccio's commentary, probably belonged to a member of the Venetian Quirini family. It was not only the upper classes and 'professionals of the pen' that enjoyed commentaries on the *Teseida*, however. P^2 and R^2, which are roughly executed *libri-registri*, copied in *mercantesca*, indicate that readers such as artisans and merchants found a commentary useful, no doubt as an aid to their understanding of the text.

Six manuscripts of the *Teseida* in my sample contain other texts added by the scribe. The fragment of the *Teseida* found in M^7 forms part of a miscellany of vernacular texts, including the *Novella di Buonaccorso di Lapo Giovanni*, charms and medical treatises, suggesting that the *Teseida* was linked with popular knowledge and entertaining narration. M^1, R^2, R^5, Pn, and V^3 all contain additional poems. In R^2 and

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[51] Montagnani, pp. 21-23.
[52] Ibid., pp. 14-15.

V^3 these are linked to Boccaccio: the former contains a *serventese* attributed to the *certaldese*, and the *Filostrato* follows the *Teseida* in the latter. M^1 contains poetry by Petrarch and Fazio degli Uberti, and R^5 includes works by Dante and Ovid, demonstrating that Boccaccio continued to be linked with medieval authors, as well as with classical writers, in the first and second halves of the fifteenth century.

Remaining paratexts in manuscripts of the *Teseida* include devices which facilitate orientation within the text. The scribe of Pr^2 marked some lines of text with the word 'nota' in the margin and others with a pointing hand. The scribe of V^3 wrote 'nota' in red ink against some lines of text, as well as using coloured paragraph marks, and important names mentioned in the commentary were re-written in the margin in red ink. The scribe of R^4 also used paragraph marks and Pr^3 has running titles written in the upper margin of the folios indicating the number of each book.

6.1.4 TRACES OF READING

Of the sample of twenty-six manuscripts of the *Teseida*, seven contain no visible traces of reading prior to 1520. These manuscripts are F, M^3, M^6, M^7, R^5, Pr, and Pr^3. M^7 is distinguished from this group by virtue of being a miscellany, containing only a fragment of the *Teseida* on two leaves. It is possible, therefore, that traces of reading were present on other leaves not included in M^7. According to Petrucci, the *libro-registro* is characterized by the absence of comments or reader's notes.[53] F, M^3, M^6, and M^7 are Type 2 and 3 manuscripts which could all be described as *libri-registri*: medium-sized exemplars written on paper in chancery minuscule or *mercantesca*, whose readers were entertained by the *Teseida*, but felt no desire to annotate the text or even use the paper for unrelated notes or drawings. The remaining manuscripts may have been owned by readers more accustomed to writing whilst reading. Pr^3 is also a paper Type 3 exemplar, but is copied in semi-gothic bookhand and was owned by the Prince of Bisignano, and Pr is a parchment Type 1 manuscript written in humanistic bookhand. The absence of traces of reading in these manuscripts may indicate that they were not read at all, or were read in a 'clean' manner. In other words, they were read by readers without a pen in their hands, or even ink in the vicinity. The absence of marginalia certainly indicates that these manuscripts were not studied by their owners, but this does not mean that they were not read for pleasure, perhaps away from a desk and writing equipment.

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[53] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 183.

Table 17: *Distribution of traces of reading in MSS of the 'Teseida'*

	Category 1	*Category 2*	*Category 3*			*Category 4*	
MS	Marginalia	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated Notes	Scribbles Smudges	Pen Trials	Related Illustration	Unrelated Illustration
M^1			✓	✓			
M^2		✓					
M^4	✓	✓			✓		
P^1	✓	✓			✓		✓
P^2		✓		✓			
P^3		✓					
Pn		✓					
Pr^1	✓						
Pr^2	✓	✓				✓	✓
R^1			✓				
R^2			✓				✓
R^3			✓				
R^4							✓
T	✓	✓					
V^1	✓	✓	✓				
V^2		✓					
V^3			✓				
V^4		✓					
Vz		✓					

The majority of manuscripts of the *Teseida* do contain traces of reading and Table 17 indicates into which categories these traces fall. Most manuscripts (twelve) contain marks and symbols, which indicate that a reader or readers was engaging with the text, although it is virtually impossible to determine in what manner. Only six manuscripts include marginalia, which represent a more sustained involvement with the text, although five of these six manuscripts also contain marks and symbols against the text. The marginalia included in these manuscripts tend towards isolated examples rather than a continued interaction. The traces of reading in manuscripts M^4 and Pr^1 tell us most about the erudition of their annotators. A reader in Pr^1 has referenced Lucan's *De bello civili* III. 220-21 next to the commentary at XII. 86 (fol. 118^r): 'Phoenices primi, famae si creditur, ausi | mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris', while a passage of commentary has been added to fols 1^{r-v} in M^4.[54] The first folio in Pr^1 also contains the heading 'Di Messer Giovan Boccaccio' added by a reader. Pr^2, T, and V^1 all contain notabilia: readers of both Pr^2 and T have chosen to note significant names in the margin, while V^1 contains brief summaries of events in the margins. The scribe of P^1 left blank two lines in stanza VIII, 7, which were then added in by a later reader (fol. 101^v), demonstrating that the reader was familiar with at least one other manuscript or printed edition of the *Teseida*.

All of the manuscripts that contain marginalia are paper exemplars, but it seems that these are among some of the most carefully prepared manuscripts in the sample, although they do not contain the same types of decoration (see Table 18). There are significant numbers of Type 1 exemplars, and two of the Type 3 manuscripts (M^4 and V^1) fall amongst the subgroup that can be singled out for regularity of script, consistency of layout, and wide margins. Only P^1 might be considered a *libro-registro*, in which it is unusual to find marginalia.

Table 18: *Presentation of MSS of the 'Teseida' that contain marginalia*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout
M^4	Paper Type 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	1 column
P^1	Paper Type 2	Chancery minuscule	Medium	1 column
Pr^1	Paper Type 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 columns
Pr^2	Paper Type 1	Chancery minuscule	Medium	1 column
T	Paper Type 1	Humanistic bookhand	Medium	1 column
V^1	Paper Type 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	1 column

[54] There is some debate over whether this addition can be attributed to Giovanni Mazzuoli. See Agostinelli, p. 27.

Table 19: *Presentation of MSS of the 'Teseida' that contain unrelated notes*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout
M^1	Parchment Type 2	Chancery minuscule	Large	2 columns
R^1	Paper Type 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	2 columns
R^2	Paper Type 3	*Mercantesca*	Medium	1 column
R^3	Paper Type 2	Chancery minuscule	Medium	2 columns
V^1	Paper Type 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	1 column
V^3	Paper Type 3	Chancery minuscule	Large	2 columns

Six manuscripts also contain notes that are unrelated to the text (see Table 19). Only one of these six exemplars also contains marginalia (V^1), which would suggest that different types of reader leave these two traces of reading. However, it is difficult to find a reflection of these apparently different types in consistency of presentation. Table 19 illustrates that readers who use their manuscripts for notes that are not related to the text of the *Teseida* do so in both parchment and paper manuscripts, which might be written in cursive scripts or book hands and be large or medium-sized. Exemplars might be of a high quality or roughly executed, and transcribed professionally or by amateur copyists. None of the above manuscripts contain illumination, however, suggesting that the most expensive status symbols prohibited this type of interaction.

The unrelated notes are all found on blank folios, either at the beginning or the end of manuscripts. Apart from the religious note 'yhs' [yesus] written on the blank folio at the beginning and end of his manuscript (Pr^2) by Matteo di Pietro da Siena, the remaining notes are all of a literary or proverbial nature. Despite the existence of manuscripts written by 'copisti per passione' and transcribed in *mercantesca*, there are no examples of the financial transactions Branca describes in manuscripts of the *Decameron*.[55] M^1 contains a folio of what Agostinelli describes as 'jottings' at the beginning of the text, which begin 'Vivi leale e non essere superbo' and include 'O tu che chon questo libro ti trastulli'. R^3 contains a proverb on fol. 94^v, while the remaining three manuscripts include poems: R^2 includes a canzone by Antonio Pucci, 'Uno chavalieri di Roma una fiata', V^1 contains a whole series of octaves, and a reader of V^3 copied a *strambotto* into the manuscript.

The illustrations that appear in manuscripts of the *Teseida* are largely unrelated to the contents of the text. Pr^2 contains the most comprehensive number of sketches in both ink and pencil over several leaves.[56] Some of these sketches are of unidentifiable objects. Of those that can be identified, some do not appear to relate to the text, such as that of the top of a jug. Others are of heads and a bearded man, which may or may not

[55] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 195.
[56] Fols. 1^{r-v}, 2^v, 133^v, 135^v, 136^{r-v}.

represent a response to the *Teseida*. The sketch of a knight on horseback, which also includes an additional kneeling figure, seems the most likely illustration of a character or characters from the *Teseida*, perhaps representing Palemone or Arcita. P^1 contains drawings described by Agostinelli as 'sketches of two(?) other shields with the letters C B and of a horse'.[57] To my eye this looks more like a shield containing five stars and three crescent moons, beneath an insignia composed of two swords, a helmet and some letters which include B and C. The animal Agostinelli describes as a horse suggests a rampant lion or bear, which may also represent part of the insignia belonging to the author of these sketches. The owners or readers of both R^2 and R^4 chose to trace the outline of the watermark at the end of the text, although in R^2 this is done in drypoint, perhaps because of the watermark's proximity to the colophon, while in R^4 it is traced in ink on a blank leaf.

6.2 PRINTED EDITIONS OF THE *TESEIDA*

There are two editions of the *Teseida* printed in Italy before 1520. The *editio princeps* was printed in Ferrara in 1475 by Agostino Carnerio, and the second edition was printed *c.* 1490 in Naples by Francesco del Tuppo. After 1520, the *Teseida* was printed three times in Italy before the end of the sixteenth century. Tizzone Gaetano da Pofi edited the version that was printed by Girolamo Pentio in Venice in 1528. A year later, again in Venice, the *Teseida* was printed by Giovanantonio da Sabio 'et fratelli', in a translation into modern Greek. The *Teseida* did not appear again in Italian until fifty-one years later, this time re-written in prose by Nicolao Granucci and printed in Lucca by Vincenzo Busdraghi 'ad instantia de Giulio Guidoboni'.[58] In numerical terms, therefore, the *Teseida* does not appear to have been a very popular printed text for readers of Italian, appealing more in the late fifteenth century than in the sixteenth century. When the dates attributed to the extant manuscripts of the *Teseida* are also taken into account, a picture emerges of a gradual decrease in interest in this text over the fifteenth century. Of the fifty-six manuscripts dated prior to 1520 and listed by Agostinelli in her catalogue, thirty date to the first half of the fifteenth century, and eight to *c.* 1450, while only fourteen were transcribed in the second half of the fifteenth century.[59] Interest in the *Teseida* in print outside Italy was also scarce. It was not until the very end of the sixteenth century, in 1597, that a French translation was printed by

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[57] Agostinelli, p. 32.
[58] Based on information provided by the BMC, GW, ISTC, EDIT16, and Index Aureliensis.
[59] I have not counted two manuscripts which are dated to the fifteenth century as a whole.

Abel L'Angelier in Paris, despite the fact that a French translation in manuscript form had been circulating since 1460.[60]

6.2.1 AGOSTINO CARNERIO AND THE 1475 EDITION

The first edition was printed in Ferrara in 1471 by a Frenchman, André Belfort.[61] In 1473, Belfort enlisted the assistance of the Ferrarese *cartolaio*, Bernardo Carnerio, to print two hundred copies of the *Institutes* of Justinian. Bernardo supplied the paper and some money up front, with each partner receiving half the number of printed books.[62] A year later, Bernardo's son, Agostino, began his printing career, presumably with his father's support.[63] It seems to have been a short career, however, as the ISTC lists only thirteen works printed by Carnerio, with the latest dating from 1479. Of this number, the vast majority were printed in 1474 and 1475, the period in which the *Teseida* appeared.[64]

Table 20: *Incunabula printed by Agostino Carnerio grouped according to discipline and language*

Type of work	Number of works	In Latin	In Italian
Law	3	3	0
Literature	5	2	3
Religion	2	1	1
Treatise writing	3	3	0
Totals	13	9	4

Before I go on to discuss the details of the *Teseida* edition I would like to consider briefly its significance in relation to Carnerio's output as a whole. Table 20 shows that the *Teseida* belongs to the largest category of texts produced by Carnerio, and that marginally more Italian texts make up this literary group, although Carnerio printed more Latin works overall. The two Latin literary works are both by classical authors, Horace and Ovid, while those in Italian are by fourteenth- and fifteenth-century authors. Of most interest is Pietro Andrea de' Bassi's *Le fatiche d'Ercole*, which was

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[60] Franco Simone, 'Giovanni Boccaccio "fabbro della sua prima fortuna francese"', in *Il Boccaccio nella cultura francese*, ed. by Carlo Pellegrini (Florence: Olschki, 1971), pp. 49-80.
[61] BMC, VI (1930), x.
[62] Angela Nuovo, *Il commercio librario a Ferrara tra XV e XVI secolo: la bottega di Domenico Sivieri* (Florence: Olschki, 1998), pp. 36-38.
[63] For the involvement of stationers in the printing industry in Ferrara see Nuovo, *Il commercio librario*, particularly pp. 18-21. Both Nuovo and P. Veneziani suggest that Bernardo was the patron and financer of his son's printing works. Agostino frequently mentions his father in the colophons, including in the 1475 edition of the *Teseida* (Nuovo, pp. 43-51; P. Veneziani, 'Carnerio, Agostino', in *DBI*, XX (1977), 464-65).
[64] Four works are dated 1474, and four are dated 1475, with one dated 1474-1476. No works are recorded for 1477, when Veneziani suggests Agostino was in the process of preparing for a large undertaking (p. 464).

composed shortly after his commentary to the *Teseida*.[65] Both the *Fatiche* and the *Teseida* with de' Bassi's commentary were printed by Carnerio in the same year, but the relationship between these two works was established in the fifteenth century. The *Fatiche* and glossed *Teseida* could be included in the same exemplar, and scribes produced manuscripts of each work that were designed to complement each other. MS MA, for example, which was commissioned in Ferrara by Guarino da Verona, includes both works, while CaM, commissioned by Alberto d'Este for the Duke of Milan in 1471, includes de' Bassi's commentary and is described by Agostinelli as the 'companion piece to a copy of Pietro Andrea de' Bassi's *Fatiche d'Ercole* (Harvard Univ., MS Typ. 226)'.[66] Carnerio's use of the folio format and roman type in each edition may have been a deliberate attempt to maintain this connection, and indicates that his edition of the *Teseida* was designed to appeal to courtly readers, especially those in Ferrara. The descriptions of the *Fatiche* and glossed *Teseida* given in the BMC illustrate the similarities in presentation.[67] The measurement of the page given for the *Fatiche* is 314 x 225 mm, while that for the *Teseida* is 316 x 229 mm, and blank spaces for initials are left in the *Fatiche* as they are in the *Teseida*. Carnerio does not specify the month in which printing of the *Teseida* was completed, but there is reason to believe that both editions were printed at the same time, or one very shortly after the other. The BMC notes that descriptions of the edition of the *Fatiche* by Hain and Pellechet 'describe the first leaf as bearing Boccaccio's dedication of his *Teseide* [sic] to Fiammetta but this is presumably due to a confusion in the printer's office between the sheets of this book and the *Teseide* which were both in hand at the same time, and the first leaf is here accordingly assumed to be blank' (VI, 606).

Both MSS MA and CaM described above were transcribed in Ferrara for courtly readers. Alberto d'Este's decision to commission a manuscript as a gift for a recipient as important as the Duke of Milan suggests that the *Teseida*, and its connection with de' Bassi, had not lost prestige in this particular milieu at the beginning of the 1470s, despite the fact that interest in the *Teseida* had probably begun to decline elsewhere by this date. Carnerio's decision to print the glossed *Teseida* indicates that reading tastes in Ferrara had changed little after the advent of the new technology. The printer's interest in the *Teseida* and *Fatiche*, almost certainly based on their selling power, is highlighted by the context of his output as a whole. Not only did Carnerio print only

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[65] For further details on the dating and contents of the *Fatiche*, see Orlandi, in particular, pp. 300-06.
[66] See MA and CaM in Agostinelli, pp. 42 and 9-10 respectively.
[67] BMC, VI (1930), 606-07.

five literary works, which are dwarfed by the total number of works in other categories, but he also produced more works in Latin than in Italian.

6.2.1.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

Many of the decorative elements planned by Carnerio follow the ornamentation employed in the manuscript tradition of the *Teseida* very closely.[68] Spaces for hand-decorated initials were left at the beginning of each major section in the text in both manuscripts and Carnerio's edition. These spaces follow a hierarchical organization in terms of size. The scribe of almost every manuscript of the *Teseida* in my sample also chose to set the first initial of each octave slightly apart from the rest of the text, and it was subsequently highlighted by a stroke of red ink by the rubricator. In some cases, the first initial of each line was also marked with red ink. The layout in the edition mimics this practice, albeit in black type alone, since each line in the octave begins with a capital letter.

In contrast to the majority of manuscripts, however, only one rubric in red type is included in Carnerio's edition. This is found in a prominent position, since it precedes the dedication, and therefore introduces the text as a whole. The decision to include a coloured rubric in this position indicates that Carnerio considered the dedication an important feature of his edition. This is more evidence to support my hypothesis that the edition was produced for readers in Ferrara, who were familiar with de' Bassi's work and supported the courtly connection afforded by de' Bassi's dedication to Niccolò III d'Este. The rubrics which occur throughout each book are printed in black, which means that they do not stand out very clearly from the text. In addition, these rubrics do not always occur in the same position in the text. In other words, the reader does not come to expect to see them in the same position, and therefore they are more difficult to find. Together with the lack of other orientation devices, such as foliation or signatures, this suggests that the work was designed to be read through from beginning to end, rather than used as a study text. The only rubrics that are easier to locate are those situated at the beginning of each book, which tend to be separated from the text around them and printed in capital letters.

Carnerio produced books printed in both roman and gothic type, and appears to have associated each type with different kinds of work. Thus, the three legal texts which he printed are all composed in gothic type, which was commonly associated with this type of work, while the five literary works all contain roman type. By using roman

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[68] For a description of the edition see Appendix III.

type for vernacular works, including the *Teseida*, it may have been Carnerio's intention to emphasize their classical elements and make them more appealing to readers with learned or humanistic pretensions. The use of this type certainly sets the printed edition apart from most manuscripts of the *Teseida*, which were frequently transcribed in a cursive script, usually chancery minuscule. Among the sample of twenty-six manuscripts, there are only two written in humanistic script, the hand-written precursor of roman type. Although Carnerio does employ two different founts, it is also true that the three legal texts printed in gothic represent the final stages of his printing career. All three were produced in 1478 or 1479, leaving open the possibility that Carnerio did not have access to gothic type when he printed the *Teseida* in 1475.

Of the thirteen works printed by Carnerio, six are in folio, six in quarto, and one in octavo. As I noted above, both the *Teseida* and the *Fatiche* are in folio, and are the only works written in Italian in this large format. The remaining four texts in folio are the three legal works and an edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. An edition in folio was more expensive to produce than smaller formats, and gives the impression that this was a luxury product. In the *Teseida*, four octaves are placed in a single column in the middle of each page, surrounded by margins wide enough to accommodate extensive glosses to some passages. The use of paper seems extravagant because when the text is not glossed large expanses of page are left blank. The edition resembles the formal and expensive *libro da banco* format, indicating that it was intended for readers familiar with traditional book models, and was designed to be conserved. Although most manuscripts of the *Teseida* follow less formal book formats and are only of a medium size, it may be significant that Carnerio's edition reflects the presentation of the two extant manuscripts which were certainly transcribed in Ferrara. Both MA and CaM are large exemplars (measuring 403 mm and 364 mm high respectively) with four octaves in a single column on each page, surrounded by de' Bassi's commentary in the margins.[69]

6.2.1.2 PARATEXTS

Agostino Carnerio chose to include both the dedication to Niccolò d'Este and the commentary to the *Teseida* composed by de' Bassi at the beginning of the 1420s in his edition. Cristina Montagnani has studied the content of the commentary found in MS MA and claims that a comparison of the texts found in this exemplar and the printed

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[69] See n. 66. It should be remembered, however, that both these manuscripts were presentation copies and may not reflect the presentation of other codices circulating at court.

edition reveals no variants, abbreviations, or additions. The only discrepancies found are the result of errors in the incunabulum.[70] Thus it seems that Carnerio made no effort to alter de' Bassi's compositions, suggesting that the same practical demands for explanatory material existed among readers of the printed edition as among readers of manuscripts. Carnerio also made no effort to claim the paratexts as his own. The opening rubric, 'Adsit principio Virgo Beata meo' [May the Blessed Virgin be present at my beginning] (also composed by de' Bassi), does not announce that the book begins with a dedication, or reveal by and for whom it was written, but Carnerio cannot have hoped to sustain any lasting impression that he was the author of the dedication or commentary, since de' Bassi names himself and the dedicatee in the course of the dedication, while the printer does not announce himself until the colophon on the final leaf. It would also have been clear to readers of the printed edition that the dedication was written during the lifetime of Niccolò III, who died in 1441, since de' Bassi explains in the text that he was commanded to write by the Marquis. An explanatory rubric may have been, in any case, unnecessary, since the readers Carnerio hoped to attract may have already been familiar with the work through manuscript copies of the *Teseida*, perhaps even through Niccolò III's dedication copy, presumably held in the court library.[71] Even if this manuscript was not consulted directly by readers outside the court, it may well have acted as an exemplar for other manuscripts copied and read in Ferrara.

I noted above that there was a long-standing connection between the *Teseida* and the *Fatiche*, and that the *Teseida*, with de' Bassi's commentary, was probably still popular in Ferrara during Carnerio's printing career. Carnerio's decision to include de' Bassi's dedication and commentary in an edition, which, I will go on to argue further, was destined predominantly for readers in Ferrara, was an attempt to tap into the manuscript market. Courtly readers made up an important section of the book-buying public in Ferrara, but one that was slow to relinquish their luxury manuscripts and replace them with printed books.[72] It was therefore in Carnerio's interests to offer potential readers a volume that resembled the manuscripts to which they were accustomed as closely as possible. Hindman also comments on this phenomenon:

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[70] Montagnani, p. 13.
[71] According to Tissoni Benvenuti, many Ferrarese readers, and not just the Duke's family, would have been able to take books out on loan from the court library (pp. 13-33). On borrowings from the Este library see also Everson, 'Read What I Say', pp. 42-46.
[72] On the court's preference for luxury manuscripts see Bertoni, *La biblioteca estense* and Nuovo, *Il commercio librario*. Nuovo also describes Ercole I's more favourable reaction to print once it became established (pp. 29-31).

> while the script, materials, and decoration of manuscripts were simulated in early printed books, so too their contents was adopted. [...] Many cases exist where not only a manuscript's textual contents but also its dedicatory prologue to an earlier patron was preserved in printed editions.[73]

The large size and spaces left for hand-illumination in the *Teseida* would have helped to simulate the appearance of luxury manuscripts such as MA and CaM.

Had Carnerio wished to view the dedication and commentary as purely exegetical tools, devoid of political significance, it would have been possible, and acceptable, to remove the first section of the dedication. This focuses on the victorious exploits of the Este family, culminating in a eulogy of Niccolò III and the joy of living in Ferrara under his rule. Naturally, this kind of rhetoric would have been of most interest to readers in Ferrara, and most of all to the Ferrarese aristocracy and courtiers. For these reasons, Carnerio is unlikely to have aimed his edition at a market outside his native city. As I noted above, manuscripts produced for readers in other parts of Italy illustrate that references to Ferrara were inappropriate; hence CaM, which was copied for the Duke of Milan, omitted the dedication, whilst retaining the commentary, while V^4 contains de' Bassi's commentary, but does not include the first part of the dedication.

The remaining sections of dedication are made up of a preface to the commentary, in which de' Bassi describes the structure of the work in the manner of the traditional *accessus*, and the beginning of the commentary, in which the meaning behind Boccaccio's opening words are explained. Neither the Este family, nor any connection with Ferrara is mentioned. Retention of these sections alone, together with the commentary, would have made the edition feel more up-to-date, or at least less firmly anchored in a precise geographical and chronological context. However, association with the established manuscript tradition was clearly of greater benefit to Carnerio's aims than innovation.

The decision to make the edition of the *Teseida* most appealing to readers in Ferrara potentially restricted the number of interested readers and therefore, the printer's financial success. However, this may not have been an issue, since readership of the *Teseida* may have already declined outside courtly circles. If this were the case, by ensuring that the edition included exuberant praise of the Este family, Carnerio would have been maximizing his chances of recouping his investment. The fact that the dedication was written for Niccolò III, rather than for Ercole I, was evidently not an

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[73] Hindman and Farquhar, p. 102.

important detail, perhaps because Niccolò was Ercole's father, and also because de' Bassi's emphasis is as much, if not more, on the Este family's illustrious lineage and exploits in general, than on Niccolò. It is not until the victorious deeds of Azzo I, Aldrovandino I, Azzo II, Obizzo I, Azzo III, Aldrovandino II, Rainaldo, Niccolò I, Obizzo II, Aldrovandino III, Niccolò II, Folco, Ugo, and Alberto have been recounted, together with a mention of Beatrice, Alda, Aylise, and Constanza, that Niccolò III is named and a passage given over to praise for him alone.

6.2.1.3 TRACES OF READING

Agostino Carnerio's edition of the *Teseida* exhibits clear signs of the cross-fertilization between the traditions of manuscript and print, highlighted by many scholars in recent years.[74] The producers of manuscripts and incunabula often moved in the same spheres: illuminators worked on both printed and handwritten books, and Carnerio himself is an example of a *cartolaio* adapting to the new technology. The close relationship between the 1475 edition of the *Teseida* and manuscript culture is particularly evident in the decorative scheme envisaged by Carnerio. The placement of coloured, decorative initials was planned by the printer, but intended to be executed by hand, after the printing process was completed. To these ends, Carnerio left blank spaces of varying sizes at salient points in the text to be filled in by an illuminator, in exactly the same way as a scribe left blank spaces for decoration in manuscripts. The printer may have organized and financed this hand-decoration himself. Bühler comments that the difference between the printed book and manuscript in this context is that:

> the *original* embellishment of an incunable took place at the instance of the producer (be he the printer, publisher, or financial backer); the decoration of a manuscript, usually [...] a bespoke production, was primarily dependent upon the preferences of the purchaser or owner.[75]

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[74] See for example, Curt F. Bühler, *The Fifteenth-Century Book: The Scribes, the Printers, the Decorators* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania Press, 1960); Albert Derolez, 'The Copying of Printed Books for Humanistic Bibliophiles in the Fifteenth Century', in *From Script to Book*, ed. by Hans Bekker-Nielsen, Marianne Børch, and Bengt Algot Sørensen (Odense: Odense University Press, 1986), pp. 140-60; Mary A. Rouse and Richard H. Rouse, *Cartolai, Illuminators and Printers in Fifteenth-Century Italy: The Evidence of the Ripoli Press* (Los Angeles: UCLA Research Library, 1988); Lilian Armstrong, 'The Hand-Illumination of Printed Books in Italy 1465-1515', in *The Painted Page: Italian Renaissance Book Illumination 1450-1550*, ed. by Jonathan J. G. Alexander (Munich: Prestel, 1994), pp. 35-47.

[75] Bühler, p. 69.

Table 21: *Hand-decoration in copies of the 1475 edition of the 'Teseida'*

Hand-Decoration Added to the Blank Spaces for Initials Left by the Printer					
Copy	Beginning of de' Bassi's Dedication	Beginning of Boccaccio's Dedication	Beginning of Book I	Beginning of Subsequent Books	Additional Decoration
Lo	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initial	Coloured initial at sonnet and first stanza, alternately blue and red	Paragraph marks, coloured alternately blue and red, precede the first initial of each stanza and first initial of each section of commentary on several fols
Lo[1]	None	None	None	Some initials roughly executed in brown ink	None
M	None	Illuminated initial in gold, red, and blue	Illuminated initial which extends into a vine scroll border decoration on a pink, green, and blue background in the top and exterior margins. Laurel wreath containing a shield in the middle of the bottom margin. The coat of arms either is damaged or has been removed.	Coloured initial in blue at sonnet and first stanza	None
O	Folio missing	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initial in blue at sonnet and first stanza	Paragraph marks, coloured alternately blue and red, precede the first initial of each stanza and first initial of each section of commentary
P	None	None	None	None	Initial roughly executed in brown ink at the beginning of the author's sonnet to the Muses
V	None	None	None	None	None

Hellinga reveals that the early printer Peter Schöffer in Mainz organized hand finishing for many of his books, and Rouse and Rouse also note that it was more common for the printers at the Ripoli press to arrange for decoration on speculation, although this usually involved only 'the routine application of red'.[76]

In the case of the *Teseida*, however, it seems certain that hand-decoration was added at the discretion of the individual buyer, either commissioned through Carnerio, whose close links with the *cartolaio* business would have facilitated his contact with rubricators and illuminators, or executed independently of the printer. There is little consistency in the style of the decoration included in the six copies of Carnerio's edition of the *Teseida* that I have seen, and some copies include no decoration at all, which suggests that Carnerio did not commission even minimal decorative elements to be added by hand to all copies in the edition. For this reason, I have chosen to consider hand-decoration as an indication of individual readers' preferences, and include discussion relating to this aspect of presentation under the heading 'traces of reading', despite the fact that this decoration was not normally added by readers themselves.

Table 21 contains details of the hand-decoration included in each of the six copies of the *Teseida* that I have seen.[77] I have attributed my own sigla to these copies, which correspond to incunabula held in the following libraries:

Lo	London, British Library, IB. 25638
Lo[1]	London, British Library, IB. 25639
M	Manchester, John Rylands Library, 8943
O	Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. 4Q 2.12
P	Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-YD-99
V	Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Incun. 295

Three of the above copies (Lo, M, and O) contain hand-decoration that was probably commissioned from a professional illuminator. Of the remaining three, V contains no decoration at all, and Lo[1] and P include a small number of initials in brown ink. The lack of skill with which these initials were executed, together with the inconsistency with which they were added to some books and not to others, suggest that they were drawn by a reader. Books or sonnets singled out for an initial may have been particularly significant, or there may have been no conscious reasoning behind the

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[76] Hellinga, pp. 140-61; Rouse and Rouse, p. 56.
[77] The ISTC lists seventeen copies in total.

decision to include an initial at that point. The owners of Lo[1], P, and V might not have been able to afford decoration. Alternatively, they may have chosen not to embellish their copy because the text was not considered sufficiently important.

Of the copies that do contain decoration, only M includes illuminated initials, while Lo and O contain coloured initials. The owner of M also commissioned some border decoration and a coat of arms, suggesting that this owner was reasonably wealthy, if not a member of the aristocracy. The use of simple coloured initials in Lo and O suggests that their owners were not as wealthy, or did not view the *Teseida* as such a high-status work as the owner of M, and yet they desired some decoration. It is of course possible that O had a more elaborate, perhaps illuminated, initial on its first folio, which is now missing. The use of coloured initials may have been employed as much for orientation within the text as for purely aesthetic embellishment. The introduction of some colour assists the reader in finding the beginning of each book more quickly than they might otherwise, particularly since orientation in this edition of the *Teseida* is not aided by any other devices, such as foliation, signatures, or tables of contents. It may be significant that Lo and O are also the only examples in this sample to include coloured paragraph marks marking the beginning of stanzas and sections of commentary. These do not continue throughout the work in Lo, but where they are utilized, act as additional visual markers aiding the reader. They might have been used for purely ornamental reasons, but this seems less likely in a book which contains only simple coloured initials.

Despite Carnerio's attempt to emulate the presentation of expensive high quality manuscripts, the types of decoration found in these copies correspond closely to those found in medium-low quality manuscripts of the *Teseida*. In my sample of twenty-six exemplars, only four contained illuminated initials, and an equally small number included border decoration. By far the largest proportion of manuscripts included coloured initials and blank spaces for initials. In terms of decoration, therefore, it seems that the introduction of print did not dramatically change what readers could afford, or expected and wanted to find in their books of the *Teseida*.

The distribution of traces of reading is illustrated in Table 22. L is the only copy from among the six I have looked at to contain no traces of reading. However, none of the copies contain any traces of reading that can be classified as 'marginalia together with marks or symbols' (category 1), 'related illustration', or 'unrelated illustration' (category 4). Manuscripts of the *Teseida* do not contain any examples of marginalia found in conjunction with marks and symbols, but illustration occurs almost as

frequently as marginalia. The lack of illustration in printed editions may represent a change of attitude towards books, which might be the consequence of the presentation of this particular edition, or of print in general. However, this seems unlikely given that there are significant instances of scribbles, smudges, and pen trials. In fact, most traces of reading occur in category 3. The only incidence of an unrelated note found in O consists of a date rather than a more extended record of personal events, interests, or transactions.[78] In contrast with manuscripts of the *Teseida*, half the copies contain corrections to the text.[79] These suggest that readers had access to additional versions of the text, presumably in manuscript form. Readers may have owned manuscript copies of the *Teseida* themselves, or have had access to other manuscripts in the community. In either case, the fact that half the sample contains corrections suggests that it may have been relatively easy to obtain copies of the *Teseida*. Corrections also reveal the beginnings of a new interest in textual editing and standardization, facilitated by print.[80]

Table 22: *Distribution of traces of reading in copies of the 1475 edition of the 'Teseida'*

	Category 1	*Category 2*	*Category 3*			*Category 5*
Copy	Marginalia	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated Notes	Scribbles /Smudges	Pen Trials	Corrections
Lo^1		✓				✓
M					✓	✓
O	✓		✓	✓	✓	
P	✓	✓		✓		
V	✓			✓		✓

Although there are three examples of marginalia among copies of the 1475 edition, like the traces found in manuscripts, these are extremely brief moments of engagement with the text, occurring on only one leaf in each copy. None of the three readers provides us with an insight into his or her erudition by referring to another source. There are, however, more sustained examples of the process begun in MS Pr^1, where the reader provided a heading stating that Boccaccio was the author of the work. A reader in P added a note at the top of the first folio which identifies Boccaccio as the author, and in addition, marked other passages in the text that relate the work to a temporal context, and to those that have been involved in its composition. Thus, the section in the dedication which reads 'commandare a mi, Piero Andrea de i Bassi, vostro antiquo e fidele famiglio, dechiari lo obscuro texto' has been underlined.

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[78] I have been unable to read the year given in this date.
[79] The sole example of 'correction' in the manuscript sample occurs in P^1 where a reader added two lines of text.
[80] Location of the source of these corrections is outside the remit of this research, but would be worth investigating at a later date.

Similarly, 'fo Zohanne da Certaldo cognominato Bochazo' is underlined, and a pointing hand draws attention to the date in the colophon. The reader of V has also supplied the comment 'interpretato da Piero Andrea de Bassi' beneath the colophon. These additions reveal that readers are concerned to identify the authorial origins of their text, a concern which was perhaps made more necessary by Carnerio's edition, which does not include an opening rubric identifying either Boccaccio or de' Bassi.

6.2.2 FRANCESCO DEL TUPPO AND THE *C.* 1490 EDITION

Printing was introduced to Naples by Sixtus Riessinger in either 1470 or 1471.[81] Riessinger was assisted by various law students, among whom was Francesco del Tuppo, whose name first appeared in a book printed by Riessinger in 1474, where he is described as a corrector of the text and financial partner. The first book printed by del Tuppo alone appears in 1478, the same year in which Riessinger stopped printing in Naples.[82] Many of the editions attributed to del Tuppo are not dated in the colophon, and the dates attributed to his work can vary between different sources. Marco Santoro states that del Tuppo ceased printing in 1493, although the BMC argues that he was still printing official records in 1498.[83] In either case, del Tuppo's career spans one of the longest periods in Neapolitan printing history, during which he produced some forty-four editions.[84]

Table 23: *Incunabula printed by Francesco del Tuppo grouped according to discipline and language*

Type of work	Number of works	In Latin	In Italian
Astrology	3	0	3
Law	9	5	4
Literature	13	2	11
Medicine	3	1	2
Religion	6	4	2
Treatise writing	6	5	1
Totals	40	17	23

In order to assess the significance of the presentation of the *Teseida* in the context of del Tuppo's output as a whole, I have collated information on the content, format, and language of forty editions that contain del Tuppo's name alone from the ISTC. Details of the type used in each edition have been gathered from the BMC, GW,

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[81] BMC, VI (1930), xl and Marco Santoro, 'La stampa a Napoli nel '400', in *Il libro a stampa: i primordi*, ed. by Marco Santoro (Naples: Liguori, 1990), pp. 293-314 (p. 293).
[82] BMC, VI (1930), xli.
[83] Santoro, 'La stampa a Napoli', p. 303; BMC, VI (1930), 868.
[84] Santoro, 'La stampa a Napoli', p. 303.

and IGI, and information on content and language is displayed in Table 23.[85] Santoro's analysis of Neapolitan incunabula has revealed that: 'a Napoli [...] nel Quattrocento le discipline "laiche", la letteratura, la trattatistica, il diritto e la medicina stessa [...] sembrano beneficiare della particolare attenzione degli stampatori in misura proporzionalmente maggiore che altrove'.[86] Table 23 illustrates that del Tuppo's output therefore reflects the general situation in Naples. He produced more works in Italian than in Latin, and demonstrated a particular interest in vernacular literary works, with Boccaccio proving especially popular, perhaps because of the author's personal connection with Naples. Before the *Teseida* appeared, Riessinger had printed the *Filocolo* for del Tuppo in 1478, and the *Fiammetta* was produced by del Tuppo himself in 1480. Both the *Fiammetta* and *Teseida* are in quarto format and in roman type. Del Tuppo printed only four classical works, and of these only Cicero was in the original Latin. Reflecting on the general preference in Naples for literary works in the *volgare*, Santoro comments that:

> la produzione letteraria sembra destinata ad un pubblico 'educato' all'uso dell'volgare [...] e poco partecipe, nella sostanza, dei nuovi stimuli della realtà contemporanea. Volendo semplificare forse più del lecito, si potrebbe nelle linee generali individuare questo pubblico per certi versi nella ricca borghesia emergente o comunque nella nuova categoria di lettori formatasi in virtù della crescente alfabetizzazione, per certi altri nella vasta schiera di cortigiani vicini non soltanto a Ferrante ma anche a Federico.[87]

This observation suggests that del Tuppo produced his edition of the *Teseida* for types of readers similar to those envisaged by Carnerio in Ferrara, namely the bourgeoisie and courtiers. It seems significant that the only two editions of the *Teseida* to be printed before 1520 should be produced within such close proximity to courts that enjoyed vernacular romances as well as selected classical and humanistic works, rather than within cities such as Florence, where the taste for humanism was more widespread. However, despite the apparent similarities in environment and intended readers for the *Teseida* in print, the presentation of del Tuppo's *Teseida* differs greatly from that designed by Carnerio.

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[85] I have excluded the following editions because I was unable to locate information on their type: Andrea de Rampinis, *Lectura super constitutionibus Regni Siciliae* (1479), Carolus Surrentius, *De modo augendi orationem* (*c.* 1485), Mohammed Rhasis, *Hystoria d'Almansore philosopho* (*c.* 1486), Fernandus I, *Capitula* (1492), Andreas de Rampinis, *Lectura super constitutionibus Regni Siciliae cum repertorio* (1492), *Ritus et observantiae antiquitus observatae in magna curia vicariae civitatis Neapolitanae* (1492), and two editions of the *Statuta Siciliae* (1492).

[86] Santoro, 'La stampa a Napoli', p. 301.

[87] Ibid., p. 312.

6.2.2.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

Like Carnerio, del Tuppo elected to leave space for hand-decoration rather than include decorative printed initials.[88] As I noted above, this is a common feature in incunabula, and was used to Carnerio's advantage, since hand-decoration allowed printed books to replicate the appearance of luxury manuscripts more closely. However, decoration was clearly not considered an important element in del Tuppo's edition, since only one space has been provided for an initial. This decision aligns the edition more closely with Type 3 manuscripts of the *Teseida*, which contain minimal decorative elements, rather than with luxury manuscripts. Both Pr^1 and Pr^3 (owned by the Duke of Nardò and Prince of Bisignano) are Type 3 manuscripts, which suggests that intended readers of the Neapolitan edition of the *Teseida*, like the Ferrarese edition, came from similar sections of society to the readers of manuscripts of the *Teseida*, and held similar attitudes towards the work. Rubrics are included in del Tuppo's editions, but are not printed in red. Carnerio chose to single out the opening rubric by printing it in red, which del Tuppo does not do, although he does facilitate orientation within the book by including paragraph marks at the beginning of each rubric.

Del Tuppo printed in both roman and gothic type, with roman type used in slightly more editions.[89] Gothic is used in editions printed from 1480 onwards, and at least two other works are printed in gothic *c.* 1490, suggesting that the decision to use roman type for the *Teseida* was a conscious and significant decision. Overall, more Latin works are printed in roman, while vernacular texts are divided fairly equally between gothic and roman type. The two types are also shared relatively equally between the literary works, which on the whole are written in Italian. Ovid's *Heroides*, *Aesopus moralisatus*, and the *Commedia* are printed in roman, while Cicero's *Epistolae* and Laertius's *Vitae et sententiae philosophorum* are printed in gothic. Thus, it is difficult to argue that the choice of roman type for the *Teseida* was intended to highlight the classical elements in the text. There may be a connection between the use of verse and roman type, since del Tuppo did not use gothic type for any of the poetical works he printed, but this still does not explain why gothic was chosen for some prose texts and roman for others. The use of roman type in the *Teseida* provides a link with Carnerio's edition, but distinguishes both printed works from manuscripts of the *Teseida*, which use humanistic bookhand very infrequently. However, MSS Pr^1 and Pr^3 date from the first half of the fifteenth century before the influence of the new humanistic script was

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[88] A description of del Tuppo's edition is included in Appendix III.
[89] Of the forty editions I have looked at, twenty-two are printed in roman type.

fully diffused throughout Italy and requested by non-Tuscans. Agostinelli does not give a specific provenance for Pr^3, but suggests that Pr^1 may have been transcribed in Naples. Both manuscripts are copied in semi-gothic bookhand, which is a script showing humanistic influences, in circulation before the maturation of humanistic bookhand.

The format of the *Teseida*, which is in quarto, is not unusual in the context of del Tuppo's overall production, which includes a large number of both quarto and folio formats. There appears to be some correlation between the format of a work and the discipline to which it belongs, since the astrological works are all in quarto, while the legal works are, without exception, in folio. However, simple correlations such as these do not hold for the literary works, where format does not appear to be linked to the classical or medieval origins of a text. Only three texts are in folio: Dante's *Commedia*, the *Vita et Aesopus moralisatus*, and the *Innamoramento di Rinaldo*, while Boccaccio, Ovid, and Cicero are all in quarto. As well as the decoration, the format of the *Teseida* sets it apart from that produced by Carnerio, which is in folio. The production costs for del Tuppo's edition would have been significantly lower, not only because of the reduced format, but also because the poem is arranged in two columns on each page, quartering the number of sheets required.[90] The desire to save on paper and keep costs low was evidently a primary concern for the Neapolitan printer, and more important than aesthetics. As Nadia Cannata notes, the use of two columns in this context is not linked to the commentated gothic model, but became solely a means of producing books cheaply, to the detriment of legibility.[91] The placement of eight octaves on each page means the text space appears dense and difficult to read, making it extremely difficult to orientate oneself within the text and any non-linear reading virtually impossible. Naturally, a reduction in format and the number of stanzas on each page means a reduction in the depth and weight of the book, increasing the likelihood that the text will be read in a wide range of locations. The presentation of the Neapolitan edition indicates that del Tuppo was responding to the growing numbers of literate middle classes, keen to read Boccaccio for entertainment.

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[90] Nadia Cannata calculates that: 'questo particolare formato [*in quarto*, a due colonne] permetteva allo stampatore di risparmiare sulle spese della pubblicazione quattro volte rispetto ad uno stesso testo stampato a piena pagina *in folio*', in her *Il canzoniere a stampa (1470-1530): tradizione e fortuna di un genere fra storia del libro e letteratura*, 2nd edn (Rome: Bagatto libri, 2000), p. 177.

[91] Ibid., p. 185.

6.2.2.2 PARATEXTS

The increased portability of del Tuppo's edition means that as well as consulting the *Teseida* at a desk, readers were able to hold the book in their hands or on their laps, which would have made it difficult to gloss the text at the same time. The narrow margins indicate that del Tuppo did not consider writing alongside reading a likely activity among his projected readership, and he did not include a printed commentary. He may have been unaware of the existence of commentaries to the *Teseida*, or deliberately chose to exclude a gloss because his market was not a scholarly one interested in the medieval scholastic tradition, or had no interest in the exegesis of the text. The only paratext included in the *Teseida* is the printed signatures, which act as an orientation device, although these would have been as much help to the binder as to the reader, who lacked a table of contents or other indexing system.

6.2.2.3 TRACES OF READING

Two copies of the Neapolitan edition of the *Teseida* are listed in the ISTC, both of which I have seen. I have labelled these two copies F and N:

F Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, E. 6. 2. 29

N Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale 'Vittorio Emanuele III', Palazzo Reale 39

It is unlikely that del Tuppo commissioned hand-decoration on speculation for his edition of the *Teseida* because neither of the above copies contains any hand-decoration in the blank space for an initial left by the printer, or in any other part of the book. This also means that decoration was financially unfeasible for the owners of these two copies, or an unnecessary addition in their opinion. Again, this reinforces the similarities between this printed edition and Type 3 manuscripts of the *Teseida*, of which the majority contain blank spaces for initials.

F and N both contain some traces of reading, although neither contains marginalia. A reader of F has corrected some of the typographical errors found in the text, and left marks and symbols on several pages, the precise meaning of which is difficult to fathom, but which suggest that at least some of the text was read fairly thoroughly. Judging from the hand used, the notes written in some of the margins in N were almost certainly left by a reader post 1520. Other traces in this copy consist of horizontal ink lines, which may have been made by the same later sixteenth-century reader, used to mark the boundaries between the end of one book and the beginning of

the next. This illustrates that del Tuppo's concern for saving space and the omission of decorative elements has resulted in a text that is not easy to read, and in which it is even less easy to move about in a non-linear fashion.

6.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has illustrated that manuscript copies of the *Teseida* appealed to a wide range of social classes, from merchants to noblemen, although diversity of ownership is not reflected in extensive physical or presentational variations. On the basis of their support and cursive script, the majority of paper exemplars might be described as *libri-registri*, while the small number of extant parchment manuscripts tend to resemble humanistic books or *libri-registri di lusso*. Most manuscripts can be described as *libri-registri* based primarily on their support material and script. According to Petrucci, these codices were produced by readers for themselves, and evidence relating to scribes of the *Teseida* seems to support this. In other respects, however, these paper manuscripts often diverge from the definition presented by Petrucci, which prescribes a careless or rough execution and minimal decoration. Exemplars written in chancery minuscule might contain few decorative features and yet be very well executed, while roughly executed paper manuscripts sometimes contain illuminated ornamentation. There is some suggestion that the relationship between the cultural formation of the reader or owner and the quantity of decoration included in the manuscript is one of inverse proportion, indicating that in general, the *Teseida* was not accorded high status by the cultural élite. The small proportion of 'humanistic' manuscripts may reflect the interests of those on the periphery of high culture, such as courtiers and middle class readers who were not discouraged by the language of the *Teseida*, and, accustomed as they were to French romances, could enjoy the 'medieval' aspects of the work alongside its classical elements, rather than fully-fledged humanists. As popular reading material at the court in Ferrara, in particular, the *Teseida* may have helped pave the way for writers such as Boiardo and Ariosto, and the development of the romance epic. There is little evidence that readers accustomed to learned enquiry used the *Teseida* as a tool for their studies, although the commentary had a limited success in an exegetical capacity.

The appearance of two printed editions of the *Teseida* at the end of the fifteenth century crystallized aspects of the text and its tradition which had retained appeal for readers over a century after its initial publication. Both Ferrara and Naples had significant numbers of readers that enjoyed epic narrative, although the text retained a different degree of literary status in each city, witnessed by Carnerio's conservative and

costly folio edition and del Tuppo's edition in quarto designed to satisfy the immediate demands for inexpensive and entertaining literature. These two responses might be explained by differences in the general cultural formation of readers in each city. While Ferrara had been exposed to Guarino's humanistic teaching, Santoro's research suggests that humanism had made less of an impact in Naples.[92] Writing in the context of the status of the romance epic in general, Jane Everson has noted that:

> the romance epic became an item of high, literary culture precisely when there was a combination of intense humanist activity [...], and a long-established tradition of vernacular narrative poetry [...], which the contemporary political establishment enjoyed and valued additionally for its usefulness as propaganda – in short in the Florence of the Medici and in Ferrara.[93]

In many respects, therefore, Boccaccio's hopes for his vernacular classic were not realized, and, apart from isolated pockets of interest, the work had lost favour by the beginning of the sixteenth century. Although readers of the *Teseida* were not overwhelmingly scholarly and comprised some merchants, there is little indication that the *Teseida* was read in the same manner as that described by Branca for the *Decameron*. Amongst the many instances where blank leaves in *Teseida* manuscripts were used for notes and drawings unrelated to Boccaccio's text, there are no traces of financial transactions, which Branca argues reveal that a work was particularly attractive to, and played a central role in, mercantile life.[94] In the following chapter, I will go on to evaluate in more detail how Branca's work on merchant readership compares with my own consideration of material and paratextual responses for both manuscripts and printed editions of the *Decameron*.

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[92] Santoro, 'La stampa a Napoli', p. 301.
[93] Everson, *The Italian Romance Epic*, p. 132.
[94] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 195.

CHAPTER 7

Decameron

Vittore Branca's research on the manuscript tradition of the *Decameron* and his thesis regarding merchant readership have played a pivotal role in literary and bibliographical studies by raising awareness of the relationship between readership and codicological evidence in the context of the *Decameron*. However, Branca has been criticized for conducting an unsystematic evaluation of manuscripts and presenting inconsistent bibliographic descriptions. Cursi's comprehensive and systematic examination of exemplars sets out to rectify this failing, with the aim of reconstructing the manuscript tradition in a credible manner and evaluating the cultural significance of surviving exemplars.[1] Discussion is centred around three main axes: presentation, production and diffusion, and case studies, and in each of these palaeographical evidence plays a strong role. Thus, the first section on presentation focuses on the significance of script and chronology, the second section engages with the issue of scribal production, and the case studies highlight particular issues that often relate to palaeographical concerns.

Cursi's conclusions challenge those reached by Branca; he argues that a significant proportion of manuscripts are written in semi-gothic scripts, as well as mercantile scripts, more manuscripts were written in the 1470s than in the earlier period described by Branca, and overall there are a reduced number of manuscripts of the *Decameron* compared with other works by Boccaccio, suggesting that it was not as popular as Branca had claimed. In addition, there is evidence for scribes and ownership in only a very small proportion of manuscripts, and their social status is not exclusively mercantile. In fact, Cursi makes a case for many scribes being 'copisti a prezzo'. He finds that traces of reading that reveal mercantile interest are generally non-existent, irrelevant, or sporadic.[2]

One of the aims of this chapter is to follow Cursi's lead in undertaking a systematic study of manuscripts of the *Decameron*, focusing on the areas highlighted by Branca as potential sources of evidence for readership, namely presentation, incorporating evidence for scribes and ownership, traces of reading, and paratexts. Where I differ from these studies is in my overall aim, and therefore in the details of my

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[1] See his article: 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione'.

[2] Cursi's conclusions are summarized on pp. 527-28. Cursi has followed up this study with an article on an individual 'copista a prezzo' ('Ghinozzo di Tommaso Allegretti'), which takes issue with the earlier study on this scribe: Giuseppina Fermetti, 'Un copista per passione: Ghinozzo Allegretti', *StB*, 14 (1983-84), 150-77.

methodology. Whereas Branca is concerned with reconstructing the text of the *Decameron* from the manuscript tradition, and Cursi focuses on the processes of production, my fundamental interest lies with what manuscript presentation reveals about readership. Of the features which form the focus of my discussion on physical structure and presentation, support, size, and layout play only small roles in Cursi's analysis, while decoration is excluded from consideration entirely. I shall evaluate how the presentation of manuscripts has changed in relation to the autograph of the *Decameron*, and the implication that this has for readership, an aspect of reception neglected by both Branca and Cursi. I have also extended the time-frame within which Branca and Cursi worked to include the first two decades of the sixteenth century. While this means that only a few extra manuscripts will be considered, it allows me to look at the materiality and paratexts of a wide spread of printed editions, something which has not been attempted in this context before. It is also a primary aim of this thesis to contextualize evidence relating to the *Decameron*. Cursi did this on a small scale when he contrasted the number of manuscripts of the *Decameron* produced with those of other works by Boccaccio in circulation. In the final conclusion to the thesis, evidence relating to the *Decameron* will be compared with the results obtained from an analysis of the readership of the *Teseida* and *De mulieribus* in order to contribute to an understanding of Boccaccio's *fortuna* on a wider scale.

7.1 MANUSCRIPTS OF THE *DECAMERON*

There are sixty extant exemplars of the *Decameron* dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and a further seven are attributed to the sixteenth century.[3] Appendix IV contains a list of the thirty manuscripts transcribed before 1520 that I have viewed.[4] F, F^6, FR^1, FR^2, FR^3, Vl^1 are excluded from my initial analysis of physical structure and presentation because they contain extracts from the *Decameron*, rather than the full text.[5] F^8 is also excluded because it contains only a list of vocabulary from the *Decameron*. Analysis of FR, Vf, and Vr, which contain incomplete texts or fragments of text, is included, since these were probably originally intended to be completed copies of the *Decameron*. F^9, however, will be excluded because it contains

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[3] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 73-136.

[4] F^8 and FR^2 have been attributed to the sixteenth century by Branca, and therefore may have been copied after 1520.

[5] By 'full text' I refer to any version of the *Decameron* that includes, or was intended to include, one hundred *novelle*, together with the proem, introductions to each day, *ballate* and conclusions. However, this definition also acknowledges that full-text versions may contain significant textual variations.

a text of only six lines, from which it is too difficult to obtain sufficient information on presentation. F^{10} is also excluded, since it has been noted that this fragment was originally from FR.[6] I shall therefore reference F^{10} only where there are relevant paratexts or traces of reading. This leaves a sample of twenty-one manuscripts.

Four of the twenty-one manuscripts (Lo, Vb^3, Vf, and Vr) contain the full text of the *Decameron* together with other texts, the significance of which will be discussed under the heading 'Paratexts' below (7.1.4). Three manuscripts in the sample are written in more than one hand. F^3 was copied by two scribes: scribe A, who identifies himself as Nicolaus, and scribe B, whose hand first appears on fol. 101^r and then alternates with scribe A.[7] P^5 contains three hands: scribe A copied the majority of the manuscript in *mercantesca*, scribe B transcribed passages on fols 35^r, 38^v, 50^v, 69^v, 154^v, and 158^v in *mercantesca*, while scribe C copied passages on fols 31^r, 54^r, 145^r, 159^r, 172^r, and 176^r in chancery minuscule. P^6 contains two mercantile hands, the first of which is found on fols 1^r-39^r, and the second on fols 39^r-182^r. Scribe A (identified by Cursi as Antonio di Bartolomeo) in Vb^1 copied fols 1^r-3^v and 224^r, while scribe B completed the remainder of the manuscript.[8] Vl^2 was copied by three scribes and is unusual in that it is divided into three separately bound volumes, foliated consecutively.[9] Scribe A wrote in a chancery minuscule and is responsible for fols 2^r-33^r (vol. 1), scribe B copied fols 33^r-85^v (vol. 1), fols 87^r-170^v (vol. 2), and fols 261^r-270^v (vol. 3) in *mercantesca*, while scribe C transcribed fols 1^{r-v} (vol. 1), and fols 171^r-260^v, 271^{r-v} (vol. 3), also in a mercantile script.[10] Where more than one scribe has been involved, the script assigned to a manuscript is that which has been used most frequently. Three manuscripts within my sample are dated in the colophon by the scribe: F^2, F^3, and Vr. For the remaining manuscripts I have used dates attributed by Cursi.[11]

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[6] Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 473, in particular, n. 31.
[7] See Ibid., pp. 507-08.
[8] Ibid., pp. 514-17.
[9] For a comprehensive analysis of this manuscript see ibid., pp. 495-98.
[10] Branca used Vl^2 to support his thesis that the first three days of the *Decameron* (contained in volume 1) were circulated independently, before the remaining *novelle* were published (*Tradizione*, II, 123). Cursi has conducted a thorough analysis of the watermarks in the three volumes, on the basis of which he concludes 'il cod. Vat. lat. 9893 fu trascritto interamente tra il settimo e l'ottavo decennio del Trecento; a distanza di quasi un secolo, intorno al terzo quarto del Quattrocento, alcune parti che nel frattempo erano cadute (la c. 1r, le cc. 171r-260v, la c. 271r-v) furono integrate dal copista della mano C'. Traces of ink in volume one which mirror a rubric in volume two also suggest that initially the manuscript was in one volume ('Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 497).
[11] Cursi has assigned dates to manuscripts on the basis of palaeographical analysis and watermarks in ibid., p. 484.

In order to establish whether my sample of twenty-one full-text manuscripts is representative of extant manuscripts of the *Decameron* in general, I shall begin by conducting a brief analysis of Cursi's sample, which represents a larger proportion of the total number of manuscripts. Cursi is concerned only with manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries and hence has a sample of fifty-five exemplars. F^6, F^9, and F^{10} have been excluded 'per ragioni di carattere testuale' outlined on pp. 473-74, while no explanation is given for the exclusion of H and SF. In order to carry out a preliminary analysis of Cursi's data I have excluded a further ten manuscripts, which I do not consider to be full-text exemplars, leaving a sample of forty-five manuscripts.[12]

Cursi has provided data for four out of the five presentation features that I have chosen to analyse: support, script, size, and layout, and attributed a date to each manuscript. In order to ascertain that my sample is representative, I have calculated how manuscripts are divided among these categories in terms of percentages, and displayed the results for both samples in Tables 24-28. The percentages in these tables demonstrate that my sample of twenty-one manuscripts can be considered representative in terms of support, script, size, layout, and date. On the basis of Tables 29-31, it is also possible to claim that my sample is representative in terms of the relationship between support and each of the remaining presentation features.

Table 24: *Support in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

Support	Parchment	Paper
% of MSS in sample of 45	7	93
% of MSS in sample of 21	5	95

Table 25: *Script in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

Script	GB	SGB	HB	HC	M
% of MSS in sample of 45	2	42	2	2	51
% of MSS in sample of 21	5	38	5	5	48

Table 26: *Size in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

Size	Large	Medium	Small
% of MSS in sample of 45	47	53	0
% of MSS in sample of 21	48	52	0

[12] D, F, FR^1, FR^3, L^9, L^{10}, L^{11}, Si, U, and Vl^1 contain extracts from the *Decameron*. In order to make these decisions for manuscripts I have not viewed in person, I have referred to the descriptions given in Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 73-136.

Table 27: *Layout in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

Layout	1 column	2 columns
% of MSS in sample of 45	11	89
% of MSS in sample of 21	10	90

Table 28: *Dates attributed to MSS of the 'Decameron'*

Date	14th century	15th century
% of MSS in sample of 45	27	73
% of MSS in sample of 21	33	67

Table 29: *Relationship between script and support in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

	Script	GB	SGB	HB	HC	M
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 45	2	38	2	2	49
	% of MSS in sample of 21	5	33	5	5	48
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 45	0	4	0	0	2
	% of MSS in sample of 21	0	5	0	0	0

Table 30: *Relationship between size and support in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

	Size	Large	Medium
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 45	40	53
	% of MSS in sample of 21	43	52
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 45	7	0
	% of MSS in sample of 21	5	0

Table 31: *Relationship between layout and support in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

	Layout	1 column	2 columns
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 45	11	82
	% of MSS in sample of 21	10	86
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 45	0	7
	% of MSS in sample of 21	0	5

7.1.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

A reconstruction of the manuscript tradition of the *Decameron* is complicated by various factors. Branca cites the intervention of 'copisti per passione', sometimes working at different times and from different sources, as primary obstacles to a reconstruction, and notes that there is still much work to be done.[13] Although no definitive conclusions have been reached concerning the stemma as a whole, studies on the textual tradition of the *Decameron* have a long history. From the end of the nineteenth century, scholars such as Oskar Hecker, Aldo Francesco Massèra, and

[13] Vittore Branca, 'Ancora su una redazione del *Decameron* anteriore a quella autografa e su possibili interventi "singolari" sul testo', *StB*, 26 (1998), 3-97 (pp. 7-12).

Michele Barbi began to discuss the relative merits of the text of a select number of manuscripts (predominantly B and Mn) and early printed editions.[14] Vittore Branca joined the discussion in 1953, re-evaluating the relationship between MSS B, Mn, and P, and the text of the *Deo Gratias* edition once B was definitively identified as an autograph in 1962.[15] As a result, it has been established that Mn belongs to the same family as B (although it is not a copy, as had been claimed earlier), while P, on the other hand, transmits a different text. In 1994, supported by Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto's thesis that the illustrations in P were executed by Boccaccio himself, Branca proposed that the text of P represents a redaction of the *Decameron* anterior to the vulgate tradition witnessed by B and Mn.[16]

The text transmitted by the antigraph of P seems to have had a wide diffusion both prior to, and after, the appearance of the extant autograph B.[17] Twenty manuscripts in my sample follow the text of P on at least one occasion, rather than passages transmitted by B.[18] It is unlikely, therefore, that the scribes of these manuscripts used the extant autograph, or manuscripts deriving solely from this tradition, as their exemplar. Branca also comments that 'l'accertamento e lo studio delle due redazioni che abbiamo distinto in P e B [...] non può escludere certo che vi siano state altre redazioni d'autore precedenti o intermedie o posteriori'.[19] In particular, it has been suggested that the first three days from the *Decameron* circulated independently from the work as a whole, although scholars are by no means united in

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[14] B: Berlin, Staatsbibliothek der Stiftung Preussischer Kulturbesitz, MS Hamilton 90; Mn: Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, MS Pluteo XLII 1. For an overview of conclusions see Branca, 'Per il testo', especially pp. 197-200.

[15] P: Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS It. 482; the presentation of the *Deo Gratias* is discussed below (7.2.1). See Branca, 'Per il testo', which includes an overview of preceding conclusions (pp. 197-200); Branca, 'Rapporti fra autografo e testimonianze affini (Dg Mn P)', in *Tradizione*, II, 263-303; and Branca, 'Dopo l'edizione dell'autografo: ancora studi e discussioni sulla tradizione del testo in B Mn P e sulla posizione di P', in *Tradizione*, II, 331-470.

[16] Vittore Branca, 'Boccaccio "visualizzato" dal Boccaccio: possibile identificazione nel Parigino It. 482 di una redazione del *Decameron* anteriore all'autografo degli anni settanta', *StB*, 22 (1994), 225-34. In the first section of this article ('Corpus dei disegni e cod. Parigino It. 482', pp. 197-225) Ciardi Dupré Dal Poggetto argues that Boccaccio is the author of the illustrations in P. For additional support of this theory see also Vittore Branca, 'Su una redazione del *Decameron* anteriore a quella conservata nell'autografo hamiltoniano', *StB*, 25 (1997), 3-131; Branca, 'Ancora su una redazione'; Marco Cursi, 'Un nuovo autografo boccacciano del *Decameron*?: note sulla scrittura del codice Parigino Italiano 482', *StB*, 28 (2000), 5-34.

[17] Vittore Branca, 'Prime proposte sulla diffusione del testo del *Decameron* redatto nel 1349-51 (testimoniato nel cod. Parigino Italiano 482)', *StB*, 28 (2000), 35-72.

[18] Branca has published details of passages in P that do not occur in B or Mn, and indicated which other manuscripts in the tradition contain these readings in 'Dopo l'edizione', pp. 365-71. Vf is not included in Branca's sample of manuscripts, therefore it is not clear how the text of this exemplar relates to P.

[19] Branca, 'Ancora su una redazione', p. 7.

their opinion on this.[20] It is nevertheless relevant to the aims of this thesis to consider the relationship between the presentation of the extant autograph and subsequent exemplars, in order to evaluate whether there are any parallels between Boccaccio's intended readership and his actual readership.

It is also possible to speculate that the missing autograph from which P derives was written on parchment in semi-gothic bookhand, since all eight extant autographs containing texts by Boccaccio have these two features in common.[21] There is reason to believe that the scribe of P, Giovanni di Agnolo Capponi, would have had access to Boccaccio's service exemplar and used it for his own transcription, and he may have been influenced by its presentation. It is widely accepted that P was copied within Boccaccio's own lifetime, and the Capponi were merchants living in the same district of Florence as Boccaccio's family.[22] Furthermore, as I mentioned above, Boccaccio may have provided the illustrations to this manuscript himself. P is written on parchment, although Capponi uses *mercantesca*, rather than the semi-gothic bookhand usually preferred by Boccaccio.[23] Parchment manuscripts of the *Decameron* are extremely rare: there are only three such extant full-text exemplars, including P, composed before 1520. Capponi may have been influenced in his choice of support material by the parchment autograph to which he had access, but wrote in *mercantesca* because this may have been the only hand in which he was proficient. Boccaccio, however, appears to have condoned the use of a cursive hand by choosing to associate himself so closely with the manuscript. Branca comments that Boccaccio would be unlikely to append his illustrations to 'un testo spurio o falsificato del suo capolavoro',[24] and it seems to me equally improbable that he would 'authorize' this manuscript if he were unhappy with the message transmitted by its appearance.

The illustrations in P have been dated to the end of the 1360s, but it has been suggested that only a couple of years later, at the beginning of the 1370s, Boccaccio was interested in promoting a rather different reception of the *Decameron* than that represented by P.[25] Branca conjectured that Boccaccio encouraged a literary appreciation of his work by sending exemplars to Mainardo Cavalcanti and Petrarch.

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[20] Padoan, 'Sulla genesi del *Decameron*'. See n. 10 above.
[21] For further details see Chapter 5.
[22] For the date of this manuscript (1360/70), see Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 477. For biographical details of Capponi see Lucia Nadin, 'Giovanni di Agnolo Capponi copista del *Decameron*', *StB*, 3 (1965), 41-54.
[23] For a description of P see Cursi, 'Produzione, Tipologia, Diffusione', p. 477; Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 108-10; *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 66-72.
[24] Vittore Branca, 'Boccaccio "visualizzato" dal Boccaccio', p. 229.
[25] For the date of the illustrations in P see *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 71-72.

The presentation of the surviving autograph (B), a parchment exemplar copied in semi-gothic bookhand, has been used as evidence by Petrucci for the idea that Boccaccio planned to promote vernacular literature to the dignity of the university/scholastic desk-book. Similarly, Pastore Stocchi's consideration of the presentation of the autograph led him to conclude that Boccaccio intended only a cultural and social élite to have access to the *Decameron*.[26] The presence of Boccaccio's hand in a 'mercantile' manuscript of the same period (P), albeit as an artist rather than as a scribe, suggests that Boccaccio did not copy B in order to distance his work from the less culturally and socially qualified masses, but to ensure that it reached as many readers as possible. This would indicate that Boccaccio's plea to Mainardo Cavalcanti to help him restrict the readership of the *Decameron* should be interpreted as a piece of rhetoric rather than as a serious guide to the work's intended reception.[27]

It is also important to note that, although P is frequently listed by Branca as a manuscript that was produced and read in the mercantile environment characteristic of the initial diffusion of the *Decameron*, and B is lauded as a high quality *libro da banco*, in essence, the differences in presentation between the two manuscripts are small and relate primarily to the script. Both are large sized exemplars (B is approximately 30 mm taller than P), with the text arranged in two columns. The autograph is written in semi-gothic bookhand and ornamented with decorated and coloured initials, and a series of portraits in pen and ink, illustrating some of the protagonists from the *novelle*. P is written in *mercantesca* and contains only coloured initials, but also a series of pen and ink drawings in the same tradition as those found in B. Branca himself has commented that the illustrations in the autograph are an important link with the 'mercantile' elements that might have appealed to readers such as Capponi: 'volle mantenere le illustrazioni su quel piano pratico, tipicamente borghese-mercantile, che caratterizza il suo capolavoro'.[28]

Table 32: *Presentation of the parchment MS of the 'Decameron'*

	MS	Date	Script	Size (mm)	Layout	II	DI	CI	BD	R
Type 1[29]	P^1	1375-1399	Semi-gothic bookhand	344 x 248	2 cols	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

[26] See the Introduction.
[27] See the discussion relating to *Ep.* XXII in section 1.4.
[28] Branca, *Boccaccio medievale*, p. 406.
[29] For a definition of manuscript types see section 6.1.1.1.

Table 33: *Presentation of paper MSS of the 'Decameron'*

	MS	Date	Script	Size (mm)	Layout	II	HI	DI	CI	BSI	BD	R
Type 1	Lo	*c.* 1450	*Mercantesca*	335 x 230	2 cols	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	F[1]	1450-1475	Humanistic bookhand	324 x 225	2 cols	✓		✓			✓	✓
	Vch	1450-1475	Semi-gothic bookhand	332 x 232	2 cols	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Type 2	F[3]	1396	Gothic bookhand	349 x 260	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	Vz[1]	1375-1399	Semi-gothic bookhand	398 x 283	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	P[6]	1400-1425	*Mercantesca*	392 x 274	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	Vb	1400-1425	*Mercantesca*	296 x 218	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	P[2]	*c.* 1450	Semi-gothic bookhand	332 x 223	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	Vb[3]	*c.* 1450	*Mercantesca*	337 x 235	2 cols			✓				✓
	F[2]	1469	*Mercantesca*	286 x 205	2 cols			✓	✓	✓		✓
	P[3]	1450-1475	Semi-gothic bookhand	308 x 212	2 cols		✓	✓	✓			✓
	Vb[2]	1450-1475	Humanistic cursive	341 x 230	2 cols			✓				✓
Type 3	Vr	1395	Semi-gothic bookhand	286 x 211	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	FR	1375-1399	*Mercantesca*	289 x 200	2 cols				✓			✓
	P[5]	1375-1399	*Mercantesca*	275 x 207	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	Vl[2]	1375-1399	*Mercantesca*	284 x 210	2 cols				✓	✓		✓
	Vb[1]	1400-1425	*Mercantesca*	294 x 218	Full page				✓			✓
	P[4]	*c.* 1450	*Mercantesca*	290 x 210	2 cols			✓	✓			✓
	Vf	*c.* 1450	Semi-gothic bookhand	286 x 206	2 cols			✓				✓
	Vz	1450-1475	Semi-gothic bookhand	253 x 179	Full page					✓		✓

P^1 is the only parchment manuscript of the *Decameron* that I have seen (see Table 32).[30] This is a very high quality manuscript, with features which resemble both B and P. P^1 is approximately the same size as P,[31] arranged in two columns like both P and B, and written in semi-gothic bookhand, following the example of the autograph B. However, P^1 differs from both P and B in its decoration, which was professionally executed and is of a formal character very different from the narrative illustration found in P and B.[32] This exemplar resembles the *libro da banco* model, used for vernacular works prepared for readers familiar with the Latin scholarly texts normally presented in this manner. It seems likely, therefore, that its owner was considerably cultured, as well as reasonably wealthy, and in addition, attributed a high status to the text of the *Decameron*. Owners such as these were in the minority, however. As Table 24 illustrates, almost all extant manuscripts of the *Decameron* are written on paper and therefore do not resemble either B or P. Given that a significant proportion of these exemplars also date from the fourteenth century, when parchment was in constant supply and generally viewed as a superior material for books, the choice of paper seems to reflect a commonly held perception that the *Decameron* was a low status work of literature. Alternatively, many owners may not have been able to afford parchment books and copied their own texts onto paper.

Table 33 summarizes the presentation of paper manuscripts using the same division into three types based on decorative initials outlined in Chapter 6, and reveals that expensive and complex decorative features, such as illuminated initials and border decoration, are comparatively rare among exemplars of the *Decameron*. Unlike B and P, none of the manuscripts in my sample contain illustration. According to the descriptions given by Branca in the second volume of *Tradizione delle opere*, alongside B and P, there are only two extant manuscripts that contain illustration. These are H (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Holkham misc. 49) and P^7 (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS It. 63).[33] P^7 includes one hundred and fifteen watercolours, which

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[30] P^3 contains parchment leaves at the beginning of each quire to provide strength, but I have classified it as a paper manuscript.

[31] The height of P is given variously as 333 mm in Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 108, 335 mm in Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 477, and 350 mm in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 66.

[32] Branca describes a shift in the visual tradition 'dalla narratività alla ornamentalità; dal disegno o dall'acquerello artigianali, spesso quasi parlati, alla miniatura o all'opera autonoma di professionisti e di artisti qualificati', occurring 'al tramonto della società e della civiltà mercatantesca, comunale e tardomedievale' in Branca, *Boccaccio medievale*, p. 411, although P^1 dates from the end of the fourteenth century.

[33] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 102-3, 107-10. All three manuscripts are discussed in Branca, Watson, and Kirkham, 'Boccaccio visualizzato'. H is also described by Albinia C. de la Mare and Catherine Reynolds in 'Illustrated Boccaccio Manuscripts in Oxford Libraries', *StB*, 20 (1991-

Branca uses as evidence for mercantile interest in the *Decameron*, noting their narrative nature and close links with the text. He comments that the illustrations are 'dirette a lettori non letterati ma avidi di trame e di vicende appassionanti', and rather grandly refers to this type of visual response as the 'la prima fase di visualizzazioni del *Decameron*'.[34] H is held up as the first example of the *Decameron*'s success in the traditional sense:

> è necessario [...] giungere fino al 1467 prima di trovare nello splendido codice estense [H] un esemplare uscito dalle mani di un copista di professione letteraria, impreziosito dall'opera di un alluminatore famoso, destinato a un signore e a una biblioteca di alta dignità.[35]

Although it would be hard to deny that H represents 'official' recognition of the *Decameron*, it is interesting that it was not followed by other manuscripts containing this level of decoration, particularly since the *Decameron* spawned a rich iconographical tradition in other media, and also in manuscripts outside Italy.[36] Manuscripts may have become lost or destroyed in the intervening centuries, but expensive illuminated exemplars are more likely to be safeguarded than inexpensive, undecorated exemplars. It seems that, in Italy at least, H must be thought of as the result of individual taste (that of Teofilo Calcagnini in this case), rather than as a reflection of a more widespread attitude towards the *Decameron*.

Among the paper manuscripts in my sample there are a significant number of Type 3 exemplars: manuscripts containing only coloured initials, or decorated initials of a low quality which were probably executed by the scribe. On these grounds, these manuscripts correspond to Branca's characterizations of books which appealed to the middle classes and were copied by readers for themselves. However, codices containing professionally-executed ornamentation figure in greater numbers. The three Type 1 paper manuscripts in the sample all contain painted decoration which is not always of the highest quality, but nevertheless can be classified as the 'ornamento vistoso' Branca claimed was usually lacking. Lo contains full border decoration at the

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92), 66-70, and in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 288-94, which includes images from the manuscript. P is the subject of an article by Ciardi Dupré dal Poggetto, who argues that Boccaccio is the author of the illustrations: 'Boccaccio "visualizzato" dal Boccaccio'. The subject is taken up again in Cursi, 'Un nuovo autografo?'. P^7 is described in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 104-14, which includes reproductions of the images.

[34] Branca, *Boccaccio medievale*, pp. 409-10.

[35] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 199.

[36] For details of illustrations from the *Decameron* in paintings, *cassoni*, *deschi da parto*, and French manuscripts see Branca, *Boccaccio medievale*, pp. 417-27, and *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II.

opening of the proemio, as well as a historiated initial depicting Pampinea surrounded by the remaining eight storytellers.[37] The decoration at the proem in Vch is more refined and covers three borders, with a historiated initial containing a portrait of Boccaccio holding a closed book.[38] Both Lo and Vch contain a coat of arms in the lower margins, which is integral to the border decoration.[39] The border decoration in F^1 is of a very high quality and is composed of the vine scroll motif popular with humanists. The Type 2 manuscript P^3 also has a historiated initial which depicts Boccaccio in the act of lecturing on a text. Overall, most manuscripts contain at least two types of initial, and there is only one (Vz) in which spaces for decorative initials have been left blank.

The large number of manuscripts containing professionally produced decoration, typically of a medium quality, supports Cursi's conclusion, formulated largely on the basis on palaeographical evidence, that there were numerous 'copisti a prezzo', used by those who lacked the time or the skill to copy manuscripts for themselves.[40] Although manuscripts written in *mercantesca*, the hand most associated with mercantile and other middle-class reader-copyists, make up the largest proportion, the almost equally large numbers of exemplars written in semi-gothic and gothic scripts demonstrate that the production of manuscripts of the *Decameron* was by no means homogenized, and that a significant number of scribes replicated the script preferred by Boccaccio in autograph B. Humanistic scripts appear in much smaller numbers, and neither of the two manuscripts in my sample that contain humanistic scripts, F^1 and Vb^2, has the full-page layout or medium dimensions typical of humanistic books. It is significant, however, that all extant exemplars written in humanistic scripts date from after 1450, indicating that the *Decameron* began to appeal to humanists in the second half of the fifteenth century.[41]

Chancery minuscule, which is often characteristic of amateurly produced books and exemplars copied for merchants and artisans, is not represented among manuscripts of the *Decameron*.[42] The reason for this, Cursi writes, 'potrà forse essere spiegato con maggiore cognizione di causa quando sarà possibile confrontare il quadro grafico

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[37] Lo is described with a reproduction of the decoration at the proem in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 262-63.
[38] Vch is also described with a reproduction of the proem in ibid., pp. 139-40.
[39] In Vch this has been removed.
[40] Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 528.
[41] See also ibid., p. 486.
[42] In my sample it is used only by scribe C in P^5, although the semi-gothic bookhand used in P^1 and Vr contains elements of chancery minuscule.

decameroniano con i risultati di altre indagini relative alle tradizioni manoscritte di opere letterarie volgari trecentesche'.[43] Based on a comparison with manuscripts of Giovanni Villani's *Nuova Cronica*, Cursi suggests that the use of chancery minuscule as a book hand was declining by the end of the fourteenth century, and that it was linked with large format parchment manuscripts with careful ornamentation.[44] According to my research, however, it would seem that these conclusions are not valid for the *Teseida*, which paints a different picture again. Chancery minuscule is the script that occurs most frequently among manuscripts of the *Teseida*, featuring in forty-three per cent of the total number of exemplars written before 1520. All the manuscripts in my sample written in chancery minuscule date from the fifteenth century, and the script features most heavily in paper manuscripts of medium format with simple and sometimes carelessly executed decoration.[45] This suggests that the absence of chancery minuscule is a feature particular to the tradition of the *Decameron*.

Table 26 shows that manuscripts are fairly equally divided between medium- and large-sized formats. The absence of small-sized exemplars is surprising given that *mercantesca* script is associated with paper support and a small or medium format in the *libro-zibaldone* model. Once again, therefore, the distribution of sizes illustrates that the manuscript tradition of the *Decameron* is characterized by diversity in methods of production, and thus in readership, and that the large size selected by Boccaccio for B continued to appeal. F^3, P^2, and Vch are large-sized manuscripts written in a gothic script with the text arranged in two columns, which closely approximate to *libri da banco* and B, rather than to exemplars produced by 'copisti per passione', despite being written on paper.[46] Lo, P^6, and Vb^3 are also large-sized manuscripts with the text arranged in two columns, approximating to formal and traditional book formats, and yet these paper exemplars are written in *mercantesca*.

In terms of layout, there is remarkable consistency across manuscripts of the *Decameron*, with the two columns of text used by Boccaccio in the autograph being the favoured choice in manuscripts written in both formal and cursive scripts, as well as among exemplars containing both illumination and minimal decorative elements. Preference for the two-column layout may have been dictated by the large size of many manuscripts. A bi-columnar arrangement may also have helped scribes to fit more text

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[43] Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 480.
[44] Ibid., p. 480, n. 48.
[45] See section 6.1.1.1.
[46] Petrucci comments that vernacular books, especially luxury exemplars, came to assume many of the characteristics of the *libro da banco* in the course of the fourteenth century. See his 'Storia e geografia', p. 1237.

onto each page, thereby shortening the overall length of the manuscript and reducing the cost, even when large sheets of paper or parchment were used.

Cursi has studied the chronology of manuscript production of the *Decameron* in some detail, and provides a graph which illustrates high and low points in production.[47] To summarize his findings, the production of manuscripts during Boccaccio's lifetime was quite low, picking up after his death and reaching an initial apex at the end of the fourteenth century. After a severe drop in numbers immediately following this apex, production levels rise with some hesitation from the 1440s, reaching the highest peak in the 1470s before falling once more. No manuscripts in my sample date from the first two decades of the sixteenth century, suggesting that the slump in production in the last quarter of the fifteenth century revealed by Cursi continued into the sixteenth, perhaps due to the introduction of printed exemplars.[48] The Type 1 manuscripts in my sample all date from the third quarter of the fifteenth century, when the text was at its most popular. Although there was a renewed interest in the text immediately after Boccaccio's death, Type 3 manuscripts date more frequently to this period, suggesting that the work may have been copied in considerable numbers, but did not achieve significant cultural status.

7.1.2 SCRIBES AND OWNERSHIP

The evidence for scribes that can be found in the manuscripts I have viewed is summarized in Table 34. Branca proposed that the evidence found in colophons demonstrated that the *Decameron* was written and owned by 'copisti per passione', while Cursi has argued that this work was not entirely the province of amateur scribes. Domenico da Caronelli is the only named scribe with a known mercantile background. However, alongside Vr, he also copied the extract of the *Decameron* found in U (Udine, Biblioteca Comunale Vincenzo Joppi, MS 30), suggesting that he copied at least one of these works for someone other than himself.[49] Niccolò, the Benedictine monk, may have written for himself, for the monastery, or been commissioned by a reader outside the monastery, and he may have been quite different in social and cultural class from merchant copyists. I have not been able to find any information about Lodovico

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[47] See Grafico 4 – Codici *Decameron* – Distribuzione cronologica, in 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 485.
[48] See section 7.2 for a discussion of the interaction between manuscripts and printed editions of the *Decameron*.
[49] Ibid., pp. 503-06. See also U in the discussion below relating to extracts of the *Decameron*. I have used the form of his name adopted by Cursi, although Branca refers to him as 'Domenico Caronelli' (*Tradizione*, II, 96).

Tommasini, and based on the colophon in Vch, Filippo da Bibbiena is the only scribe who can be classified a 'copista per passione'. According to Branca, Filippo was probably 'un agiato agricoltore', although he does not provide any evidence for this conclusion.[50] Interestingly, Filippo's manuscript does not resemble the simple exemplars described by Branca, but is a Type 1 manuscript written in semi-gothic bookhand, with professional illumination. This exemplar also differs from the others in Table 34 because it was explicitly intended for a plural readership – for Filippo himself, as well as for his relatives and friends. It is extremely difficult to judge what these readers shared in common, or how their needs and interests differed from one another. Thus, it is unclear whether the presentation of this manuscript is a response to a group which shared the same requirements, or whether it represents a compromise reached among the group, or reflects the requirements of a single, dominant group member.

Table 34: *Evidence for scribes of the 'Decameron'*

MS	Type	Scribe	Colophon
F^2	Paper 2	Lodovico Tommasini[51]	Finito oggi questo dì 28 d'ottobre 1469 scritto per me Lodovico di Ser Jacopo Tommasini a onore di Dio e della sua Madre.
F^3	Paper 2	Niccolò	Hoc librum expletum fuit die XXV mensis Iulii 1396 per me dompno .n. monachum ordinis sancti benedictiti [sic]. Amen deo gratias Amen .n. Nicolaus.
P^6	Paper 2	Copista a prezzo?	Anonymous
Vb	Paper 2	Copista a prezzo?	Anonymous
Vb^1	Paper 3	Copista a prezzo & Antonio di Bartolommeo?	Anonymous
Vb^2	Paper 2	Copista a prezzo?	Anonymous
Vb^3	Paper 2	Copista a prezzo?	Anonymous
Vch	Paper 1	Filippo da Bibbiena	Filippo d'Andrea da Bibbiena scrisse questo Cento Novelle per se suoi parenti et amici.
Vr	Paper 3	Domenico da Caronelli	Et scrito et complito per mi Domenego de Caronello in Coneglano 1395 a dì 24 de Aprille. Deo gracias. Amen Amen Amen.

In addition to the evidence provided in colophons, Cursi has attributed Vb and P^6 to a single scribe. He or she is also identified as the copyist of four other manuscripts containing vernacular works, suggesting the activity of a professional scribe, despite the use of *mercantesca*.[52] Cursi also suggests that three more manuscripts in my sample were copied by anonymous 'copisti a prezzo': the central section in Vb^1 may have been

[50] Branca, 'Copisti per passione', p. 72.
[51] Cursi neglects to include Lodovico in his table of manuscripts on p. 478, although he does mention that there is no further information on this scribe on p. 489.
[52] See Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', pp. 513-14.

given to a professional scribe to copy because its owner, Antonio di Bartolomeo, who began the transcription, was not accustomed to copying such a long work.[53] On the basis of physical evidence Cursi reasons that Vb^2 and Vb^3 originated from the shop of a single *cartolaio*. The manuscripts were given to two different scribes, who each used a different script (humanistic cursive and *mercantesca* respectively). It would be interesting to know how much the choice of script was conditioned by the availability of scribes with particular calligraphic skills, and how much it was dictated by the taste of the purchaser in each case. In contrast to Filippo da Bibbiena's exemplar, these professional manuscripts are all Type 2 exemplars, and almost all written in *mercantesca*.

Table 35: *Evidence for ownership of MSS of the 'Decameron'*

MS	Type	Owner(s)	Evidence
Lo	Paper 1	Gabrielli da Stra	Coat of arms (fol. 6^r)
P^6	Paper 2	Sinibaldo e Giuliano di Filippo	Questo libro è di Sinibaldo e Giuliano di Filipo di Simone ritagliatori. (fol. 182^r)
P^3	Paper 2	Ferdinand I of Naples	Library number (fol. 279^v)
Vb^1	Paper 3	Antonio di Bartolomeo	Questo libro si è di me Antonio di Bartolommeo merca…[mercante?] MCCCCXXIII. [Written over the top in black ink] Tomaxo Raffacani. (fol. 224^r)

As Table 35 illustrates, P^6, which was transcribed by an anonymous 'copista a prezzo', was owned by two 'ritagliatori' and Vb^1 was also owned by a merchant.[54] As Cursi points out, however, this information concerns only a very small percentage of manuscripts; thus, whilst the *Decameron* clearly was owned by merchants, this does not preclude the possibility of other social classes having an interest in it.[55] This is borne out by the evidence, which Cursi does not cite, that both Lo and P^3 belonged to wealthy and socially prominent owners.

[53] Ibid., pp. 514-17. See also the discussion on ownership below.
[54] A 'ritagliatore' is a retailer (as opposed to a wholesaler). Cursi gives the following definition: 'venditore di stoffe in tagli sufficienti alla confezione di un abito o di un arredo' (ibid., p. 514, n. 187).
[55] Ibid., p. 490.

Table 36: *Manuscripts containing extracts from the 'Decameron'*

MS	Date	Extracts from the *Decameron*	Other texts
F	1358-1363	Conclusions and *ballate* from Days I-IX, IX. 10	'Introduction' by the scribe.
F^6	1400-1425	*Ballate* from Days VII-X and from X. 7	Sonnets by Alberto degli Albizzi, *rime* by Boccaccio, letter from Boccaccio to Franceschino de' Bardi
U	1400-1425	III. 10, introduction to Day IV, X. 5	'Epistola da una egregia nobile famoxa dona mandada ad un so dolce Amante D. di Karonelli'
L^{10}	*c.* 1450	VIII. 5	Documents and political orations, *rime* and writings by Petrarch, Leonardo Bruni, and others. *Novella* V. 2 from the *Pecorone*, Latin translation by Bruni of IV. 1 from the *Decameron*, *Novella di Seleuco* by Bruni, *La Ruffianella* (falsely attributed to Boccaccio)
D	1450-1475	IV. 1	Miscellany of writings by Bruni (lives of Petrarch and Dante, vernacular translation of *Pro Marcello*, *Novella di Seleuco*), *Urbano* (attributed to Boccaccio), letter from Boccaccio to Franceschino de' Bardi, *Trattato di nobilità* by Bonaccorso da Montemagno, *novella* about Guglielma, daughter of the King of England and wife of the King of Hungary.
FR^1	1450-1475	IV. 1	Lives of Dante and Petrarch by Bruni, oration by Cicero to Caesar introduced by Bruni, oration by Bruni, *Urbano*, versification by Accolti of IV. 1 from the *Decameron*, *Novella di Seleuco* by Bruni, proem of letter from Boccaccio to Franceschino de' Bardi, *Trattato sulla nobiltà* by Bonaccorso da Montemagno, orations or protests by Stefano Porcari.
FR^3	1450-1475	IV. 1, X. 10, introduction to Day III	Lives of Dante and Petrarch by Bruni, 6 orations by Stefano Porcari, *Novella di Seleuco* by Bruni, a morality on Bruni and Boccaccio's *novelle*, an extract on Hannibal and Scipio from the vernacular translation of Petrarch's *De viris illustribus* by Donato degli Albanzani, a frottola by Gregorio Roverbella, a *canzone* to the Virgin by Matteo Griffoni.
Si	1450-1475	IV. 1	Orations, letters (including from Boccaccio to Pino de' Rossi and to Franceschino de' Bardi), epistles, 'protests', proems, translations into the vernacular.
L^9	1475-1499	Introduction to Day IV, VI. 9	*Rime* by Guido Cavalcanti, Dino del Garbo's commentary on the *canzone* 'Donna me prega' and various testimonies on Cavalcanti
L^{11}	1475-1499	IV. 1	*La sfera* by Gregorio Dati, *Novella di Seleuco* by Bruni, *Novelle* XXXI and XII by Masuccio Salernitano

Table 36: *Manuscripts containing extracts from the 'Decameron'* continued

MS	Date	Extracts from the *Decameron*	Other texts
Vl[1]	1475-1499	III. 5 and IV. 1	Aurispa's Vernacular translation by Aurispas of 'Questio inter Annibalem et Alexandrum', vernacular translation by Aurispa of the 'Differenzia tra Filippo e Alessandro' by Giustino, vernacular translation by Aurispa of the 'Differenzia fra Cesare e Catone' by Sallust, letter by Lentulo on Christ, *Novella di Seleuco* by Bruni, 'Trattato di due giovani romani ove si disputa di nobilità per aver Lucrezia per moglie', letter from Boccaccio to Pino de' Rossi, *Urbano*.
FR[2]	1500-1599	*Ballata* from X. 7	*Vita nuova* by Dante and *rime* by various authors (including Buonaccorso da Montemagno, Dante, Cavalcanti, Antonio Pucci, Petrarch, Sacchetti, Pieraccio di Tedaldi, Bartolomeo da Castel della Pieve, Cino da Pistoia, Jacopo di Dante, Paolo dell'Abbaco, Riccardo conte da Battifolle, Antonio degli Alberti, Francesco Alfani, Fazio degli Uberti, Guinizelli, Guittone d'Arezzo, Sennuccio, Francesco degli Albizzi, Cino Rinuccini, Andrea di Perugia, and Boccaccio), *ballate* by Boccaccio (LXXII from the *Rime* and *ballata* from the VIIth Questione d'Amore of the *Filocolo*)
L[12]	1500-1599	*Ballate* from Days I-X	*Rime* and various texts
M	1500-1599	*Ballate* from Days I-X and from X. 7	*Vita nuova* by Dante, *rime* by Dante, Cavalcanti, Cino, Guinizelli, and Guittone
Vb[4]	1500-1599	*Ballata* from X. 7	Miscellany of writings and notes by Celso Cittadini, including a section of mainly Sienese *rime* by different authors (including Boccaccio)

7.1.3 MANUSCRIPTS CONTAINING EXTRACTS FROM THE *DECAMERON*

Arguing his case for the initial diffusion of the *Decameron* among mercantile readers and copyists, Branca notes that additional texts of a similar nature are sometimes found in conjunction with *novelle* from the *Decameron*. However, he fails to make the distinction between manuscript miscellanies that include extracts from the *Decameron*, and *novelle* that are added by the scribe or subsequent reader to full-text versions of the *Decameron*.[56] *Novelle* from the *Pecorone*, and by Sacchetti, Masuccio, and Bruni are cited as examples of 'narrazioni congeniali', but he overlooks other works, such as Gregorio Dati's astronomical and geographical treatise *La sfera*, or Aurispa's translations of Latin works into the vernacular, which are less easy to reconcile with the 'mercantile' nature of the *Decameron*. When Branca does comment explicitly on 'sillogi', he refers to manuscripts containing 'liberi rifacimenti di novelle del *Decameron*', rather than extracts.[57] Cursi challenges Branca's claim that *novelle* similar in character to the *Decameron* are frequently added, but excludes L^{10}, L^{11}, and Vl^{1} from consideration precisely because they are miscellanies, conceding only that L^{3} and Vr have had other stories added, both of which are full-text versions of the *Decameron*.[58] When presenting the list of manuscripts he has chosen to include in his study, Cursi acknowledges that F^{6} contains extracts from the *Decameron*, and accordingly excludes it from his study.[59] However, as I noted above, other manuscripts that contain extracts are included without further comment.

In the context of the reception of *Decameron*, I feel it is vital to make a distinction between manuscripts that contain, or were intended to contain, full-text versions of this work, and miscellanies which include extracts. Each type of manuscript presents Boccaccio in a different light and commands potentially very different audiences. The manuscript miscellanies also warrant further investigation because they were generally transcribed at a much later date than the full-text manuscripts and were not subjected to such rigorous competition from the printed medium.[60] In this section I intend to consider briefly the significance of the contents of miscellanies for the reception of Boccaccio and the *Decameron*. For this purpose I have compiled details of

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[56] For example, Branca groups together L^{10}, L^{11}, and Vl^{1}, which are miscellanies, and L^{3} (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Pluteo XLII, 4), which is not (*Tradizione*, II, 198).
[57] Ibid., p. 198.
[58] Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 491.
[59] Ibid., p. 474.
[60] Several editions of individual *novelle* were available, for example, Bruni's translation into Latin of IV. 1 was printed *c.* 1475 and Matteo Bandello's translation into Latin of X. 8 was printed in 1509. However, these were not accessible to those who could only read Italian, and were not printed in the same quantities as editions of the full-text of the *Decameron*.

the contents of the fifteen manuscripts transcribed before 1520 that contain extracts from the *Decameron* and other texts (see Table 36).[61] Many of these miscellanies consist of more than one manuscript of varying provenance and date. Where this is the case, I have listed only the contents of the section written in the same hand as the extracts and contemporaneous with the *Decameron*.[62]

Manuscripts containing extracts from the *Decameron* can be divided into two types: those that include a maximum of two *novelle*, and those that include one or more *ballate*. F is the only manuscript which includes both a *novella* and nine *ballate*, as well as the only manuscript to contain the conclusions from the first nine days. The significance of the scribal introduction to this selection of extracts was discussed in Chapter 3. U also contains a letter authored by the scribe, but the remaining manuscripts contain texts from non-scribal sources. These texts were apparently selected according to conscious stylistic guidelines concerning the contents of miscellanies, since there is a correlation between Boccaccio's *ballate* and other poetical works, and between *novelle* from the *Decameron* and other prose works. F^6 is an exception, since it contains *rime* and a prose letter by Boccaccio, and FR^1 contains prose together with Francesco Accolti's rendering of the second part of IV. 1 in verse. In these cases, the decision about content appears to have been thematic: texts are linked by a common author, or the same text is presented 'translated' into a different form. However, the decision to include Matteo Griffoni's *canzone* in FR^3, which is otherwise largely composed of prose texts, may have been guided by nothing other than personal taste.

Miscellanies undoubtedly reflected, and were influential in forming, particular perceptions about Boccaccio. In M the combination of authors such as Guido Guinizelli, Guittone d'Arezzo, Guido Cavalcanti, Dante, and Cino da Pistoia highlights the influence of love poets on Boccaccio's *ballate*, rather than his reputation as the lively narrator of a 'mercantile epic'. FR^2 contains a much wider variety of poetical works, but these were also mostly written in the fourteenth century, once again underlining Boccaccio's medieval formation. Transcriptions of the *ballate* may have been in demand by readers who disapproved of, or were uninterested in, the prose

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[61] I have viewed six of these manuscripts in person (F, F^6, FR^1, FR^3, Vl^1, and FR^2). The remaining nine manuscripts are described by Branca (*Tradizione*, II, 73-136), including four exemplars attributed to the sixteenth century which may have been copied after 1520.

[62] I have derived this information from the descriptions given by Branca in ibid., pp. 73-136, although the details provided are often inconsistent. Hence for some manuscripts a comprehensive description of the contents is given, while for others a brief summary is provided.

narrative of the *Decameron*, and who wished to consider the *ballate* as self-contained works, independent of their original context. Alternatively, readers may have included the *ballate* in collections of lyrics precisely because the full-text version of the *Decameron* had been so well-received. Almost all the poets included in these compilations are of Tuscan origin, and four out of five of the manuscripts containing *ballate* and other poems date from the sixteenth century. It is possible, therefore, that extracts from the *Decameron* were held up as linguistic models, while their content and context was only of secondary importance.[63]

Manuscripts which include Boccaccio's *novelle* together with prose by other authors are generally miscellanies of vernacular texts that could have been accessed by readers with similar levels of literacy to those necessary for the *Decameron*. However, L^{10} contains Bruni's translation of the story of Guiscardo and Ghismonda (IV. 1) into Latin, which indicates that at least one manuscript must have been designed for a reader with some knowledge of Latin, who was potentially very different from the middle-class readers of full-text versions of the *Decameron*.[64] Several miscellanies contain texts that have been translated from Latin or Greek into the vernacular, for example, Bruni's translation of Cicero's *Pro Marcello* (D), a translation of Buonaccorso da Montemagno's *De nobilitate* (D, FR^1), a passage from Donato degli Albanzani's translation of Petrarch's *De viris illustribus* (FR^3), and a selection of translations by Aurispa (Vl^1). This suggests that there was some interest in humanistic works, but the readers at which these miscellanies were aimed lacked the ability to read a classical language.

The story of Guiscardo and Ghismonda (IV. 1) is the *novella* by Boccaccio most frequently included in these miscellanies, and evidently appealed to humanists, since it was translated by Bruni. Chiari comments 'le novelle boccaccesche tradotte in latino non erano state scelte a caso, giacchè di preferenza erano state scelte quelle di

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[63] That it may have been common at the beginning of the sixteenth century to read Boccaccio's verse, at least in the form of narrative works such as the *Teseida* and *Amorosa visione*, is hinted at in *Prose della volgar lingua*, II. 2 when Bembo writes: 'il qual Boccaccio, come che in verso altresì molte cose componesse, nondimeno assai apertamente si conosce che egli solamente nacque alle prose'. Dionisotti comments 'il sottintenso polemico è la grande fortuna, cui il Bembo reagisce ora dopo esserne stato egli stesso partecipe, delle opere minori del Boccaccio nella letteratura cortigiana del Quattro e primo Cinquecento' (Bembo, *Prose e rime*, p. 131, n. 9). The contents of another sixteenth-century manuscript also point to the linguistic role played by the *Decameron*. F^8 (Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, IV 39) is a slim paper volume containing a list of vocabulary from the *Decameron* and *Corbaccio*, ordered alphabetically, with each word followed by the appropriate numerical reference.

[64] Bruni translated IV. 1 in 1438 (Chiari, p. 300). Other *novelle* from the *Decameron* that were translated into Latin in the fifteenth century include I. 1 by Antonio Loschi, X. 1 by Bartolomeo Fazio, V. 1, and X. 8 by Filippo Beroaldo.

argomento serio alle quali meglio, secondo appunto il gusto umanistico, si confaceva il latino' (p. 300). Bruni's own reputation may in fact have contributed to the popularity of this *novella* and perhaps overshadowed its original provenance. FR^3 contains both IV. 1 and the story of Griselda (X. 10), another dignified and tragic tale to which Petrarch chose to give his seal of approval with a translation into Latin.[65] It is also significant that D, FR^1, FR^3, Si, L^9, and Vl^1 are written in humanistic scripts. Presented in a different context, therefore, these extracts could lose their association with the 'mercantile' nature of the *Decameron* and appeal to a different readership. However, there are two miscellanies which contain humanistic texts and a choice of *novelle* from the *Decameron* that does not deny the less serious side to Boccaccio's narration. L^{10}, which contains the Latin translation of IV. 1, also includes the story of the judge from the Marche who has his trousers pulled down in court (VIII. 5), and Vl^1 includes IV. 1, together with the story of Messer Francesco Vergellesi's desire for a palfrey, which leads to his wife making a cuckold of him (III. 5).

As Branca noted, *novelle* by authors other than Boccaccio, which are often related to the *Decameron*, are frequently included in these 'prose miscellanies'. Bruni's *Novella di Seleuco*, which was composed in 1438 and tells of the great generosity of Seleucus, King of Syria, was particularly popular. Written to form the counterpart to Tancredi's cruelty,[66] the *Novella* appears together with IV. 1 in five manuscripts (D, FR^1, FR^3, $L1^1$, and VL^1), and in L^{10} it is juxtaposed with Bruni's translation of IV. 1 into Latin. Miscellanies containing these *novelle* together with stories from the *Decameron* suggest that readers were conscious of and encouraging a narrative tradition that had begun with Boccaccio. However, it would be misleading to ignore other texts, the choice of which appears to have been conditioned by preference for an author. Both the *Urbano* and *La Ruffianella* were attributed to Boccaccio in the fifteenth century, and Boccaccio's letters to Franceschino de' Bardi and Pino de' Rossi appear in four manuscripts. More than one work by Leonardo Bruni appears in at least four manuscripts and several translations by Aurispa are included in Vl^1. There is also a remarkable degree of homogeneity in the selection of authors and texts across the sample of manuscripts, with at least one work by Bruni occurring in L^{10}, D, FR^1, FR^3, $L1^1$, and Vl^1, Buonaccorso da Montemagno's *Trattato sulla nobilità* appearing in both D and FR^1, and Stefano Porcari's orations included in FR^1, FR^3, and probably in Si. It is more difficult to account for the inclusion of *La sfera*, by Gregorio Dati, in L^{11}, which

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[65] *Sen.* XVII. 3.
[66] Chiari, p. 303.

is otherwise a compilation of *novelle* by different authors. L^9 can be distinguished from the remaining 'prose miscellanies', since its contents revolve around the central figure of Guido Cavalcanti. In this context, Boccaccio is not of interest in his own right, but for his comments on Cavalcanti in VI. 9, where Cavalcanti is the central character, and in the introduction to Day IV, which contains a passing reference to the poet.

With the exception of F, all the miscellanies date from the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, with a significant number dating from 1475 onwards. Thus, the circulation of extracts from the *Decameron* seems to have been a phenomenon which operated largely independently to the *fortuna* of the full-text version, attracting primarily humanistic readers once interest in the text as a whole in manuscript form had begun to decline. The number of printed editions of the *Decameron* in circulation from the 1470s may have rendered transcription of the full text by hand unnecessary in this period.[67] However, for those readers who wished to have only selected passages from the *Decameron* at their disposal, copies in manuscript were invaluable.

7.1.4 PARATEXTS

Tables of contents and additional texts are both found in full-text manuscripts of the *Decameron*. Branca refers only briefly to the latter, and writes:

> altri [copisti] ancora vollero accodare alle cento del Boccaccio novelle che li avevano particolarmente dilettati, come quella del Grasso Legnaiolo (cod. di Stoccolma [St]) o due anonime ma assai note (cod. di Modena α J 6 6 [E]); Domenico Caronelli infine pensò di prolungare i ritmi nobili ed eroici della Decima Giornata con una epistola esemplare [in Vr and U].[68]

Cursi does not take issue with the comments relating to Vr and U, but points out that the *novelle* added to E were copied by a reader rather than the scribe, and argues that St was transcribed professionally, hence the addition of a *novella* from the Grasso Legnaiolo is not a feature characteristic of 'copisti per passione'.[69] Within the sample of full-text manuscripts that I have examined, an additional two exemplars (Lo and Vb^3) contain texts added by the scribe. In both cases, however, the additional text is not a *novella*. Lo contains the sonnet 'Sempre se dice che uno fa malle a cento' (fol. 1^v), attributed to Antonio Pucci or Buccio di Ranallo,[70] while Vb^3 includes the *canzone* by Dante 'Donna pietosa e di novella etate' (fol. 250^v). There is no explicit evidence to identify the scribe

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[67] For details of the number of printed editions in circulation, see section 7.2.
[68] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 198.
[69] 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', p. 491.
[70] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 96.

or owner of either manuscript. Both are written in *mercantesca*, but contain decoration that was probably professionally executed.

To my knowledge, there has been no consideration by previous scholars of the significance of the presence of tables of contents, although they appear in fifteen exemplars in my sample.[71] Typically, the table consists of a short summary for each *novella*, arranged by day and the order in which it appears in the narrative. The structure of the *Decameron* is generally easy to discern, since rubrication and decorative initials are used to mark the beginning of each day and each summary. In some cases, the table of contents is written entirely in red ink in order to distinguish it from Boccaccio's narrative, although in these manuscripts it is more difficult to distinguish between days and *novelle* at a glance.[72] Lo and P^4 include the name of the relevant narrator for each *novella*, while F^3 provides the name of the king or queen presiding over each day. The summaries are usually numbered, sometimes from 1-10 within each day, but also, on occasion, consecutively throughout the table of contents.[73] The table offers an overview of the contents to the reader, providing an introduction to the structure, or functioning as an *aide-mémoire*. In the majority of cases, however, it would not have greatly facilitated the reader's orientation within the text, since folio numbers are provided in only four manuscripts.[74] The scribes of F^3, P^4, and Vr have provided aids to orientation elsewhere, with running titles across the top of each folio giving the number of the appropriate day and *novella*. Interestingly, P^4 contains folio numbers in the table of contents as well as running titles, which may mean that its reader had a greater interest in directed reading. The scribe of Vb^2 also facilitated orientation and memory by repeating the names of the narrators in red ink in the margin on several folios where these characters are first introduced.

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[71] F^1, F^2, F^3, Lo, P^1, P^2, P^3, P^4, P^6, Vb^1, Vb^2, Vb^3, Vch, Vr, and Vz^1. In general, there has been little written about tables of contents in manuscripts. Mary A. and Richard H. Rouse offer a brief introduction in 'La naissance des index', in *Histoire de l'édition française. I: Le Livre conquérant: Du Moyen Âge au milieu du XVIIe siècle*, dir. by Henri-Jean Martin and Roger Chartier, 3 vols ([Paris]: Promodis, 1982), I, 77-85. Parkes discusses how the inclusion of tables of contents is linked to changes that took place in the presentation of academic books in the thirteenth century in his article 'The Influence of the Concepts'.

[72] This is the case in P^2, P^6, and Vb^2.

[73] Consecutive numbering from 1-100 may reflect the fact that the *Decameron* was also known as the *Centonovelle*.

[74] P^1, P^4, Vb^1, and Vb^3.

7.1.5 TRACES OF READING

I have identified five different categories of traces of reading found in manuscripts containing texts by Boccaccio.[75] Branca comments on unrelated notes (category three) of a commercial and financial nature found in manuscripts of the *Decameron*, arguing that these provide evidence that exemplars were owned and read by merchants. He cites L^6 and Vb^1 as examples, but does not reveal how many other exemplars are involved.[76] 'Chiose', which might correspond to the marginalia of category one, are mentioned in passing, but once again, no examples are given.[77] Cursi responds to Branca's comments, writing:

> in realtà, nonostante uno scrupoloso esame di qualsiasi annotazione identificabile posta sulle carte di guardia, all'interno dei piatti, all'inizio o alla fine del testo, ho potuto rilevare che l'unico testimone all'interno del quale compaiono tracce di conti databili con certezza ad un periodo contemporaneo o di poco posteriore alla copiatura è il Parigino Italiano 1474 [P^5].[78]

Concerned with debating the points of Branca's thesis about mercantile readership, Cursi does not mention the existence of traces of reading other than those that I have defined as 'unrelated notes'. In addition, Cursi has limited his search for traces of reading to marks that are more or less contemporary with transcription of the manuscript, in order to give credence to or challenge Branca's claims about the initial diffusion of the *Decameron*. I have extended my search for traces of reading to include any that provide information about readers and reading practices up until 1520.

Table 37: *MSS of the 'Decameron' that do not contain any traces of reading*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout
F^1	Paper 1	Humanistic bookhand	Large	2 columns
Lo	Paper 1	*Mercantesca*	Large	2 columns
P^3	Paper 2	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 columns
P^6	Paper 2	*Mercantesca*	Large	2 columns
P^4	Paper 3	*Mercantesca*	Medium	2 columns
Vf	Paper 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 columns
Vl^2	Paper 3	*Mercantesca*	Medium	2 columns
Vz	Paper 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	1 column

Of my sample of twenty-one manuscripts, over one-third does not contain any traces of reading. Table 37 summarizes the presentation features of these manuscripts.

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[75] These categories are defined in section 4.2.
[76] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 195. See also Branca, 'Copisti per passione', p. 71; Branca, 'Per la storia del testo', pp. 420-21.
[77] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 195.
[78] Cursi, 'Produzione, Tipologia, Diffusione', p. 492.

F[1] and Lo are two of the most beautifully decorated paper manuscripts in the sample and may have been kept as status symbols, treated with special care and read only on special occasions. This would contradict Branca's opinion that 'di fronte al *Decameron* i lettori non fossero raccolti in un atteggiamento di ammirazione e di rispetto come di fronte ai capolavori di evidente e consacrata dignità letteraria'.[79] The remaining manuscripts in Table 37 are Type 2 and 3 exemplars more likely to have been copied by readers for themselves, or transcribed by low-cost professional scribes for readers unable to afford to own books as status symbols, or for readers who did not attribute great status to the text. Petrucci comments that one of the features which characterizes *libri-registri*, copied by non-professional scribes, is the absence of comments or reader's notes, implying that the act of writing whilst reading was not customary for this type of reader.[80] Manuscripts may have escaped being marked because they were enjoyed away from the workplace or desk, where there were no writing implements to hand, but this does not accord well with Branca's claim that 'ripetutamente possiamo sorprendere [...] tracce di conti, di fitti, di prestiti', suggesting that manuscripts were written and read in the workplace, or at least within reach of pen and ink.[81]

Table 38 illustrates which traces of reading are found in manuscripts of the *Decameron*. Although I have viewed nine manuscripts that contain unrelated notes, three exemplars alone include possible examples of financial transactions on the blank leaves included at the beginning or end. Vb[3] contains a small quantity of arithmetic dated 'adi 5 di maggio', but without a corresponding year, FR also contains several lines of mathematical addition on the same leaf as a note dated 1516-1518, and P[5] contains arithmetic, of which Branca notes 'le varie registrazioni di fitti, salari, prestanze che appaiono sulle carte di questo codice possono ricordare il tipo di quelle caratteristiche nell'amministrazione dei Del Bene'.[82] All three are paper manuscripts written in *mercantesca*, resembling the 'tradizione umile e borghese' described by Branca.[83] The remaining notes that are unrelated to the *Decameron* range from sonnets on blank leaves (P[5] and Vb), to a record of the elections and deaths of Doges in Venice, dating from 1457 to 1475 (Vz[1], fol. 1[r]), a simple note, 'in christi nomine amen' (Vr, fol. 1[r]), and a proverb: 'non est amicus nosster qui nosstra bona tollit sed amicus nosster est qui

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[79] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 198.
[80] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 183.
[81] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 195.
[82] Ibid., p. 115.
[83] Ibid., p. 199.

nosstra bona reddit' (P^1, final blank leaf). The two notes written in Latin suggest that these readers of the *Decameron* had at least a basic knowledge of that language.

Table 38: *Traces of reading in MSS of the 'Decameron'*

	Category 1	*Category 2*	*Category 3*		*Category 4*	*Category 5*
MS	Marginalia	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated Notes	Scribbles/ Smudges	Unrelated Illustration	Corrections
F^2				✓		✓
F^3		✓				✓
FR	✓		✓			
P^1			✓			
P^2			✓			
P^5	✓		✓			
Vb	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Vb^1	✓	✓				
Vb^2		✓				
Vb^3		✓	✓		✓	✓
Vch		✓	✓			
Vr		✓	✓			
Vz^1		✓	✓			✓

A significant number of manuscripts contain marks or symbols against passages of text that demonstrate some interaction with the contents of the *Decameron*. In contrast, only four manuscripts contain marginalia, most of which provide notes to facilitate orientation. These may have been equally of use to readers studying the text as to those reading purely for entertainment. In Vb a reader has provided running titles across the recto and verso of each folio, indicating the relevant day within the work. A reader of FR has marked 'prologo' across the top margins of folios containing the proem and on subsequent folios given the name of the king or queen in charge of each day. On the lower margin of folios in P^5 the name of the principal character in each *novella* is supplied as a running title. It is interesting to note that none of these manuscripts contain a table of contents, and therefore readers may have felt especially compelled to add these features in order to find their way around the text with ease. A reader of Vb^1, perhaps interested in the language used by Boccaccio, has chosen to copy certain words, principally from the *cornice* of Day V, into the margin, for example, 'surgenti raggi', 'leggiere affano', and 'per tribunali' (fols 103^r-06^r).

The readers of five manuscripts made corrections to the text, where there is both simple scribal error and variation in the textual tradition. A note on fol. 71^v of Vb^3 explicitly indicates that the reader was aware of the text transmitted by other manuscripts ('in altri testi [...] notono questi [sic] parole'), although this may well have

been recorded after 1520. Although there are no illustrations that relate to the content of the *Decameron*, a reader or owner of Vb^3 has added to the decoration extending from a decorated initial on fol. 9^r to make what seems to be a coat of arms, while Vb contains a small drawing of a rose on fol. 147^r.

7.2 PRINTED EDITIONS OF THE *DECAMERON*

In the 1470s and 80s the *Decameron* was issued frequently, appearing in seven cities across Italy, from Naples in the south, to Milan and Venice in the north. Demand for the work seems to have lessened temporarily between 1484 and 1516, when only four editions were printed, before it stimulated a second period of intense printing activity between 1516 and 1518. Table 39 contains the publishing details for all seventeen editions of the *Decameron* printed before 1520.

Table 39: *Editions of the 'Decameron' printed before 1520*

Siglum[84]	City	Printer	Date
N	Naples?	Printer of Terentius	*c.* 1470
CV	Venice	Christoph Valdarfer	1471
M	Mantua	Pietro Adamo de' Micheli	1472
A	Bologna	Baldassare Azzoguidi	1476
Z	Milan	Antonio Zarotto	1476
R	Vicenza	Giovanni di Reno	1478
S	Venice	Antonio da Strada	30 March 1481
F	Florence	Ripoli Press	13 May 1483
T	Venice	Battista Torti	8 May 1484
JGG	Venice	Giovanni and Gregorio de Gregori	20 June 1492
B	Venice	Manfredo Bonelli	5 December 1498
BZa	Venice	Bartolomeo Zanni	5 July 1504
BZb	Venice	Bartolomeo Zanni	5 August 1510
GG	Venice	Gregorio de Gregori	May 1516
G	Florence	Filippo Giunta	29 July 1516
AZ	Venice	Agostino Zanni	1518

Numbers of dated and datable manuscripts of the *Decameron* had been rising steadily from 1460 and reached their peak in 1470. Thus, it seems that printers were responding to an interest in the *Decameron* that was already prevalent when the first presses were set up, rather than attempting to create or resurrect interest in a lost or forgotten text. Most of the manuscripts produced around 1470 were medium-low quality exemplars copied in semi-gothic bookhand and *mercantesca*, but interest from humanists was on the increase. All extant exemplars written in humanistic script date from after 1450 and printers may have sought to exploit this interest.

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[84] I have attributed my own sigla to these editions, since a standardized system is not in use.

The dramatic decrease in the number of manuscripts copied after the introduction of the first editions, as well as the frequency with which the new editions appeared, suggests that the *Decameron* was enthusiastically received in print. Manuscripts containing mercantile hands were produced in much smaller numbers in the 1470s than previously, although this does not necessarily indicate that interest among merchants and artisans had all but disappeared. The large quantities of 'mercantile' manuscripts produced in the 1450s may have continued to satisfy the needs of these readers, who might also have been attracted to the *Decameron* in print. Copying a manuscript for oneself that lacked elaborate decoration and an expensive binding could be considerably cheaper than commissioning a manuscript from a professional scribe. However, the price of printed books in comparison with manuscripts could also be extremely attractive, and the prices of the first editions may even have been lowered to compete with the large quantity of manuscripts in circulation.[85]

The drop in production levels of both manuscripts and printed books between 1484 and 1516 might be attributed to a temporary saturation in the market. By the second decade of the sixteenth century the Italian reading public was fully accustomed to printed books and production costs were much lower than they had been in the 1470s.[86] In terms of price, the *Decameron* could be accessible to larger numbers of readers than ever before. Christian Bec has revealed that merchant readers in Florence who could only afford one manuscript were most likely to own a missal.[87] When printed books became more affordable, readers could begin to build up larger collections of books that included literary works as well as devotional literature. Renewed interest in the *Decameron* in 1516 is probably also linked to the beginnings of a significant change in attitude towards Boccaccio and his vernacular prose on behalf of the cultural élite. The appearance of manuscripts suggests that in the fifteenth century the *Decameron* was generally read by those with little formal education and participation in written culture, and by readers who viewed it as a low status work. Towards the end of the fifteenth century and the beginning of the sixteenth, numbers of more expensive exemplars rose, and humanists began to show their appreciation for the linguistic qualities of the *Decameron*, a fact which is reflected both within the

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[85] For the relative prices of manuscripts and printed books, see Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 112-18.
[86] Horatio H. Brown comments that books printed in Venice were cheaper and reached a wider market as early as 1480 in *The Venetian Printing Press 1469-1800* (Amsterdam: van Heusden, 1969), pp. 34-35. See also Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 117.
[87] Bec, *Les Marchands écrivains*, p. 394.

manuscript tradition and outside. In 1505 Aldo Manuzio printed Bembo's *Asolani*, which imitated the grammar and vocabulary used by Boccaccio, and in 1516 the first Italian grammar was published, which drew in part on the *Decameron*.[88] Editions of the *Decameron* printed in 1516 reflect some of these new concerns, which begin to take shape and solidify to a greater extent after 1520.[89] The production of manuscripts of the *Decameron* never recovered, with only seven manuscripts surviving from the sixteenth century, in comparison to some fifty-one editions.[90]

The provenance of manuscripts is frequently difficult to determine and thus it is difficult to reach any conclusions about the geographical spread of Boccaccio's readers prior to print. Of the fifty-five manuscripts described by Cursi, only sixteen can be located in a specific city or region. The majority were copied in Tuscany, although a reasonable number originated in the Veneto, and two came from Naples.[91] Printed books, as indeed some manuscripts, were not always intended for the city in which they were produced. However, from the information in Table 39 it is possible to gauge with some certainty that initial demand for the *Decameron* in print was not restricted to Tuscany. Indeed, Florence did not produce an edition of the *Decameron* until 1483, after which only one more Florentine press contributed to the *Decameron*'s *fortuna* prior to 1520. In contrast, an edition was printed in Venice as early as 1471, and from 1484 onwards Venetian editions were virtually unrivalled by other cities. Venetian primacy continued into the sixteenth century, challenged only by Florence in 1527, 1529, and 1573, and Brescia in 1536. However, by the sixteenth century, at least, Venetian editions of the *Decameron* were undoubtedly exported to other cities within Italy.

7.2.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION[92]

The text of the first edition of the *Decameron*, known as the *Deo Gratias*,[93] descends directly from the extant autograph manuscript B.[94] There is little evidence of the

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[88] See also section 3.16.
[89] For the presentation and paratexts of the 1516 editions, see the discussion below (7.2.1; 7.2.2). The publication of Bembo's *Prose della volgar lingua* in 1525 represents a watershed in terms of debates over the status of the vernacular and the *fortuna* of the *Decameron*.
[90] EDIT16 and the Index Aureliensis record fifty-one editions printed in Italy in the sixteenth century.
[91] Florence (5), Siena (2), Pratovecchio (2), Veneto (4), Conegliano (2), Naples (2). See Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', pp. 477-78.
[92] A detailed description of the presentation of each edition can be found in Appendix V.
[93] This is a reference to the words with which the text ends. The edition lacks any indication of its provenance, the name of its printer, or the date it was printed. The printer has been linked with an edition of Terentius's *Comoediae* that appeared in Naples around the same time as the

influence of B in the presentation of the *Deo Gratias*, since it is a small folio edition with the text arranged in a single column, but there appear to be similarities in the target audience envisaged by both Boccaccio and the printer. While the autograph was a high quality manuscript aimed at learned readers, the edition seems to have been designed to attract the humanists and economically privileged readers who had recently begun to take an interest in Boccaccio. The choice of roman type reflects the recent trend for humanistic scripts in manuscripts of the *Decameron*, the large format increased the status of the text and imitated the many large-sized manuscripts copied between 1450 and 1475, and cost does not seem to have been a major issue, since only forty lines of text are arranged on each page, leaving wide margins.[95] The choice of single-column layout, which contrasts with approximately ninety per cent of *Decameron* manuscripts, may have been influenced by the model of humanistic books, which commonly associated humanistic scripts and a single column of text.[96]

That printers had access to preceding editions is also reflected in the presentation of the printed exemplars which resemble each other closely, no doubt because it created less work for the compositor to set the type following the same arrangement of layout and spacing as in the source text.[97] In his 1471 edition Christoph Valdarfer left spaces for hand-decoration at the same locations as in the *Deo Gratias*, the text is printed in a single column of roman type, and the edition is in folio.[98] However, the quality of Valdarfer's edition is such that Domenico Fava has commented: 'supera assai per

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Decameron, and is therefore commonly known as the 'printer of Terentius'. The ISTC also attributes an edition of the *Epistolae et Evangelia* in Italian to this printer *c.* 1470, followed by three further works around 1475.

[94] See Mirko Tavosanis, 'L'*editio princeps* del *Decameron* e il suo antigrafo', *Nuova rivista di letteratura italiana*, 1 (1998), 245-69. Tavosanis argues that a second, unidentified, exemplar was used in place of the missing leaves in the autograph.

[95] The printer may have been limited by the type founts in his possession (all the editions attributed to him use roman type), but the diversity in format amongst his editions indicates that size was a conscious choice.

[96] See for example, manuscripts of the *Teseida* and *De mulieribus* written in humanistic script (Chapters 6 and 8).

[97] On the relationship between texts see Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 121; Mirko Tavosanis, *La prima stesura delle 'Prose della volgar lingua': fonti e correzioni* (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2002), pp. 149-50.

[98] Valdarfer set up his first printing press in Venice in 1470, but does not seem to have stayed there for long after printing the *Decameron* in 1471 (BMC, V (1924), xi). By 1473 he had moved to Milan, and he continued to print until at least 1488 (BMC, VI (1930), xxii, 724). Most of Valdarfer's output consists of legal works, with some classics and medical texts (Alfred W. Pollard, *Catalogue of Books Mostly from the Presses of the First Printers Showing the Progress of Printing with Moveable Metal Types through the Second Half of the Fifteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1910), p. 162). Gianvittorio Dillon notes that the *Decameron* is the only vernacular work printed by Valdarfer in his 'I primi incunaboli illustrati e il *Decameron* veneziano del 1492', in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, III, 291-318 (p. 303).

eleganza di caratteri e per venustà di stampa quella precedente, che sembra precedere la valdarferiana di parecchi anni e non già di mesi'.[99] The spaces left for hand-decoration in Valdarfer's edition are slightly smaller than in the Neapolitan edition, and since both editions contain the same number of lines of text per page, this makes the decoration appear marginally less prominent in Valdarfer's edition, and orientation around the text potentially more difficult.

Trovato suggests that Pietro Adamo de' Micheli used the text of Valdarfer's edition, together with some manuscript sources, for his 1472 edition, and indeed the presentation of de' Micheli's edition differs so little from the previous one, that it is difficult to believe that he was not familiar with it.[100] The layout of the table of contents in de' Micheli's edition replicates exactly that used by Valdarfer, and spaces for decoration are left at the same places in the text, although in size these fall between the heights chosen by the printer of Terentius and Valdarfer.[101] Roman type is used, as it is for the four other works printed by de' Micheli, and Boccaccio's work is again presented in folio, with a layout of one column. Although an extra line of text has been added to each page, the size of the text block in de' Micheli's edition is four millimetres shorter and two millimetres narrower than Valdarfer's design, and has four leaves fewer than the Venetian edition.

Although the presentation of the early editions perhaps imitates the *Deo Gratias* for practical reasons, the similarity between editions also suggests that printers were marketing their editions at a readership similar to that envisaged by the printer of Terentius: the humanists who had begun to take in an interest in the *Decameron* in manuscript form, as well as reasonably wealthy merchants. Although similarities in readership might not seem surprising for editions produced within one or two years of each other, they do indicate that the perceived demands for the *Decameron* were quite standardized in both southern and northern Italy in the same period.

The first pause in the printing activity relating to the *Decameron* occurred between 1472 and 1476, and was quickly ended by the appearance of two editions in the same year. Baldassare Azzoguidi brought out an edition in Bologna, while Antonio

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[99] Domenico Fava, 'Intorno alle edizioni del Quattrocento del *Decameron*', *Accademie e biblioteche*, 7 (1933), 123-45 (p. 127).

[100] Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 121. De' Micheli introduced printing to Mantua in 1472, but enjoyed a relatively short career himself, printing his last book in 1474 (Fernanda Ascarelli and Marco Menato, *La tipografia del '500 in Italia* (Florence: Olschki, 1989), p. 182). It should be noted that according to the BMC, de' Micheli began printing in the last week in November 1471 (VII (1935), 927). The ISTC lists only five works under his name, including the *Decameron*, which must have been one of the first books he printed.

[101] The blank space for the initial at the beginning of the proem measures 8 lines high.

Zarotto did the same in Milan.[102] Azzoguidi replicated de' Micheli's text, with only minor variations, and used the first part of de' Micheli's colophon to form his own.[103] There is also conclusive evidence that Azzoguidi had had some direct contact with the Venetian edition of 1471, since the text of Valdarfer's colophon is reproduced at the end of the table of contents, with the wording changed only to substitute Azzoguidi's name and city of birth for that of Valdarfer. Following the presentation of the preceding editions, Azzoguidi included spaces for decoration at the same sections in the text, and used roman type and the folio format. However, this is also an edition that introduced the first significant changes to the model established by the printer of Terentius. The text is arranged in two columns, which breaks the connection between roman type and a single-column layout, favoured by humanists, and although the text space measures approximately the same as in the preceding editions, there are more lines of text per page, creating an edition that is some forty leaves shorter than those produced by Valdarfer and de' Micheli. This would have reduced the paper costs, and may have enabled Azzoguidi to sell his edition more cheaply. In addition, for the first time printed rubrics distinguished by paragraph marks are introduced that facilitate navigation for the reader, even when hand-decoration is not applied. This may be a sign that the printed text was beginning to supplant low quality manuscripts copied by readers for themselves, and become available to a wider audience, who may not have been concerned with or been able to afford additional hand-decoration.

Antonio Zarotto drew on the text of both the 1471 and 1472 editions, but he also introduced changes to the presentation of his edition which would have reduced the cost and perhaps made his edition more appealing to a wider range of readers.[104] Zarotto retained a single column of text, but chose to replicate the semi-gothic script that had

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[102] My assessment of the presentation of these editions must focus on the *Decameron* produced by Azzoguidi, since I have not been able to see the only copy of Zarotto's edition held in Vienna.

[103] Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 121. Azzoguidi had introduced printing to Bologna in 1471 in partnership with Franciscus Puteolanus and Hannibal Malpiglius, probably housing the printing press on his own premises and putting up the initial capital (BMC, VI (1930), xxx-xxxi). According to the ISTC, the majority of Azzoguidi's output is made up of religious works, with a small number of classical texts; the *Decameron* seems to have been only a temporary departure into vernacular literature.

[104] For the textual sources see Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 121. For biographical information and details of Zarotto's output, see Arnaldo Ganda, *I primordi della tipografia milanese: Antonio Zarotto da Parma (1471-1507)* (Florence: Olschki, 1984), pp. 15-17, 125-204; BMC, VII (1935), 708.

been so popular in manuscripts of the *Decameron* with a semi-gothic typeface, which enabled him to fit more words on each line and reduce the length of his edition.[105]

The innovations introduced by both Azzoguidi and Zarotto indicate that the *Decameron* was beginning to become cheaper and more accessible. The appeal of the presentation of Azzoguidi's edition, in particular, shows that these changes were not localized to Bologna or Milan, but were symptomatic of general shifts in readership patterns. In 1478 Giovanni di Reno followed Azzoguidi's model very closely, replicating Azzoguidi's practice of using a modified version of Valdarfer's colophon, and using the same number of lines of text on each page, and printed rubrics to introduce each *novella*.[106] In turn, Antonio da Strada used Giovanni di Reno's edition as the principle textual source for his edition of 1481. He took advantage of the two-column layout, adding four lines of text to each column and leaving a narrower space between the columns, allowing the number of leaves to be reduced quite dramatically.[107] Antonio's *Decameron* may well have been the cheapest edition printed thus far, being almost one hundred leaves shorter than the first edition produced by Valdarfer.

Coming after editions where printers seem to have been consistently working towards creating cheaper books that were slimmer, lighter, and easier to transport and read in different locations, the presentation of the Florentine edition of 1483 is an apparent anomaly in the early printed tradition of the *Decameron*. There is a return to the single column of text, but fewer lines are included on each page and the text space is the smallest it has ever been, creating an edition that is forty to fifty leaves longer than the earliest editions. For the first time in the history of the printed *Decameron*, a series of woodcut initials begins each section in the text, with the exception only of the proem, where a space for hand-decoration has still been left. Printed rubrics preface each day, and the rubrics for each *novella* give a description of the contents. Printed foliation is also introduced for the first time, although this is restricted to three leaves containing the table of contents.[108]

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[105] I do not know the measurements of the text space or margins, but I presume that these have not been dramatically reduced, because the same number of lines of text per page are used as in earlier editions.

[106] Giovanni di Reno set up a press in Vicenza in 1475, and produced a selection of classics in translation, grammatical works, and devotional works, as well as the *Decameron*. See Alfred W. Pollard, pp. 197-99; BMC, VII (1935), 1040; Neri Pozza, 'La prima diffusione della stampa nel Veneto', in *Il libro a stampa*, ed. by Santoro, pp. 287-88.

[107] Antonio da Strada's name first appeared in a printed book in 1480 and he worked intermittently up until 1492, changing from a primarily scholastic output to a classical one around 1485 (BMC, V (1924), xxiii, 292).

[108] The development of printed foliation with relation to the *Decameron* will be discussed in more detail in the section entitled 'Paratexts' (7.2.2).

There is no obvious suggestion in the presentation that Florentine printers were aware of the existence of other printed versions of the *Decameron*, and the edition appears relatively late in the city's history of printing, especially given Boccaccio's Tuscan origins and the fact that the *Decameron* seems to have been copied more frequently in Florence than elsewhere.[109] Even when the *Decameron* did appear in Florence it did not seem to attract much attention. We know from the *diario* of the Ripoli press that printing began on 20 April 1482 and was finished on 13 May 1483.[110] At this time, however, the press was experiencing financial difficulties. Production of the *Decameron* was actually ceased for more pressing works, and the estimated print run amounts to only 105 copies.[111] This seems quite low, given that the average print run in Florence at this time was approximately 300 copies, while 1200 copies had been printed of Cristoforo Landino's *Commedia* two years previously.[112] The only record of a sale of the *Decameron* recorded in the *diario* is made to one Benevenuto, a goldsmith, four months after printing finished.[113]

That the market for printed books in Florence was probably isolated and quite different from that found in other cities is underlined by the presentation of the Venetian edition of the Decameron printed a year later in 1484 by Battista Torti.[114] This makes no visual reference to the lengthy Florentine version, and instead, Torti continued to find ways to reduce the size, and thereby the cost, of the edition. The text is arranged in two columns, the text space and number of lines in each column are once more increased, the space between the columns is decreased, and spaces for hand-decoration supplied in place of woodcut initials.

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[109] The first printed book appeared in Florence in 1471. On the origins of print in Florence see Roberto Ridolfi, 'La stampa in Firenze nel secolo XV', in *Il libro a stampa*, ed. by Santoro, pp. 335-37, and William A. Pettas, *The Giunti of Florence: Merchant Publishers of the Sixteenth Century* (San Francisco: Rosenthal, 1980), pp. 3-16. It is commonly claimed that rich and educated book lovers in Florence were not interested in printed books, but there is evidence to suggest that printed works were occasionally financed by the Medici, and that they fully appreciated the power of print (see Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 65, 81-82).

[110] The *diario* has been transcribed in Melissa Conway, *The 'Diario' of the Printing Press of San Jacopo di Ripoli 1476-1484: Commentary and Transcription* (Florence: Olschki, 1999). For dates relating to the *Decameron* see p. 43, n. 136 and p. 302.

[111] Ibid., pp. 58-61.

[112] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 21.

[113] Conway, p. 351.

[114] The first book produced by Battista Torti is dated 1481, and up until 1483 his output was almost entirely classical. Shortly before printing the *Decameron*, Torti began to include works on logic and romances in the vernacular among his repertoire, but he was famous all over Europe for his glossed legal texts (BMC, V (1924), xxvi-xxvii, 292). Torti enjoyed a long career, printing up until 1536 (Ascarelli and Menato, p. 337).

The presentation of Giovanni and Gregorio de Gregori's 1492 edition is the most radically different from preceding editions because it is the first to contain an extensive series of woodcuts illustrating the text. Of all the editions of the *Decameron* printed before 1520, this one has attracted the most critical attention, not only on its own terms, but also because the illustrations had such a wide-reaching influence on subsequent editions.[115] Illustrations from the 1492 edition appear in various guises in all the following editions of the *Decameron* printed before 1520, with the exception of the edition printed in 1516 by Gregorio de Gregori.

The full-page woodcut at the proem consists of an architectural framework, surrounding a scene in which the ten storytellers sit in a semi-circle in the open-air, against a screen of espaliered vegetation. A smaller woodcut divided into two scenes begins each day. For the days which are presided over by a female storyteller, a woodcut is used which depicts a female figure on a throne in the scene to the right, and when a male storyteller commands the stories, the woodcut shows a male figure seated in front of a fountain. In both woodcuts, the left-hand scene depicts all ten storytellers, some of them holding musical instruments. Boccaccio himself is depicted writing at a desk in an illustration preceding the 'Vita de Giovan Bocchaccio'. The woodcuts placed at the beginning of each *novella* illustrate scenes from the story in question. Characters are usually named and the frame is often subdivided into two or three areas, which allow successive scenes to be depicted.[116] The highly narrative qualities of these vignettes have important implications for readers and the reading process. The scenes that have been represented visually are likely to have been chosen to be the most representative of those stories, and the way in which they have been depicted could give interesting insights into how the designer of these woodcuts, at least, perceived the text. I do not have the space here to consider the content, but Fava comments that 'ciò che più colpisce [...] è l'intento di mettere maliziosamente in evidenza le scene più scabrose e più libere coll'evidente fine di eccitare la morbosa curiosità de' lettori'.[117] This signals that the woodcuts may have been used as a marketing tool, a visual advertisement of the contents which could be taken in at a glance. An illustrated book

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[115] See Fava, pp. 136-44; Ferrari, pp. 119-22; F. Borroni Salvadori, 'L'incisione al servizio del Boccaccio nei secoli XV e XVI', *Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa*, 7 (1977), 595-734 (pp. 648-55); Dillon, pp. 306-15. Fava also notes that the de Gregori brothers used the same architectural frame and some of the vignettes for Masuccio Salernitano's *Novellino* (p. 142).

[116] Two different artists and styles have been identified. See Dillon, pp. 309-11; Fava, pp. 141-42.

[117] Fava, p. 139.

is usually perceived as more enjoyable, perhaps more lighthearted, and therefore also more pleasant to read. Images placed at the beginning of each important section can also render the structure of a work more visible and therefore aid navigation. The hierarchical size of the images emphasizes the progression of the text, from the full-page woodcut at the proem, to the medium-sized images at the beginning of each day, to the smaller scenes at each *novella*. The content of the images contributes to the reading experience on both a practical level and in terms of pleasure. The choice of a male or female figure in the centre of the scene at the beginning of each day alerts the reader to a detail in the structure of the text, and the individual vignettes may have helped to bring the text alive for those who found reading laborious.

These narrative images, which are stylistically similar to the narrative illustrations included in selected manuscripts of the *Decameron*, indicate that the edition was probably marketed primarily at the middle classes. Ferrari notes the apparent contradiction between 'la ricca ampiezza della decorazione', which undoubtedly made the book costly, and 'il tono delle vignette [che] era decisamente popolare', and comments that the contradiction was overcome by the success of the work.[118] However, it is also clear from other presentation features that the printers worked hard to keep the paper costs down. The de Gregori brothers managed to increase the size of the text space and include the woodcuts, whilst adding only six leaves in comparison with Torti's 1484 edition.

The presentation of Manfredo Bonelli's 1498 *Decameron* is very heavily influenced by the de Gregori edition: the text is arranged in the same layout of two columns of fifty-nine lines, creating a text space whose measurements are virtually identical with those of the 1492 edition. However, by omitting a table of contents and a title-page, Bonelli managed to use the same number of sheets of paper as were used by Torti in 1484. The woodcuts used for the title-page and individual *novelle* are identical to those used in the previous edition, although each day is prefaced with the illustration depicting the male figure seated in front of the fountain, used by de Gregori only for days governed by Filostrato (IV), Dioneo (VII), and Panfilo (X). Readers are therefore deprived of the possibility of being able to determine at a glance whether a 'king' or a 'queen' was elected to rule over the day in question.

The popularity of the illustrated editions also attracted the Venetian printer Bartolomeo Zanni, whose production focused on Latin and Italian classics, often in folio

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[118] Ferrari, p. 121.

and illustrated.[119] In his 1504 *Decameron* Bartolomeo made few changes to the appearance of the earlier Venetian editions. The illustrations from the 1492 edition were recycled once more, following Bonelli's lead and using only one image for the beginning of each day. However, Ferrari notes that four vignettes 'di soggetto osceno sono state soppresse'.[120] The removal of these illustrations, together with an increased number of lines of text per page, made it possible for Bartolomeo to continue the already established trend and reduce the number of leaves in his edition, despite the reinstatement of a table of contents, title-page, and woodcut initials. This venture must have been successful and continued to attract new readers, because six years later Bartolomeo printed a second edition of the *Decameron* containing the same layout of text, the same number of leaves, and even the same arrangement of quires. Woodcut initials and illustrations were also included, although here some changes were made. The illustration used to mark the beginning of each day in both the 1498 and 1504 editions was re-cut to produce a mirror image with minor variations. The architectural framework and vegetation in the background is subtly altered, a peacock and two rabbits have been added at the foot of the fountain, and the storytellers around the lute player are significantly reduced in size.[121] Some of the woodcuts illustrating the *novelle* were also re-cut in mirror image, often minus the erotic details. Others were taken from an edition of Sabadino degli Arienti's *Le porretane*, for which Bartolomeo had cut a series of small pictures only a few months earlier.[122] Thus, not only did the illustrations subtly change the tone of the book, but some did not relate to the *Decameron* at all. Many of the images therefore lost their function as select summaries of the content, suggesting that those readers who clamoured for illustrated editions of the *Decameron* were not always concerned that images related to actual content. Bartolomeo's motivations for re-using and subtly altering woodblocks may have been purely economical, since recutting an existing image obviated the need for an artist to design a new block, thereby saving time and money. By using illustrations that were only partially unfamiliar, Bartolomeo may also have wanted to give his book a new look and rejuvenate sales, without straying too far from the formula which had already proved successful.

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[119] Ascarelli and Menato, p. 340.
[120] Ferrari, p. 122.
[121] The original image from the 1492 edition is reproduced in Fava, p. 140, while the second image from the 1510 edition can be found in Prince d'Essling, *Les Livres à figures vénitiens de la fin du XV^e siècle et du commencement du XVI^e*, 3 parts, (Florence: Olschki, 1907-14), I. 2, 101.
[122] Ferrari, p. 122.

In 1516 two editions appeared which bore witness to the most revolutionary changes in the presentation of the *Decameron* since woodcut illustrations had been introduced in 1492: the use of italic type and the quarto format. The first italic type had been cut for Aldo Manuzio by Francesco Griffo, and used for a series of Latin and vernacular texts in octavo format launched in 1501.[123] It was modelled on a cursive script and allowed a greater amount of text to be placed on the page, making a quarto edition of the *Decameron* more economical and practical than if roman type had been used. The number of leaves in a book designed in quarto is naturally increased, creating a thicker volume, but it remains less monumental than a folio edition, more portable, and ultimately easier to read. Both the Florentine and Venetian editions of the *Decameron* printed in 1516 required fewer sheets of paper than any of the preceding editions, although the number of leaves is more than double than in Bartolomeo Zanni's 1510 edition.

Although not presented in the octavo format of Aldo's 'pocket-sized' editions of Petrarch and Dante, these two editions of the *Decameron* must have had a similarly dramatic impact on Boccaccio's readership in terms of their size. Readers may well have begun to make a connection between the status of Boccaccio and his fellow authors, Petrarch and Dante, who had been treated in the same manner as classical authors in Aldo's revolutionary series.[124] It is significant that Gregorio de Gregori's Venetian edition is the first *Decameron* to contain a preface explicitly written by an editor, while the Florentine edition also contains a preface, ostensibly written by Boccaccio himself, which demonstrates that Filippo Giunta was also concerned with recovering the 'original' text.[125] This is the first textual evidence available in an edition which indicates that Boccaccio was beginning to appeal to scholarly readers.

Both the Venetian and the Florentine editions return to a single-column layout, presumably because there was little practical incentive to include two columns of text on a smaller page. Giunta based his text on the preceding Florentine edition of 1483, together with several manuscripts, as might perhaps be expected given his proprietorial feelings towards the Tuscan language.[126] Interestingly, however, he also decided to include woodcut illustrations based on those in the Venetian edition of 1492, while de Gregori eliminated ornamentation altogether from his edition, leaving only spaces for

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[123] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 124.
[124] Brian Richardson, *Print Culture in Renaissance Italy: The Editor and the Vernacular Text, 1470-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 48.
[125] Brian Richardson, 'Editing the *Decameron*', pp. 15-19. See also Roaf's article on 'The Presentation of the *Decameron*'.
[126] Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 177.

initials at the beginning of the proem, each day, and each *novella*.[127] The woodcut used at the beginning of the proem and Days II, VI-X in the Florentine edition is based on the scene depicting the storytellers used at the proem in the 1492 edition. However, as with many of the woodcuts used in Bartolomeo Zanni's editions, this one has been reversed, and also reduced in size. Leaving days IV and V without a woodcut may have helped Giunta keep the amount of paper used to a minimum. The small woodcuts beginning the *novelle* have also been reduced and reversed. Some of the images were also altered by the printer, probably to elevate the tone of this more 'scholarly' edition. Ruth Mortimer comments that: 'apparently someone at Giunta's press began to censor the blocks. On leaves e2^{v} and l6^{v}, parts of the blocks have been cut off or masked; similar scenes later in the volume are left intact'.[128] The large plain printed initials, similar to the coloured initials often applied by hand in manuscripts, are unique to Giunta's edition.

In 1518 Agostino Zanni produced an edition whose presentation referenced pre-1516 models, although the text of the 1516 Florentine edition is reproduced more or less faithfully.[129] The edition is in folio, with the text printed in roman type and arranged in two columns. The same number of lines per page and number of overall leaves are found as in Bartolomeo's editions. Woodcut initials and the woodcut illustrations from the 1510 edition have also been reinstated, although thirteen vignettes have been removed because of their obscene subject-matter.[130] The appearance of Agostino's *Decameron*, after the innovations introduced in 1516, suggests that Boccaccio's readership had become so diverse by this date that one type of edition was not suitable for all.[131]

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[127] The Venetian text is based on the 1472 edition and several manuscript sources (ibid., p. 166).

[128] Ruth Mortimer, *Harvard College Library Department of Printing and Graphic Arts: Catalogue of Books and Manuscripts.* Part II: *Italian 16th Century Books*, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1974), I, 96.

[129] According to Ascarelli and Menato, Agostino may have been a relative of Bartolomeo (p. 340). On the textual sources see Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 166.

[130] Ferrari, p. 122.

[131] At the beginning of the sixteenth century two different types of book format were also produced for editions of Dante's *Commedia* and Petrarch's *Canzoniere*: the traditional folio edition which included commentary and other paratexts, and the octavo edition influenced by Aldo Manuzio's new pocket-sized books, which were bare of any paratexts. See Brian Richardson, 'Editing Dante's *Commedia*, 1472-1629', in *Dante Now: Current Trends in Dante Studies*, ed. by Theodore J. Cachey Jr (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), pp. 237-62 (pp. 246-47); Mary Fowler, *Catalogue of the Petrarch Collection Bequeathed by Willard Fiske* (London: Oxford University Press, 1916), pp. 84-87.

Table 40: *Distribution of paratexts across editions of the 'Decameron'*

		Category 1				*Cat. 1/2*	*Category 2*				*Category 3*	
Siglum	Date	Table of contents	Foliation	Running titles	Errata	Title-page	Colophon	Life of Boccaccio	Preface	Additional texts	Signatures	Register
N	1470	✓										
CV	1471	✓					✓					
M	1472	✓					✓					
A	1476	✓					✓					
Z[132]	1476	✓					✓				✓	
R	1478	✓					✓				✓	
S	1481	✓		✓			✓				✓	
F	1483	✓	✓								✓	
T	1484		✓				✓				✓	✓
JGG	1492	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
B	1498			✓			✓	✓			✓	✓
BZa	1504	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
BZb	1510	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
GG	1516	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
G	1516	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
AZ	1518	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓

[132] Information for this edition has been gleaned from secondary sources, which do not indicate whether Z contains running titles.

7.2.2 PARATEXTS

Editions of the *Decameron* printed before 1520 contain a wide variety of paratexts, of which some were favoured by almost every printer or editor, and others appeared only once or twice over the fifty-year period.[133] These paratexts can be divided into three categories according to their primary function. The first includes devices designed to facilitate consultation of the text: tables of contents, foliation, running titles, errata, and the title-page. The title-page might also fit happily into the second category of paratexts, whose main aim was to act as a marketing tool for the printer or publisher and often also to provide context for the work and its author. Other paratexts in this category include prefaces, lives of the author, additional texts, and colophons. The third category is composed of devices that were fundamentally for the use of the printer rather than the reader, in this case, signatures and registers.[134]

Paratexts appear more frequently as time goes on, thus, with the exception of tables of contents, which are found in all the early editions, and colophons, which are introduced with the second edition in 1471, editions are lacking in paratexts until signatures are included by Zarotto in 1476. However, from 1484 onwards all editions exhibit at least four different paratexts, and several contain upwards of seven.[135] Tables of contents are found in manuscripts of the *Decameron*, but other paratexts, such as registers, are unique to printing and developed over time, as printers gradually distanced themselves from manuscript models.

Although over half of the manuscripts in my sample include tables of contents, proportionally this paratext is more common in printed versions of the *Decameron*. As Richardson comments, 'the printed book did not bring innovations in the layout of the text, but it did make more consistent and extensive use of changes in presentation which had been introduced in certain manuscripts between the twelfth and early fifteenth century'.[136] The layout of the table of contents is fairly standardized across every edition of the *Decameron* before 1520, with a combination of printed rubrics, decoration, and text which is frequently indented at the beginning of each paragraph used to create a visual aid that could not only help the reader gain access to the text quickly and easily, but was also simple to consult itself. Most tables of contents note

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[133] Details of the distribution of paratexts across editions can be found in Table 40.
[134] The introduction of signatures (in 1476) and registers (in 1484) to the *Decameron*, and their subsequent use in almost every edition printed before 1520 follows the general trend for printed books. See Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 13-14.
[135] BZa (1504), BZb (1510), and AZ (1518) contain seven paratexts; JGG (1492) and GG (1516) contain eight, and G (1516) contains nine.
[136] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 129.

the folio on which each *novella* begins, but printed foliation was not introduced throughout the text until 1484, and thereafter was employed only sporadically. In order to benefit fully from the table of contents readers would have had to add their own foliation by hand.

When printed foliation does first appear in the Florentine edition of 1483, only three leaves at the beginning of the volume, which contain the table of contents, are numbered. It is therefore difficult to imagine that this would have been regarded as a great innovation by the reader, particularly since the opening leaves are the easiest to locate, and the table of contents does not have any entries relating to itself. Given that the foliated leaves are unsigned, but the remaining quires containing Boccaccio's text are signed, the foliation seems to function as additional signing, and may have been an aid designed primarily for the printer in this case. In 1484, foliation that runs throughout Boccaccio's text is included for the first time, although, as if to emphasize the apparent lack of connection between tables of contents with references to foliation and printed foliation, this is the first edition of the *Decameron* which does not contain a table of contents. Readers would have been able to compile their own indexes with greater ease, or could have made a note of the leaf number of particularly significant passages of text. However, overall, printed foliation was clearly not considered an essential tool, appearing in only six editions, perhaps because readers were not expected to study the text. Running titles provide another means of locating a passage of text relatively quickly, and could be used in conjunction with, or independently from, the table of contents. However, they were not introduced in printed form to the *Decameron* until 1481, after which they were neglected again until 1492.

The title-page sits at the junction between categories one and two, acting both as a means of orientation for the reader and as a marketing tool for the printer.[137] The title-page is a feature found most often in printed books, and does not appear in the early editions of the *Decameron*, which were still strongly influenced by manuscript presentation.[138] Giovanni and Gregorio de Gregori are the first to include a title-page in the *Decameron* in 1492, after which it does not appear in every edition. Colophons continued to be employed in editions of the *Decameron* up until 1520, and this may help to explain why the information given on the title-page is generally restricted to the

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[137] For further details on the development of the title-page, see Margaret M. Smith, *The Title-Page: Its Early Development 1460-1510* (London: British Library, 2000) and Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, pp. 131-33.

[138] A small number of manuscripts did include title-pages. See Smith, pp. 31-34 and section 8.1.1.1 of this thesis.

name of the work and its author.[139] In his second edition, however, Zanni began to exploit the marketing potential of the title-page more fully and added a woodcut illustration above the title. In the wake of the popularity of the illustrated *Decameron* of 1492, this would have immediately advertised to prospective readers that this edition also contained woodcuts. Similarly, the title-page in Giunta's edition announces that the text has been 'nuovamente stampato', and three further *novelle* added. Again, this whets the appetite of the reader and sets this edition apart from those preceding it.

As I noted above, the colophon, with only two exceptions, continued to be included in editions of the *Decameron* up until 1520, usually providing information about the printer, and the date and location of printing. However, the colophon sometimes contains other details that warrant some discussion. Valdarfer chose to write his colophon in the form of a tailed sonnet, which included praise for the *Decameron*, 'ciento giemme ligiadre', and named the author, as well as the printer and his place of birth. This decision obviously proved popular, since the same text, with only minor modifications, was replicated by both Azzoguidi and Giovanni di Reno. Azzoguidi, however, chose to place the sonnet after the table of contents, and immediately prior to the proem, almost as an early move towards a title-page. The true colophon in Azzoguidi's edition was composed in Latin, a practice also employed in editions by de' Micheli, Zarotto, and Torti. Torti appears to have replicated the colophon used in his Latin editions, which explains the choice of language.[140] The text of de' Micheli's colophon is clearly composed in order to ingratiate himself with the Marquis of Mantua, who probably loaned de' Micheli a manuscript copy of the *Decameron* to compose his text,[141] and may have been formulated in Latin to flatter the Marquis's intellect. The colophon also provides an insight into de' Micheli's opinion of the *Decameron*, or at least of how he wished it to appear to his readership: as an 'opus facetum' (a humorous work), designed to be read for entertainment rather than for scholarly purposes. Other printers presumably agreed with this portrayal of Boccaccio's work, since Azzoguidi and Zarotto used the same formula as de' Micheli, omitting the references to Mantua and Lodovico. Antonio da Strada, the de Gregori brothers, and Manfredo Bonelli also

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[139] Such is the case for the 1492 and 1504 editions, as well as for de Gregori's 1516 edition.
[140] See BMC, V (1924), 321-32. De' Micheli, Azzoguidi, and Zarotto may have done the same, although the BMC does not contain any editions by these printers that replicate exactly the colophon used in the *Decameron*. Zarotto composed colophons in the vernacular for some of his Italian editions, although the choice of language was not necessarily linked to the content, since an edition of Petrarch's *Trionfi* printed in 1473 has a Latin colophon, while an edition of the same work printed in 1494 has an Italian colophon (see BMC, VI (1930), 409-724).
[141] Richardson, 'Editing the *Decameron*', p. 13.

referred favourably to the rulers of their respective cities, although in these cases the flattery is less extravagant and more formulaic than in de' Micheli's colophon. In order to underline the centrality of the editorial work to Giunta's edition, the person writing in Giunta's name uses the colophon as another opportunity to advertise the superiority of the text, which he claims has been 'con grandissima diligentia emendato'.

Four editions contain a life of Boccaccio composed by Girolamo Squarzafico.[142] The 'Vita' had been published for the first time attached to an edition of the *Filocolo* in 1472, and reprinted several times afterwards, indicating that it was popular and may well have been familiar to readers before it was added to the *Decameron* of 1492. As such, its inclusion may have been a useful marketing tool. On another level, a biography of Boccaccio illustrates his authorization and demonstrates that there was interest in his status as the individual creator of these works.

Prefaces to the *Decameron* are found only in the two editions of 1516, no doubt influenced by the move to consider Boccaccio as a literary model worthy of imitation.[143] Both prefaces reveal how editorial techniques, usually reserved for Latin texts, had been applied to the *Decameron*. Niccolò Delfino edited the text printed by de Gregori and holds an important position in the history of editing and Boccaccio scholarship as the first named editor of the *Decameron*. As a Venetian nobleman, Delfino must have been influenced by the editorial practices of Pietro Bembo, with whom he was acquainted.[144] From a prominent Venetian family himself, Bembo had taken a risk editing the first sixteenth-century editions of Petrarch and Dante, previously the realm of less socially prestigious editors.[145] As Bembo had done for the *Commedia*, so Delfino interrupted the practice of transmitting the text of the edition that had gone before for the *Decameron*. Delfino also followed Bembo's lead in linguistic terms, restoring some of Boccaccio's 'coloritura fiorentina trecentesca', and creating an edition whose text was used for more than a decade by successive editors.[146]

Delfino outlines his editorial methodology in the preface addressed 'alle gentili et valorose donne', in the process also revealing something of his attitude towards the

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[142] See section 3.14 for biographical details and further information on the contents of the biography.
[143] A transcription of the prefaces is found in Appendix VI.
[144] Although they were not close friends Dionisotti notes that Delfino belonged to the group headed by Bembo in his *Machiavellerie: storia e fortuna di Machiavelli* (Turin: Einaudi, 1980), p. 342.
[145] Richardson, *Print Culture*, pp. 48-49.
[146] The phrasing comes from Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 166.

status of the text and its intended readers.[147] Women are specifically addressed as the presumed readers of the edition, but far from indicating that women were the sole recipients of Delfino's editorial efforts, or that they even constituted a small part of the audience, the address appears to be a literary device in imitation of Boccaccio's own preface 'alle vaghe donne'.[148] Not only does Delfino repeat Boccaccio's claim that the *Decameron* was composed for the 'consolatione' of female readers, but he claims that his editorial work now means that women will be able to derive 'diletto' and also 'utile consiglio' from the text. This is a direct echo of Boccaccio's statement that 'le già dette donne [...] parimente *diletto* delle sollazzevoli cose in quelle [novelle] mostrate e *utile consiglio* potranno pigliare' [my italics] (p. 5). Delfino then goes beyond Boccaccio's prescriptions to be more specific about the quality of female readership intended for the Venetian edition, which has been singled out by virtue of its 'nobilità di cuore' and 'eccellenza di leggiadri costumi'. Indeed, he states that 'a tutte questa opera non è iscritta'. These comments flatter the readership in the manner typical of dedications and presentation addresses, and may also have been an attempt by Delfino to guide the text, at least theoretically, away from the middle class masses towards a more educated literate élite. Delfino concludes by painting a picture of the *Decameron* as a noble and refined text, telling the recipients of his letter that by reading Boccaccio's work, 'quella virtù [...] sentirete ne' vostri animi gentili destarsi talmente, che da molto più tenute, et più di loro dal mondo honorate sarete'.

Giunta's edition was probably prepared by a team of editors, and its preface is composed as if Boccaccio had come back from the dead and written it himself, which is a powerful device to gain authorization for any changes that are made and immunity from criticism.[149] The tone of Giunta's preface is far more competitive than that used in the previous edition, with overtly critical comments made about the corrupt nature of other texts, and implicit reference to the Venetian Delfino's in particular.[150] Tension between Venetian and Florentine editors over the question of language had already made itself felt in the first Florentine edition of Petrarch, and was to continue

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[147] For further details on the editing of this text see Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, pp. 165-66; Richardson, 'Editing the *Decameron*', p. 15; Richardson, *Print Culture*, pp. 60-61; Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie*, pp. 342-43.

[148] *Decameron*, p. 4.

[149] The resurrected Boccaccio states that Giunta adopted 'il iudicio di più docti huomini Fiorentini'. Cf. the appearance of Boccaccio in Vincenzo Bagli's dream-vision in the dedication to *De mulieribus* (Venice, 1506) (see section 8.2.2).

[150] See Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie*, pp. 342-43; Richardson, 'Editing the *Decameron*', p. 18; Richardson, *Print Culture*, p. 83.

throughout the century.[151] Giunta seems less concerned with providing guidelines for the ideal reader, and addresses the 'lectore' in general, but does not miss the opportunity to advertise the future output of the press: 'Boccaccio's' address ends with the words 'et in brieve aspecta tutte, o gran parte delle mie opere, in simil forma corette'.[152]

Giunta was also the first to include three additional *novelle* to the *Decameron*, allegedly written by Boccaccio, which would have helped to set his edition apart from that printed two months earlier by de Gregori. The additional *novelle*, which are all Florentine, also form part of Giunta's campaign to promote the Tuscan language and short story tradition. These concerns apparently overrode consideration for the structure of the *Decameron*, whose internal symmetry of ten days and one hundred *novelle* was disrupted. The implication may also be that readers were more interested in the contents of individual *novelle*, rather than in the work as a literary whole. Manuscripts of the *Decameron* containing other *novelle*, not attributed to Boccaccio, may have acted as a precedent, although there are no editions of the *Decameron* printed before 1520 that include stories attributed to other authors.

7.2.3 TRACES OF READING

Publication of the *Decameron* in print reflects the spread of the new technology across Italy, as the *Decameron* was often produced by the first printers to arrive in a city, and was frequently one of the first books printed by a newly established press. The 'printer of Terentius' was one of the first to print in Naples. The first printed book appeared in Venice around 1469 and Valdarfer printed the *Decameron* within a year of setting up his press.[153] De' Micheli introduced printing to Mantua in 1471 or 1472, and printed the *Decameron* almost immediately. Similarly, Azzoguidi formed part of the partnership that established printing in Bologna in 1471. In the early years of printing the printers themselves, as well as the prospective purchasers of books, were more familiar with the appearance and presentation of manuscripts than printed books. It is natural, therefore, that the appearance of printed books took on some of the

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[151] Dionisotti quotes from the 1504 Petrarch and from prefaces to other works by Boccaccio printed after the 1516 *Decameron* to illustrate how the cultural concerns of editors came to the fore, in *Machiavellerie*, pp. 343-46. Richardson's monograph, *Print Culture*, is also dedicated to tracing editorial tensions between Florence and Venice.

[152] In fact, the *Corbaccio* and *Epistola a Pino de' Rossi* appeared together in 1516, and the *Fiammetta* a year later, both with a preface or dedication by Bernardo Giunta. The *Ninfale fiesolano* was printed in 1518, and the *Ameto* in 1521 (Dionisotti, *Machiavellerie*, pp. 343-46).

[153] Brown, *The Venetian Printing Press*, pp. 4-8.

characteristics of manuscripts, including provision for decoration applied by hand.[154] Table 41 provides details of the hand-decoration included in editions of the *Decameron* that contain spaces for non-printed ornamentation.

Although there are twelve editions that contain blank spaces for initials and rubrication, only a small proportion of these have had hand-decoration added: all three copies belonging to the first two editions contain decorative initials, and one copy each of the 1472 edition (M^3) and 1478 edition (R^1) has been professionally decorated. The lack of hand-decoration in most editions, and the lack of consistency in the decoration found in individual copies of the 1472 and 1478 editions, suggest that most printers did not commission illuminators and rubricators to embellish the *Decameron* before copies were sold. It is more likely that purchasers took it upon themselves to commission hand-decoration at or after the time of purchase.[155] However, given that all the copies of the first two editions contain hand-decoration, it is possible that in these cases the printers themselves were responsible for supplying ornamentation on speculation, although this does not explain why rubrication was supplied only in N^3.[156] I have not been able to place copies of the first two editions of the *Decameron* side by side for comparison and, hence I cannot say whether the decoration appears to be the work of one hand or one workshop. It is certainly the case that N^1, N^2, and N^3 all contain an initial at the beginning of the proem in similar colours, with the same vine scroll design. However, the vine scroll design seems to be a common theme across all editions with hand-decoration, occurring also in CV^2 and M^3. There is also remarkable homogeneity in the choice of decoration at additional sections: in every copy containing hand-decoration, alternately red and blue coloured initials are used in the table of contents, and coloured initials are used at the beginning of each day and *novella*.

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[154] See also discussion relating to hand-decoration and the relationship between manuscripts and incunables in section 6.2.1.3 on the *Teseida*.
[155] It is for this reason that I discuss hand-decoration in the present section on traces of reading.
[156] It would be interesting to verify whether other copies of these editions contain hand-decoration, or whether there is any other evidence to suggest that Christoph Valdarfer commissioned hand-decoration for editions of other works.

Table 41: *Hand-decoration in editions of the 'Decameron'*

		Hand-Decoration Added to the Blank Spaces for Initials Left by the Printer					
Edition[157]	Copy	Table of Contents	Beginning of Proem	Beginning of Day I	Beginning of Subsequent Days	Beginning of *Novelle*	Throughout *cornice* and *novelle*
Naples?, *c.* 1470?	N^1	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Illuminated initial and border decoration in left-hand margin with vine scroll design in gold, white, pink, green, and blue	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue
	N^2	Missing	Illuminated initial and border decoration in left-hand margin with vine scroll design (incomplete)	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initial in blue	Coloured initials in blue
	N^3	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Rubric in red. Decorated initial with vine scroll design in white, pink, green, and blue	Coloured initial	Rubric in red. Coloured initial	Rubric in red. Coloured initial	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue
Venice, 1471	CV^1	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue
	CV^2	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Illuminated initial and border decoration in left-hand margin with vine scroll design	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue
	CV^3	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue

[157] The information is limited to those copies of the *Decameron* which I have viewed. In order to identify the relationship between these individual copies, the edition to which they belong, and the libraries in which they are found, I have attributed a siglum to each copy (see Appendix VII).

Table 41: *Hand-decoration in editions of the 'Decameron'* continued

		Hand-decoration added to the spaces for initials left by the printer					
Edition	Copy	Table of Contents	Beginning of Proem	Beginning of Day I	Beginning of Subsequent Days	Beginning of *Novelle*	Throughout *cornice* and *novelle*
Mantua, 1472	M^1	None	None	None	None	None	None
	M^2	None	None	None	None	None	None
	M^3	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Illuminated initial and border decoration in left-hand margin with vine scroll design in gold, white, red, green, and blue. Coat of arms in the bottom margin	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue
Vicenza, 1478	R^1	Text of fol. $\pi 1^a$ framed with red and blue lines. Coloured initials, alternately red and blue	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initial	Coloured initials	Coloured initials, alternately red and blue
	R^2	None	None	None	None	None	None
	R^3	None	None	None	None	None	None

Whether commissioned by the printer or the owner, it seems fair to say that many owners of these early editions set great store by elaborately decorated books. Four of the vine scroll initials (in N^1, N^2, CV^2, and M^3) contain illumination, which suggests that owners were relatively wealthy, and also regarded the *Decameron* as a text worthy of such decoration. The style of the initials also indicates an interest in humanism. There are relatively few examples of illuminated initials in the manuscripts of the *Decameron* in my sample, and those that do occur are most often found in codices copied in approximately the same period as when the first editions were issued.[158] However, only the illuminated initial in MS F^1 contains the vine scroll decoration associated with humanism, and this is also the only manuscript in my sample written in humanistic bookhand. Therefore, in order to find evidence for humanist interest in the *Decameron*, it is necessary to look beyond manuscripts to printed books. The vast quantity of classical literature printed at the end of the fifteenth century illustrates that humanists were quick to see the advantages of the new technology.[159] Educated humanists also tended to be better off, socially, culturally, and economically, than members of other strata of society, and were able to afford the first printed copies of the *Decameron*, either decorated to attract such readers, or subsequently embellished to their own tastes. The inclusion of a coat of arms in M^3 also suggests a socially eminent and wealthy owner.

There are three copies that contain coloured initials at the beginning of the proem, as well as throughout the remainder of the text: CV^1, CV^3, and R^1. This is the most basic type of initial applied by a professional, and may indicate that the owner was less wealthy, or considered the *Decameron* less important than those who chose to include illumination. However, the inclusion of colour would have undoubtedly facilitated navigation within the text. This is borne out by another two copies of the *Decameron*, M^2 and R^2, which do not contain hand-decoration applied professionally, but instead, roughly executed initials in black ink added by a reader.[160] Although M^2 and R^2 form part of the early editions, it is possible that the initials were added at a later date, and not necessarily by the first owner.[161]

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[158] MSS F^1 and Vch are dated 1450-1475, while MS Lo was copied *c.* 1450. Only one illuminated manuscript dates from the fourteenth century (P^1).
[159] Henri-Jean Martin notes that up until 1500-1510 Italy was the predominant centre for humanist printing, in Febvre and Martin, p. 265.
[160] The ink has now faded to brown.
[161] The initials in M^2 may be the work of several hands over a relatively long period of time.

Table 42: *Distribution of traces of reading in editions of the 'Decameron'*

		Category 1		*Cat. 2*	*Category 3*			*Category 4*		*Category 5*
Edition	Copy	Marginalia	Marginalia /Marks & Symbols	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated notes	Scribbles /Smudges	Pen Trials	Related Illustration	Unrelated Illustration	Corrections
Naples?, *c.* 1470?	N^1	✓		✓		✓				✓
	N^2			✓						✓
	N^3									
Venice, 1471	CV^1	✓	✓	✓						✓
	CV^2	✓				✓				✓
	CV^3	✓	✓							✓
Mantua, 1472	M^1			✓	✓				✓	
	M^2			✓		✓	✓			
Bologna, 1476	A^1	✓		✓						
Vicenza, 1478	R^1		✓	✓			✓			
	R^2	✓		✓		✓				
	R^3	✓			✓	✓			✓	
Venice, 1481	S^1	✓				✓				
	S^2					✓				
Florence, 1483	F^1	✓		✓						
	F^2					✓				
Venice, 1484	T^1	✓		✓		✓				
Venice, 1492	JGG^1			✓						
	JGG^3	✓				✓				
Venice, 1498	B^1	✓				✓				
Venice, 1510	BZb^1									✓
	BZb^2					✓		✓		✓

Table 42: *Distribution of traces of reading in editions of the 'Decameron'* continued

		Category 1		*Cat. 2*	*Category 3*			*Category 4*		*Category 5*
Edition	Copy	Marginalia	Marginalia /Marks & Symbols	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated notes	Scribbles /Smudges	Pen Trials	Related Illustration	Unrelated Illustration	Corrections
Venice, 1516	GG^1					✓				✓
	GG^2			✓		✓				✓
	GG^4	✓								✓
	GG^6	✓		✓						✓
	GG^7	✓		✓				✓		
	GG^8	✓		✓		✓				
	GG^9			✓						
Florence, 1516	G^1		✓	✓						
	G^2					✓				✓
	G3			✓						✓
Venice, 1517	V^1				✓	✓				
Venice, 1518	AZ^1					✓				
	AZ^2	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
	AZ3	✓			✓					

Judging by the copies that I have seen, it was already becoming less important for readers to commission hand-decoration in the *Decameron* by 1476, and after Giovanni di Reno's edition appeared in 1478 hand-decoration was not added at all.[162] It is unlikely that hand-decoration had completely lost its appeal for readers, even as the number of printed books began to overtake manuscript production, since printers continued to provide for it. Perhaps the lack of hand-decoration is symptomatic of a different kind of readership emerging: as printed books became more commonplace, and cheaper, editions of the *Decameron* became more accessible to a greater number of readers. Although spaces for initials continued to be provided until 1516, these were supplemented with decorated woodcut initials in the 1483 Florentine edition, plain printed initials in the 1516 Venetian edition, and woodcut illustrations in the remaining editions from 1492 onwards. Both the decorative and functional advantages of including decorative initials by hand were therefore diminished, which may explain the lack of hand-decoration in later copies of the *Decameron*.

Table 42 shows the distribution of traces of reading in editions of the *Decameron*. Of the forty-five copies that I have seen, only a small number do not contain any traces of reading that do not appear to date before 1520 (A^2, B^2, BZa^1, GG^3, GG^5, JGG^4, and S^3).[163] The most popular traces of reading are marks and symbols that highlight particular words or lines of text, and scribbles or smudges of ink. Both traces may figure in large numbers because they are difficult to date with any certainty, and many scribbles and smudges, in particular, may have appeared after 1520. These traces are also linked by the common problem that it is generally difficult to determine what each can tell us about readers and reading practices. However, some marks and symbols contain more clues than others. In both M^2 and GG^7 various phrases containing religious references have been highlighted. For example, in M^2 'spirito sancto', 'del verbum caro', 'fe catholica', and 'sancta croce' are picked out on fol. 153^r, while a reader in GG^7 has underlined a set of words that appear to be even more closely related, including 'per lo vero corpo di Christo' (IX. 5, fol. 295^v), and 'Al corpo d'Iddio' (IX. 6, fol. 300^r). Although it seems difficult to imagine the *Decameron* appealing to the clergy, we know that one manuscript, at least, was copied by a monk (F^3), and these marks may witness a religious reader's disapproval of particular stories, perhaps made in the context of the Counter-Reformation. In both M^2 and GG^7 *novelle*

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[162] It goes almost without saying that I have not seen every single copy of every edition printed before 1520, and copies with hand-decoration executed after 1478 may exist.
[163] Dating of traces is done, where possible, on a palaeographical basis. JGG^2 and M^3 contain no traces of reading other than ownership notes which I have not been able to identify.

are singled out that specifically mock religion and the clergy.[164] However, the repetitive marking of the same or similar phrases in GG^7 also suggests that the reader was interested in the language of the *Decameron*, rather than in the significance of the phrases themselves.

Scribbles and smudges indicate that the *Decameron* was read in an environment where ink was present, possibly at a desk or table, and also that it was not treated as a precious object to be handled only with clean hands or looked at on special occasions. Most of the scribbles occur in the margins (for example, B^1, R^3, S^1, and T^1) or on blank leaves (for example, F^2). There are fewer instances of scribbles over the text, which suggests that even readers with apparent disregard for the book retain some respect for the difference between the text and the surrounding blank spaces. An interesting example of deliberate scribbling is witnessed by JGG^3. Here, somebody has 'censored' four woodcuts illustrating naked figures or characters engaged in the sexual act, by scribbling over the offending scenes.[165] This may have been done by a reader, disgusted by the contents of these images, or may even have been done by the printers themselves, in response to objections by Venetian churchmen to obscene images.[166] This type of post-production censorship differs from the pre-production censoring of images carried out in the editions printed by Bartolomeo and Agostino Zanni, and Filippo Giunta, because in this case the 'censored' image is still discernible beneath the ink. Thus, printers that edited by hand might hope to continue to attract readers with the lure of erotic imagery, whilst preserving a morally-upright exterior. Although the same churchmen also objected to written descriptions of 'shamefulnesses', the text of the *Decameron* escaped untouched by the censor's pen, perhaps because the power of words was considered less damaging than images.

Despite the large number of editions containing scribbles or smudges of ink, only one manuscript contains this type of trace. It does not appear to be the case that manuscript owners were less likely to read and write at the same time, since a large percentage of manuscripts do contain interventions in ink in the form of marginalia, marks and symbols, and unrelated notes. Perhaps manuscripts were considered too important or precious to sully with casual scribbles, even when they were of a low quality and relatively cheap, or the fact that some manuscripts were laboriously copied

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[164] In particular, III. 1, III. 3, IV. 2, and II. 2.
[165] The woodcuts involved are those placed at the beginning of V. 4, showing Ricciardo and Caterina naked in bed; V. 6, showing Gianni and Restituta naked and tied to a stake; VII. 2, showing Giannello and Peronello engaged in fornication; and IX. 10, showing Gemmata, naked, and pretending to be a mare.
[166] Richardson, *Printing, Writing and Readers*, p. 43.

out by their owners for themselves may have made them more precious than a printed edition.

The majority of the marginalia occurring in editions of the *Decameron* tends to be notabilia: notes in the margin that summarize the text and remind the reader of the contents. A reader of T^1 notes that VI. 7 is set in Prato, perhaps indicating the reader's provenance. 'Nomi di donne' and 'nomi di Homini' are also written in the margin at the point where the names of the storytellers are listed in the proem. In the table of contents in CV^1 'Andreuccio' is written next to the summary for II. 5, while in AZ^2 the names of characters are written next to their appearance in woodcuts. In both JGG^3 and GG^6 a number of seemingly unrelated words have been picked out from the text and noted in the margins. In GG^6 these occasionally differ from the text because an alternative spelling is given, because the tense of the verb has been changed, or because the noun is given instead of the verb. Some words are also linked to numbers that may indicate the frequency with which these words appear, or cross-reference a leaf. From *novella* IV. 4 onwards explanatory synonyms are provided which would be recognizable to someone with knowledge of Latin, for example, 'infortunio' is given for 'sciagura', and 'dolente' for 'crucciosa'.

Marginalia that provide orientation for the reader occur with great frequency in both manuscripts and the earliest printed editions. Printed signatures do not appear until 1478, consistent printed foliation is not introduced until 1484, and rubrics and initials, which would otherwise aid orientation, were usually left unfilled. Even when decoration was added by hand, it was not always adequate for precise navigation around the text. Thus, for example, readers in CV^1 and T^1 found it necessary to number the *novella* at the beginning of each story. CV^3 contains numbered *novelle*, and at the proem and the beginning of subsequent days the number of the day and the reigning 'king' or 'queen' for that day is also noted, for example, 'Prima giornata', 'Pampinea regina'. A reader supplied running titles in A^1, and at the beginning of the text 'Giornata' is written in the top margin on the recto of each leaf, with the corresponding number on the verso.[167] In R^2 a reader has noted on which leaf *novella* I. 1 begins, perhaps signifying a particular favourite, and in R^3 'finis prima giornata' is recorded at the end of the first day, perhaps in lieu of rubrication supplied professionally. It should be noted that editions CV, A, and R all contain a table of contents, which includes references to the leaves on which *novelle* begin. However, the fact that this did not

[167] Subsequently 'Giornata' becomes abbreviated to 'g', and eventually only the number is supplied on the recto of each leaf.

discourage readers from adding their own orientation devices, principally focused on the location of *novelle*, indicates that these tables of contents were not helpful to the reader, probably because references to individual leaves are laborious to locate without the additional inclusion of printed foliation.

In addition to the above notabilia, the marginalia in CV^3 are noteworthy, since they constitute a selection of sayings added at the end of *novelle*: for example, 'Credi a gli effecti et non a le parole. | che spesso 'l mal' e 'l ben' ingannar suole' (I. 1) and 'Se opra rea da religion si vede, | Per questo non si dee mancar di fede' (I. 2). This would appear to be a reader adding his or her own moral gloss to the *Decameron*. Kallendorf has found that readers of Virgil in the sixteenth century often underlined and copied moralizing statements from the text, and also its surrounding printed commentary, partly because 'moral observations tended to get lost in a mass of lexical, syntactical, textual, rhetorical, etymological, geographical, mythological, and intertextual commentary'.[168] It could be argued that this reader of the *Decameron* considered the moral observations so lost in the mass of bawdy, un-Christian escapades that he or she felt obliged to add their own. A reader in S^1 also left evidence of personal feelings, writing 'bona' next to the beginning of II. 5, III. 6, III. 7, and IV. 3.

As with manuscripts of the *Decameron*, the text transmitted by printed editions is frequently corrected by readers, often within the body of the text, or in the margins. On occasion alternative spellings are given, for example, in GG^2 the word 'lagrime' used in the text of I. 1 is marked as 'l'acrime' in the margin. Two readers of Giunta's 1516 text were aware that the three *novelle* printed at the end of the *Decameron* in this edition were erroneously attributed to Boccaccio. In the rubric introducing the *novelle*, which reads: 'Finisce il Decamerone di messer Giovanni Bocchaccio, Seguitan tre novelle del medesimo auctore nuovamente ritrovate', the words 'del medesimo auctore' are cancelled out in G^2 and G^3.

Almost every manuscript copy of the *Decameron* in my sample contains traces of reading that I have categorized as 'unrelated notes', so it is particularly interesting that only four copies of printed texts contain notes belonging to this category. Two copies contain arithmetic like that found in MSS Vb^3, FR, and P^5: V^1 contains some addition in the outer margin of fol. 27^r, and AZ^3 contains several sums on the verso of the final printed leaf, which is blank. Branca uses this type of evidence to argue that the text was owned and read by merchants. If this is the case, it appears that merchants

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[168] Kallendorf discusses 'moral' marginalia on pp. 58-61 of his *Virgil and the Myth of Venice*. The quotation is found on p. 58.

were interested in the *Decameron* in print, although to a much lesser extent than in hand-written versions.[169]

As with manuscripts of the *Decameron*, there are a limited number of printed copies that contain examples of illustration unrelated to the text. Of most interest are the additions made to two woodcuts in AZ^2.[170] A disproportionately large penis has been supplied in ink to the illustration of the King of Cyprus at I. 9, and also to Paganino in the woodcut at II. 10. It seems likely that this is a comment on the content of these two *novelle*, since the King of Cyprus is asked to intervene in a rape case which tests whether he is 'man' enough to provide justice, and he is subsequently transformed from a weak, rather unmasculine king, into one described as 'valoroso', while *novella* II. 10 contrasts the virility of Paganino with the elderly and sexually inactive Ricciardo. Clearly, the additions were made by a reader who enthusiastically championed this kind of story, and perhaps looked for entertaining bawdiness in their literature, as much as for moral content. The juxtaposition of this reader's reaction with that demonstrated by the censorious reader of JGG^3 serves to illustrate that the *Decameron* appealed to a wide range of readers.

7.3 CONCLUSION

The analysis of the physical structure and presentation of manuscripts of the *Decameron* has continued to emphasize that readership of the work was not as homogenous as Branca has claimed. The relationship between the high quality extant autograph and subsequent exemplars, in particular, reveals some surprising analogies. As well as the large number of codices written in semi-gothic bookhand revealed by Cursi, a significant number of large-sized volumes with the text arranged in two columns were in circulation. These manuscripts, which would have been more expensive to produce and more unwieldy to use than smaller-sized exemplars, replicate many of the features generally found in scholarly *libri da banco* rather than in the type of books often compiled by 'copisti per passione'. In fact, the combination of a book hand with paper support and professional decoration found in a significant number of manuscripts falls between Petrucci's definitions of *libri cortesi* or *libri-registri di lusso*, which were

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[169] Other unrelated notes are more difficult to interpret. R^3 contains the comment: 'Breve la nostra vita ogi | si utile et misero e colui che al mo [...]' beneath the table of contents; M^1 contains an example of mirror writing in the bottom margin of fol. 77^r, which when reversed seems to read 'Elquale non mannchando da | uui sera tosto stanco ritenta [ritenuta?]'.

[170] Other illustrations include a face drawn in profile in the outer column of fol. $D7^v$ in R^3; a system of concentric circles including a small figure surrounded by the moon and stars and the sun on fol. 196^v in M^1; ink shading of the woodcut at the beginning of V. 6 in BZb^2.

prepared professionally, and *libri-registri* or *libri-zibaldoni*, copied by readers for themselves.

Humanist interest in the *Decameron* does not seem to have been sparked off until quite late in the fifteenth century, and may have been exploited by printers. The large number of editions produced before 1520 provide a valuable insight not only into reader response, but also into the developing printing industry. When printers were the least confident of their new technology and the adaptability of readers to it, and still replicating manuscript presentation in many aspects, editions of the *Decameron* were remarkably similar in appearance. Each printer seemed to imitate the preceding edition, following the same unimaginative process of recycling that characterized the textual tradition. The standard of presentation of these folio editions was quite high, however, and they would have been expensive to produce and to buy. Ferrari's comment that, in terms of decoration, 'gli incunaboli italiani del *Decameron* si inseriscono nella scia della tradizione manoscritta più tipicamente italiana del Boccaccio volgare: dei codici cioè di tipo mercantesco non miniati', is misleading, because it neglects the fact that provision was made for hand-decoration, the application of which could transform a rather sober exemplar into a lavish object of beauty.[171] Thus, even when presentation differed so little between editions, an element of flexibility was nevertheless present, ensuring that the *Decameron* could appeal simultaneously to those who desired books as status symbols, and to those whose primary interest was in the contents of the text, as well as to readers less able to afford extravagant decoration.

Within only several years of the first edition of the *Decameron*, however, changes to the layout, typeface, and provision for decoration began to be made. Folio editions of the *Decameron* printed in roman type made way for editions in quarto and italic type in the sixteenth century, reflecting the success of a new typeface, measures that were introduced to cut the cost of books, and demand for portability over monumentality. In the second decade of the sixteenth century, demands from Boccaccio's readership diversified to the extent that it is possible to speak of the existence of two distinct types of book, satisfying two types of reader. The illustrated edition in folio clearly appealed to readers wishing to be entertained, while the edition in quarto may have contained illustrations, but was principally characterized by the application of editorial methods previously unknown to the *Decameron*. Its appeal may have attracted readers primarily interested in the quality of Boccaccio's prose rather than in the content of his *novelle*. The prefaces added to the 'scholarly' editions of 1516

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[171] Ferrari, pp. 118-19.

are important advertisements for this new market of reader, as are the traces of reading that reveal linguistic awareness. In the next chapter I shall consider whether the reception of *De mulieribus*, in manuscript and print, differed significantly from that of the vernacular texts of the *Teseida* and *Decameron*.

CHAPTER 8

De mulieribus claris

Research on the *fortuna* of *De mulieribus* in the Middle Ages and Renaissance has tended to focus on translations of the text into Italian and on the significant number of imitations and continuations that circulated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[1] In order to complement previous research, this chapter considers evidence relevant to reception found in the material and paratextual presentation of Boccaccio's Latin text before 1520. The discussion opens with a consideration of the relationship between the autograph manuscript of *De mulieribus* and subsequent exemplars containing the Latin text, of which there are significant numbers. However, the only edition printed before 1520 utilizes a fourteenth-century translation into Italian. Despite its importance as the first example of *De mulieribus* in print, and the wealth of paratexts included in it, the 1506 edition has not drawn as much critical attention as editions that appeared later in the sixteenth century containing translations made by Giuseppe Betussi. The second part of this chapter, therefore, concentrates on the 1506 edition when seeking to consider the impact of print on the readership of *De mulieribus*, including the significance of its translation into the vernacular.

8.1 MANUSCRIPTS OF *DE MULIERIBUS*

Pier Giorgio Ricci and Vittorio Zaccaria have worked on the reconstruction of the textual tradition witnessed by Latin manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, but a comprehensive bibliography of extant Latin codices remains to be completed.[2] Branca and Zaccaria

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[1] See for example, two articles by Laura Torretta in *GSLI* on 'Il *Liber de claris mulieribus* di Giovanni Boccaccio': 'Parte III. I traduttori del *Liber de claris mulieribus*', 40 (1902), 35-50; 'Parte IV', 40 (1902), 50-65; Antonio Altamura, 'Donato da Casentino: un volgarizzamento trecentesco del *De mulieribus claris* del Boccaccio (estratti da un codice inedito)', *Atti e memorie della Reale Accademia Petrarca di lettere, arti e scienze*, 25 (1938), 265-71; Claudio Scarpati, 'Note sulla fortuna editoriale del Boccaccio: i volgarizzamenti cinquecenteschi delle opere latine', in *Boccaccio in Europe*, ed. by Tournoy, pp. 209-20; Zaccaria, 'La fortuna del *De mulieribus claris*'; Vittore Zaccaria, 'I volgarizzamenti del Boccaccio latino a Venezia', in *Boccaccio, Venezia e il Veneto*, ed. by Vittore Branca and Giorgio Padoan (Florence: Olschki, 1979), pp. 131-52; Benson, 'From Praise to Paradox: The First Italian Defences of Women', in *The Invention of the Renaissance Woman*, ed. by Benson, pp. 33-64.

[2] See Ricci, 'Le fasi redazionali', in *Studi sulla vita*. Zaccaria adds to his original comments in Zappacosta and Zaccaria, 'Per il testo'. A summary of Zaccaria's study is found in *De mulieribus claris*, ed. by Zaccaria, pp. 458-59. Attilio Hortis provides a short description of a selection of manuscripts in *Studj sulle opere latine del Boccaccio, con particolare riguardo alla storia della erudizione nel medio evo, e alle letterature italiane* (Trieste: Julius Dase, 1879), pp. 912-15. L, L^2, L^4, and FR are described in *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 71-72, 76-78. C, Cm, O^1,

have facilitated the work of future bibliographers by compiling a list of the one hundred and thirteen known extant manuscripts, as well as providing evidence to demonstrate that at least another thirty exemplars were produced.[3] I have seen a sample of thirty-three Latin manuscripts, representing approximately one-third of the available Latin exemplars.[4] Only twelve of these contain the text of *De mulieribus* alone: FR, L^2, Lo, OM, P^1, P^2, P^3, T, Vl, Vl^1, Vz, and Vz^1. Where information on physical structure and presentation is given for manuscripts that contain *De mulieribus* and another text or texts, this refers to a folio or folios within the text of *De mulieribus*, unless otherwise stated. Four manuscripts in the sample do not contain a complete text of *De mulieribus*. Biographies in T and Vp^1 break off abruptly, and it is unclear whether the scribe originally intended to complete the work. However, there are sufficient complete biographies to provide adequate information on presentation. The same is true of Vb, although here the scribe explicitly comments that he has taken excerpts from *De mulieribus*. In contrast, the text in O which relates to *De mulieribus* does not seek to replicate Boccaccio's text, but consists of notes found on a single unruled blank leaf, preceding a transcription of Seneca's *Tragedies*. The appearance and placement of the annotation, which lists the women included in *De mulieribus* and includes details of their family relationships, lends it the character of a private transcription, which is relevant to the ensuing discussion of traces of reading.

The sample of manuscripts is further reduced, since the script of five manuscripts held in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (P, P^1, P^2, P^3, P^4) indicate that these exemplars were transcribed in France, and therefore can reveal little or nothing about readership in Italy. L^4, OM, and Vr must also be omitted because they are unlikely to have circulated in Italy. The former has been attributed to a Rhenish scriptorium and includes decoration which can also be linked to this area, OM was transcribed in an English hand, and the scribe of Vr reveals that he or she copied this exemplar for a member of the clergy in Angers.[5] The following discussion of the

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and P^5 are described in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 267, 279, 347, and 359, with accompanying illustrations.

[3] Branca, *Tradizione*, I, 92-97; Branca, 'Un nuovo elenco di codici', *StB*, 1 (1963), 15-26 (pp. 23-24); Branca, 'Un terzo elenco di codici', *StB*, 4 (1967), 1-8 (pp. 6-7); Branca, 'Un quarto elenco di codici', *StB*, 9 (1975-76), 1-19 (pp. 14-16); Branca, 'Nuovi manoscritti boccacciani', *StB*, 16 (1987), 1-20 (pp. 13-15); Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 57-59; Branca, 'Codici boccacciani segnalati nuovamente. Secondo supplemento', *StB*, 26 (1998), 127-29 (p. 128); *De mulieribus claris*, ed. by Zaccaria, pp. 455-58.

[4] For a list of these manuscripts see Appendix VIII.

[5] For the attribution of L^4 to the Rheinland see *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 71-72. I am grateful to Professor Ralph Hanna (Keble College, Oxford) for information on the script and date of OM. Following the table of contents on fol. 191^r of Vr is written: 'Presente librum scribi feci per

physical structure and presentation of *De mulieribus* manuscripts is therefore based on twenty-four codices.

Only one of the twenty-four manuscripts has been dated by the scribe: L^2 has a date written in the margin beneath the table of contents on fol. 48^r. In order to date the remaining manuscripts, I have relied on library catalogue entries, information provided in Attilio Hortis's *Studj sulle opere latine*, in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, and on the palaeographical expertise of library staff and friends.[6]

When considering the relationship between the physical structure and presentation of the extant autograph manuscript and subsequent codices, it is necessary to bear in mind that Boccaccio continued to work on *De mulieribus* over a number of years. Ricci has identified seven phases in the redaction of *De mulieribus*, while Zaccaria argues that there are nine.[7] At least some of the changes Boccaccio made to his text are reflected in manuscripts copied by other scribes, suggesting that more than one autograph was used as a fair copy. According to Ricci, L and Vu descend from an early autograph, which represents the first three stages in the drafting of *De mulieribus*, Vsp represents the fourth redactional phase, and FR reflects later additions to phase four. The extant autograph did not appear until the modifications were made which Ricci labels phase six. Zaccaria concurs with Ricci that Boccaccio began by composing his biographies in three stages (phases 1-3), in an autograph labelled α. As a result of the extensive changes made to the original manuscript, Zaccaria suggests that Boccaccio considered the first autograph unsuitable for further changes and had another copy transcribed. This copy, which is now lost, Zaccaria labels Vu°. The scribe of Vu°, not fully understanding the notes and signs that indicated the correct version of the text in the autograph, mistakenly excluded some chapters from his copy. At a later date, the scribe of Vu used Vu° as an exemplar, explaining why Vu is also missing some biographies. Meanwhile, α was used as an exemplar for L (phase five), thus explaining the differences between Vu and L. The additional modifications which Ricci includes in phase four represent phase six for Zaccaria, which he also argues were carried out on a new autograph, β. As well as placing Vsp in this group, Zaccaria also adds some

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magistrum Iohannem hunaudi clericum Andegavensis Diocesis magistrum In artibus cappellanum ecclesie Andegavensis. Cui satisfeci de precio inter nos convento Anno domini m° cccc^{mo} lx°'.

[6] Hortis, pp. 912-15; *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II; I am grateful to Stella Panayotova at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, Jayne Ringrose at Cambridge University Library, Laura Nuvoloni at the British Library, Susy Marcon at the Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana in Venice, and Marco Cursi. Many manuscripts would still benefit from a more extended palaeographical analysis in order to assign to them a more precise date than the one which is provided here.

[7] Ricci, 'Le fasi redazionali', and Zaccaria, 'Le fasi redazionali'.

other manuscripts: L^4, RV, Lo^1, O^1, O^2, Vz^2, PaC, Cl, Ra^1, Vc, Ma, L^2, RL^1, Lo, Vl, Vl^1, and Tn. Phase seven is characterized by small modifications made to β, and is represented by FR (which Ricci attributes to phase five), P^1, Vz, and Vz^1. L^3 and RL are the only manuscripts identified by Zaccaria which mirror the last two phases witnessed by the extant manuscript.

Despite the detailed investigations carried out by Ricci and Zaccaria into the textual tradition of *De mulieribus*, the precise textual relationship between extant and non-extant autographs and the many subsequent extant exemplars remains unknown. Of my sample of manuscripts alone, fourteen (Ca^1, CaF, Lo^2, O^3, OM, P, P^2, P^3, P^4, P^5, T, Vb, Vp^1, and Vr) are not included by either Ricci or Zaccaria in their respective studies. A more extensive study of the relationships between manuscripts is not within the scope of this thesis, and therefore it is not possible to determine whether any other manuscripts in my sample, or from among the total number of manuscripts, also represent phases eight and nine, and which manuscripts derive from earlier autographs.[8] Not only is it not possible at present to determine which manuscripts derived from which autograph, it is also impossible to know what these additional autographs would have looked like. Therefore, in considering the relationship between the physical structure and presentation of the extant autograph and the subsequent manuscript tradition, it is not my aim to claim that differences are the result of deliberate choices made by scribes when confronted with the autograph. It is equally inappropriate to claim that manuscripts which resemble the autograph must have been influenced by it. Rather, any similarities or differences might suggest how the evidence for actual readers of *De mulieribus* compares with evidence for Boccaccio's intended readers.

Although no comprehensive bibliographical information is currently available for manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, Branca does indicate the support material used and provide an approximate date for one hundred and ten extant manuscripts.[9] From this number I have excluded two manuscripts which were certainly copied after 1520 (Ca and Pl), and two for which Branca indicates mixed support of parchment and paper (Nr

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[8] Greater understanding of the manuscript tradition of *De mulieribus* would naturally provide additional insights into the nature of transcription and diffusion, and thus into the readership of this work.

[9] This number does not include an unnamed manuscript held in the Library of Walter Leonii in Brussels, for which Branca does not supply a date or details of the support material used, Vo (Vatican City, Bib. Apostolica Vaticana, Ottoboniano lat. 1526; *De mulieribus*, ed. by Zaccaria, p. 458), in which I was unable to find the text of *De mulieribus* when I consulted this manuscript in person, or L^5 (Florence, Bib. Medicea Laurenziana, Acquisti e Doni 523; Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 58), which contains an Italian translation of *De mulieribus* rather than the Latin text.

and Tt).[10] Based on the information pertaining to the remaining one hundred and six manuscripts, Tables 43-45 suggest that my sample of twenty-four exemplars is proportionally representative in terms of attributed date and the relationship between support and date.

Table 43: *Support in MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

Support	Parchment	Paper
% of MSS in sample of 106	41	59
% of MSS in sample of 25	50	50

Table 44: *Dates attributed to MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

Date	14th century	14th-15th century	15th century	15th-16th century	16th century
% of MSS in sample of 106	12	3	81	2	2
% of MSS in sample of 25	21	4	71	4	0

Table 45: *Relationship between support and date in MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

	Date	14th cent.	14th-15th cents	15th cent.	15th-16th cents	16th cent.
Paper	% of MSS in sample of 106	3	2	52	2	1
	% of MSS in sample of 25	0	4	42	4	0
Parchment	% of MSS in sample of 106	9	1	29	0	1
	% of MSS in sample of 25	21	0	29	0	0

It would be highly misleading to extrapolate conclusions drawn from my sample for manuscripts of *De mulieribus* in general, not only because of the dearth of bibliographic information relating to script, size, layout, and decoration for the larger sample, but also because it seems highly likely that many of the manuscripts listed by Branca were transcribed and circulated outside Italy, and are therefore not representative of the reception of Boccaccio within the peninsula. Almost one third of those manuscripts which I have seen in person were not copied in Italy, a fact which is often reflected in their present position in non-Italian collections. Only a relatively small proportion of manuscripts listed by Branca is held in Italian libraries, implying, therefore, that although there are a considerable number of extant manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, many of these would have been copied and read outside Italy. This in turn would have implications for Cursi's suggestion that there were fewer exemplars of the *Decameron* in circulation in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries than of Latin works

[10] Branca also indicates that P^2 and Vc contain both parchment and paper. These manuscripts fall within my sample and I have classified both as paper manuscripts, since each contains only several parchment leaves.

such as *De mulieribus* and *De casibus*, particularly given that he argues that parchment exemplars, which make up a significant proportion of *De mulieribus* codices, had a better chance of survival than the largely paper manuscripts of the *Decameron*.[11]

There is also evidence for the international appeal exhibited by *De mulieribus* within my sample of manuscripts. The script and decoration in L^2 exhibit French characteristics, but according to a note in the manuscript it was transcribed in Rome in 1389.[12] It is possible that the scribe had been a member of the Papal court in Avignon, and perhaps had learned to write while in France, or at least had been influenced by French exemplars, before then moving back to Rome with the Papacy and copying *De mulieribus*. In contrast, the script in Lo^2 suggests that it was copied in a southern provincial region of France, but the marginalia reveal that the manuscript went to Italy and remained there until at least the early sixteenth century. Lo also contains possible evidence of the cultural crossfertilization between Italy and France, since this exemplar is written in an Italian hand but the watermarks indicate that the paper may be of a French origin.[13]

8.1.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

8.1.1.1 PARCHMENT MANUSCRIPTS

The sample of manuscripts containing *De mulieribus* is distinguished from the preceding samples of exemplars containing the *Teseida* and *Decameron* by virtue of the large proportion of parchment codices. Even though Table 43 demonstrates that approximately sixty per cent of the total number of extant manuscripts of *De mulieribus* is written on paper, a significant number of owners and readers were willing to purchase more expensive parchment exemplars, which had the potential to bestow cultural, social, and economic respectability on the owners, as well as lend significant cultural prestige to the text. This prestige may have been linked to the language rather than to the content, since parchment seems to have been regarded as an appropriate support material with greater frequency for this Latin text rather than for the vernacular *Teseida* or *Decameron*, despite Boccaccio's own use of parchment for all three autograph manuscripts containing these works. The perception of the superior strength of parchment is particularly apparent in two manuscripts of *De mulieribus*. I have classified Vc as a paper manuscript, and the text of *De mulieribus* is written on paper,

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[11] Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', pp. 494-95.
[12] See *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 77-78.
[13] I am grateful to Laura Nuvoloni at the British Library for this information.

but the first nine leaves of text, which contain an oration by Cicero, are made of parchment. These were probably inserted with the protection of the manuscript in mind, since many books receive their most wear and tear at the opening of the text. P^5 is also predominantly a paper manuscript, but parchment leaves strengthen the opening of each quire.

The quality of the parchment used in manuscripts of *De mulieribus* is extremely high in many cases. Well prepared, thin, white parchment is found in particular in FR, O^1, O^3, Vl, and Vu. These exemplars are also among those that contain very high quality painted ornamentation. The majority of parchment manuscripts contain professionally executed illuminated or decorated initials (see Table 46).[14] However, there is only one manuscript in my sample that contains a historiated initial (O^1), and no examples of miniatures or illustration accompanying the text. Two manuscripts which are not included in my sample are described in *Boccaccio visualizzato*. C is an early fifteenth-century parchment manuscript containing the texts of *De mulieribus* and *De montibus*, which features a greater quantity of decorative material than many of the exemplars in my sample.[15] The border decoration placed at the opening of *De mulieribus* contains *drôleries*, and an illustration accompanies the beginning of each book in *De montibus*. Similarly, Cm, which is a late fifteenth-century parchment manuscript, contains a series of beautifully historiated initials that runs throughout the text.[16] The ornamentation in neither of these two manuscripts, or in the manuscripts in my sample can be compared, however, with the miniatures that are a feature of French manuscripts containing a translation of *De mulieribus*. The French translation of Boccaccio's text is described by Marie-Hélène Tesnière as having a courtly tone and the manuscripts appear to have circulated primarily among French royalty and aristocracy. Exemplars were also presented to princesses so that it could act as a model of virtue.[17] The majority of the extant manuscripts contain rich cycles of miniatures that mark the beginning of each biography with a scene from the ensuing narrative.[18]

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[14] Vz^1 is distinguished from the other codices in this sample since it contains no ornamentation, and several paper leaves (fols 136-40, 143-47, 150-54, 157-61), the function of, or motivation behind, which is not easy to explain. It is possible only to hypothesize that parchment was scarce during the composition of the manuscript, or that financial constraints called for a mixed support.

[15] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 346-48.

[16] Ibid., p. 267-70.

[17] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, III, 11-13.

[18] Eleven manuscripts are described, with reproductions, in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, III, 35-66.

Table 46: *Presentation of parchment MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

	MS	Date	Script	Size (mm)	Layout	II	HI	DI	CI	BSI	DT	BD	R
Type 1	L^2	1389	Gothic bookhand	310 x 240	2 cols	✓		✓				✓	✓
	FR	1360-1399	Gothic bookhand	288 x 217	Full page	✓			✓				✓
	O^1	1375-1399	Semi-gothic bookhand	282 x 200	2 cols	✓	✓	✓					✓
	Vsp	1375-1399	Semi-gothic bookhand	380 x 255	Full page	✓			✓				✓
	L	*c.* 1490	Humanistic cursive	330 x 220	Full page	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
	O^3	1400-1499	Gothic bookhand	331 x 230	2 cols	✓			✓				✓
	Vl^1	1400-1499	Gothic bookhand	230 x 159	Full page	✓		✓					✓
	Vu	1450-1499	Humanistic bookhand	337 x 233	Full page	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓
Type 2	Lo^2	*c.* 1400	Gothic bookhand	355 x 250	2 cols			✓		✓			
	Vl	1400-1410	Semi-gothic bookhand	248 x 153	Full page			✓	✓				✓
Type 3	L^3	1360-1399	Semi-gothic bookhand	267 x 201	Full page	✓	✓						✓
	Vz^1	1400-1499	Semi-gothic cursive	316 x 223	2 cols		✓						

It might be argued that the appeal of French manuscripts of *De mulieribus* for courtly readers is founded on the translation of the text into the vernacular, but the translation itself does not guarantee the inclusion of a series of painted miniatures. The fifteenth-century French codex containing *De mulieribus* in Latin, which is described in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, also contains a series of illustrative painted miniatures, while an Italian vernacular manuscript, which was probably prepared for Niccolò III d'Este and his wife Parisina Malatesta, does not include miniatures at each biography, suggesting that a different tradition operated in France.[19] There is additional evidence from library inventories that copies of *De mulieribus* in Latin were owned by courtly readers in Italy – by the Visconti in Milan from at least the 1420s, by Niccolò d'Este in the 1430s, and by Federico da Montefeltro, the Duke of Urbino, whose library was built up in the 1460s.[20] It has been suggested that Vu is the actual manuscript copied for the Duke of Urbino in Vespasiano da Bisticci's shop in Florence.[21] Albinia de la Mare has identified several features typically incorporated into books made for the Duke by Vespasiano in the 1470s. The illuminated title-page and border decoration in the 'fashionable flowered style' in Vu match the characteristics described by de la Mare, as does the choice of humanistic script and full-page layout in this manuscript. The owner of L, another parchment Type 1 exemplar, was also wealthy and powerful; the coat of arms and devices found in this manuscript identify its recipient as Lorenzo de' Medici.[22]

Both Vu and L contain a decorated title-page. Smith notes that title-pages, which are normally associated with printed books, do occur in some luxury humanistic manuscripts in the second half of the fifteenth century.[23] Vu and L match Petrucci's definition of humanistic books in other respects – both are written in humanistic hands and are medium-sized manuscripts with a full-page layout – and therefore illustrate Petrucci's claim that by the second half of the fifteenth century humanistic books assumed the function of courtly books for princely libraries. In terms of decoration, however, there is little other evidence for humanistic interest in *De mulieribus*. Vl is the only parchment manuscript which contains the vine scroll initial typical of humanistic taste. This exemplar dates from the beginning of the fifteenth century and therefore may have been transcribed by or for a humanist rather than a courtly reader.

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[19] Ibid., 32-34; *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 281-83. For an additional Italian vernacular manuscript which does not contain miniatures see *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 97-98.
[20] Branca, *Tradizione*, I, 98; Tissoni Benvenuti, p. 16; Zaccaria, 'Le fasi redazionali', pp. 281-82.
[21] Zaccaria, 'Le fasi redazionali', pp. 281-82.
[22] *Mostra di manoscritti*, I, 76-77.
[23] Smith, p. 32.

Table 47 illustrates that almost all parchment manuscripts of *De mulieribus* are written using a book hand, which in most cases is a formal gothic script that adds to the display of cultural prestige already evidenced in the decorative schema. L is the only parchment Type 1 manuscript written in a cursive hand, but by the 1490s humanistic cursive had achieved respectability as a bookhand.[24] Vz^1 was also transcribed in a cursive hand but, as I have noted above, this manuscript might already be considered unrepresentative of parchment manuscripts of *De mulieribus* on account of its decoration and support materials.

Table 47: *Script in MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

Script	GB	SGB	SGC	HB	HC	CM
No. of Parchment MSS	5	4	1	1	1	0
No. of Paper MSS	1	0	1	3	2	5

Petrucci has concerned himself primarily with the presentation of vernacular books and the habits of the vernacular reading public, but he comments that many books in Latin came to take on a homogenous appearance appropriate to their scholarly purposes.[25] Thus, gothic bookhand was the favoured script for scholarly Latin texts, which were suited to slow, meditative study and annotation. The high proportion of manuscripts of *De mulieribus* written in gothic and semi-gothic bookhand therefore suggests that the text may have been consulted by learned readers in the scholarly manner which Boccaccio originally envisaged.

Humanistic bookhands are conspicuous by their virtual absence, although many of the parchment exemplars in my sample were transcribed at the end of the fourteenth century or the very beginning of the fifteenth, when humanistic scripts were still in the process of being developed and diffused. The use of semi-gothic bookhand represents an intermediary stage between gothic and humanistic scripts and was favoured by many proto-humanists and early humanists. This was also the script used by Boccaccio himself to transcribe the autograph of *De mulieribus*. There are four examples of parchment manuscripts written in semi-gothic bookhand, which all date to the end of the fourteenth century or the first decade of the fifteenth century, and may represent an interest in Boccaccio by the forerunners of humanism. This hypothesis is borne out by O^1, whose script has led Albinia de la Mare and Catherine Reynolds to suggest that

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[24] De la Mare, 'New Research on Humanistic Scribes', p. 444.
[25] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 171.

'questo volume [O^1] sia stato redatto all'interno della cerchia del Salutati, mentre i *marginalia* denotano che potrebbe essere stato di proprietà dello stesso Salutati'.[26]

Table 48: *Size in MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

Size	Large	Medium	Small
No. of Parchment MSS	5	6	1
No. of Paper MSS	0	8	4

Table 48 shows that a considerable proportion of parchment manuscripts are of the large size associated with *libri da banco* while, in contrast, paper codices tend towards medium or small dimensions. Large-sized volumes were naturally more expensive to produce, but could confer greater status on the text. For these reasons it is perhaps unsurprising that large sizes are only found among Type 1 and Type 2 parchment manuscripts. Three of the five large manuscripts (Lo^2, O^3, and Vsp) are written in gothic bookhands, but only two of these (Lo^2 and O^3) also have the text arranged in two columns, in imitation of the *libro da banco*. The full-page layout in Vsp creates a larger than usual text space, although the lower and external margins are particularly wide. The full-page layouts chosen for the large-sized manuscripts L and Vu can be explained by their adherence to humanistic models, which had a preference for the single block of text favoured by Carolingian scribes. Almost half of the parchment manuscripts in the sample approximate the size of the autograph (FR, O^1, Vl^1, Vl, and L^3), although only O^1 also reflects the two-column layout of Boccaccio's manuscript. If Salutati commissioned O^1, it is tempting to suggest that one of Boccaccio's autographs, or one of its direct descendents, was used as an exemplar.[27]

8.1.1.2 PAPER MANUSCRIPTS

A cursory evaluation of Table 49, which contains details of the physical structure and presentational features relating to paper manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, suggests that this group of codices is quite different from the parchment manuscripts, and was therefore transcribed for and appealed to different kinds of readers.

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[26] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 280.

[27] It is unlikely that the extant autograph was used since the text of O^1 reflects an earlier redaction: see *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 279. For other manuscripts of Boccaccio owned by Salutati see section 2.2 of this thesis.

Table 49: *Presentation of paper MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

	MS	Date	Script	Size (mm)	Layout	II	HI	DI	CI	BSI	BD	R
Type 1	P[5]	*c.* 1450	Gothic bookhand	294 x 210	Full page	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
	Vz[2]	1400-1499	Chancery minuscule	280 x 196	Full page	✓			✓			✓
	Vc	1450-1499	Humanistic bookhand	292 x 217	Full page	✓			✓		✓	✓
	T	1475-1525	Humanistic bookhand	288 x 207	Full page	✓			✓			✓
Type 2	Vz	1400-1499	Chancery minuscule	293 x 206	2 cols			✓				✓
Type 3	CaF	*c.* 1390-1430	Humanistic bookhand	208 x 153	Full page				✓			✓
	Ca[1]	*c.* 1450	Chancery minuscule	303 x 224	2 cols					✓		
	Lo	1400-1450	Semi-gothic cursive	207 x 147	Full page				✓			✓
	Lo[1]	1400-1450	Humanistic cursive	294 x 200	Full page				✓			
	Vp[1]	1400-1450	Chancery minuscule	290 x 205	Full page				✓			✓
	O[2]	1400-1499	Chancery minuscule	210 x 154	Full page				✓			✓
	Vb	1450-1499	Humanistic cursive	200 x 153	Full page				✓	✓		✓

The majority of the paper exemplars are Type 3 manuscripts containing little or no decoration and are written in cursive scripts often associated with documentation, personal writing, and lower-status works of literature. There are also more examples of small-sized manuscripts, which would have been cheaper to produce and more portable. However, the differences between parchment and paper manuscripts are not as clear-cut as they first appear. Table 50 illustrates that, although illuminated and decorated initials appear with the greatest frequency among parchment manuscripts, and illuminators generally preferred to work on animal skin, these decorative features are not entirely lacking among the paper exemplars. Historiated initials appear in the same numbers among both paper and parchment manuscripts, almost as many paper codices include border decoration, and fewer paper exemplars contain blank spaces for initials than their parchment counterparts. More important than the quantity of ornamentation, however, is the fact that the quality of the decorative features included in paper manuscripts is often extremely high and indicates that it was professionally executed. Type 1 manuscripts, P^5 and T, stand out in particular for the high standard of their illuminated initials and border decoration, which equal those found in any of the Type 1 parchment exemplars. The use of paper in these instances may have been necessitated by a shortage of parchment and an increase in the status of paper for handwritten books. P^5 dates from the middle of the fifteenth century and T may have been transcribed at the beginning of the sixteenth century. These manuscripts therefore do not appear to correspond with either of the two types of book which Petrucci claims stand out with particular prominence at the end of the fifteenth century: high quality parchment courtly books and roughly executed private vernacular texts written on paper.[28]

Table 50: *Relationship between support and decoration in MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

Decoration	II	HI	DI	CI	BSI	DT	BD	R
No. of Paper MSS	4	1	2	9	2	0	2	10
No. of Parchment MSS	8	1	5	7	3	2	3	10

T contains initials decorated with a vine scroll design and the text was copied using humanistic bookhand, indicating that it was designed for a humanistic or courtly reader. Although Table 47 shows that overall book hands are more common among parchment manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, there are a greater number of paper codices written in humanistic scripts. The quality of the manuscripts suggests that those copied in humanistic bookhand may have been transcribed professionally, while the

[28] Petrucci, 'Reading and Writing *Volgare*', p. 201.

manuscripts written in humanistic cursive are more likely to have been copied by scholars for themselves, or commissioned from low-cost professionals. Equally, the competency with which the manuscripts containing chancery minuscule were transcribed varies, indicating that some may have been written by 'copisti per passione'.

There are no large-sized paper manuscripts of *De mulieribus*. The high quality of the decoration used in Type 1 and Type 2 exemplars implies that choice of size was not necessarily linked to the wealth of the buyer or the status of the text, and may have been influenced simply by the availability of the support material, which was manufactured in predefined dimensions. Decisions of this kind may also have been determined by the manner in which the text was read: smaller dimensions suggest that a degree of portability was preferred over the solemnity that could be conferred by large size. In this respect there would appear to be a greater number of manuscripts following the example of the medium-small autograph manuscript than was the case for parchment exemplars. In fact, few codices fall within two centimetres of Boccaccio's chosen dimensions, but this again may be related to paper sheet sizes.

While parchment manuscripts are divided almost equally between those with the text arranged in two columns and those with a full-page layout, there is a much stronger link between paper manuscripts of *De mulieribus* and the full-page layout. Boccaccio's decision to produce a medium-sized manuscript with a two-column layout therefore did not inspire most readers. The prevalence of the full-page layout in this context might be explained by the almost total lack of the gothic scripts normally associated with a columnar arrangement and the preference for full-page layouts in humanistic books.

The fifteenth century witnessed the transcription of the greatest number of manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, and most of the paper exemplars fall within this period. In contrast with parchment manuscripts, which seem to have been in demand at the end of the fourteenth century and beginning of the fifteenth century, many paper codices date from the second half of the fifteenth century, when paper was widely available and had gained a greater acceptance for use in literary manuscripts. Most of the fourteenth-century parchment manuscripts are Type 1 exemplars, which suggests that *De mulieribus* achieved a particularly high status amongst the wealthy and educated in this period. In contrast, and following the general rise in status enjoyed by paper, there appears to be some correlation between Type 3 paper exemplars and the earlier half of the fifteenth century, and Type 1 paper exemplars and the latter half of the fifteenth century.

8.1.2 SCRIBES AND OWNERSHIP

Table 51: *Evidence for scribes of 'De mulieribus'*

MS	MS Type	Scribe	Colophon
L^2	Parchment 1	Astolfo	rome per Astulphum scriptum kalendis Julii. 1389 (fol. 48r)
Lo	Paper 3	Fra Giacobbe da Casale	Et scriptus est per me Fratrem Iacobus de Casali: deus gratia amen
O^2	Paper 3	Fra Bartolomeo Gardini da Bologna	scriptus per me fratrem Bartholomeum de gardinis de bononia
Vb	Paper 3	Ludovico Sandeo	haec sunt quae ex Boccatio de claris mulieribus ita transcurrenter excerpsi. Volens igitur aliquis haec diffussius videre ad eundem recurrat quoniam ea ego succinte mihi ipsi collegi. Ludovicus Sandeus[29]

Members of the clergy, who would have been among some of the sections of society most likely to be schooled in Latin, seem to have played a significant role in the copying of *De mulieribus* (see Table 51). The two manuscripts produced by these religious copyists are both simple paper exemplars written in cursive scripts with little decoration (Lo and O^2). It is unclear whether fra Giacobbe and fra Bartolomeo Gardini were commissioned to transcribe the text for other members of the clergy or secular readers, or whether they wrote for themselves, in which case Boccaccio's decision to focus on predominantly pagan women and include biographies of women such as Pope Joan would not seem to have been a hindrance.

Vb is similar in appearance to Lo and O^2, although it is written in a humanistic script appropriate to the humanistic inclinations of its scribe. Ludovico Sandeo was born in Ferrara in 1446 and died in the same city in 1482. His father was an important official for the Este family and he was humanistically educated.[30] The colophon in his exemplar indicates that Ludovico copied the manuscript for his own purposes, and, unlike other scribes, he chose to approach Boccaccio's text in a selective manner, only including passages that appealed to him personally. This fact, together with the presentation of Vb (a Type 3 paper manuscript), suggests that Ludovico approached *De mulieribus* primarily as a reference work which perhaps aided his own studies, rather than as a status symbol.

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[29] Translation of the colophon: 'These are the passages which in passing I have taken out of Boccaccio's *De claris mulieribus*. So, someone wanting to see these passages in fuller form should go back to the same [Boccaccio's *De mulieribus*], because I have gathered these short passages for myself. Ludovico Sandeo'.

[30] Marco Perugini, 'Sandeo, Ludovico (Ferrara 1446 - ivi 1482)', in *Letteratura Italiana. Gli Autori. Dizionario bio-bibliografico e Indici*, IX.ii (1991), 1576.

The only high quality parchment manuscript in which the scribe has named himself does not provide any explicit additional information about the social or cultural status of the copyist. As I noted above, L^2 is interesting because the script and decoration link it with France, although it was apparently written, or at least finished, in Rome. The scribe may have been of Lombard origin, since the name 'Astolfo' was common in this region in memory of the eponymous eighth-century king of the Lombards.[31] Marginalia on the endpapers of the manuscript also reveal a French connection, although it is difficult to say whether these leaves were added in France or brought by Astolfo or the binder from France to Italy, or whether the notes were added after the manuscript was bound by a French speaker in Italy or France. The marginalia record payments made to various workers, including 'deux ouvriers de brasse' [two brewers] and a 'tieullier' [tilemaker],[32] for services provided to two castles in France, 'chastel de gien' and 'chastel pomice', the former of which at least seems to have belonged to a 'Comte Dillet'. There is no evidence that any of these named scribes copied other works listed in major catalogues,[33] which indicates that they are more likely to be non-professional 'copisti per passione'.

Table 52: *Evidence for ownership of MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

MS	MS Type	Owner	Evidence for Ownership
O^1	Parchment 1	Coluccio Salutati	Marginalia in Salutati's hand
Vsp	Parchment 1	Cardinal	Coat of arms with cardinal's hat
Vu	Parchment 1	Federico da Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino	Inventory MS presentation
L	Parchment 1	Lorenzo de' Medici	Coat of arms and devices
T	Paper 1	Girolamo Bonomi	Hieronimi Bonomi ad Aurelium Carellium nepotem (fol. 16^v)
Vz^2	Paper 1	Gulielmo Landriano	Gulielmus Landrianus (fol. 1^r)

Among the small number of owners who can be identified, there are representatives from the highest social, cultural, and economic strata of society (see Table 52). This is perhaps partly to be expected, given that interest in the text of *De mulieribus* required some knowledge of Latin, which was only within the reach of the privileged few. It is also the case that these owners favoured the most expensive and the highest quality manuscripts in the sample, indicating that they conferred considerable status upon the work. The lack of evidence from Type 3 manuscripts,

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[31] O. Bertolini, 'Astolfo, re dei Longobardi', in *DBI*, IV (1962), 467-83.
[32] *Dictionnaire de l'ancien français: le moyen âge*, compiled by Algirdas Julien Greimas (Paris: Larousse, 1979).
[33] See Chapter 6, n. 31.

however, means that we are missing details about less socially and financially distinguished owners of *De mulieribus*, or details about those that held the text in lower esteem.

The evidence relating to scribes and owners also sheds some light on the provenance of manuscripts within Italy and reveals that exemplars of *De mulieribus* appear to have been copied and circulated over a wide area of northern and central Italy. The watermark and style of decoration in Lo[1] also suggest a North-eastern Italian provenance, while Francesca Manzari attributes P[5] to Lombardy on the basis of its decoration.[34]

8.1.3 PARATEXTS

Table 53: *MSS of 'De mulieribus' which contain tables of contents*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout	Date
FR	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	1360-1399
L[2]	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Medium	2 cols	1389
O[1]	Parchment 1	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 cols	1375-1399
Vl[1]	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Small	Full page	1400-1499
Vsp	Parchment 1	Semi-gothic bookhand	Large	Full page	1375-1399
Vl	Parchment 2	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	1400-1410
L[3]	Parchment 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	1360-1399
Vz[1]	Parchment 3	Semi-gothic cursive	Medium	2 cols	1400-1499
P[5]	Paper 1	Gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	*c.* 1450
Vz[2]	Paper 1	Chancery minuscule	Medium	Full page	1400-1499
Vz	Paper 2	Chancery minuscule	Medium	2 cols	1400-1499
Lo	Paper 3	Semi-gothic cursive	Small	Full page	1400-1450
Ca[1]	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	2 cols	*c.* 1450
Vb	Paper 3	Humanistic cursive	Small	Full page	1450-1499
O[2]	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Small	Full page	1400-1499
Lo[1]	Paper 3	Humanistic cursive	Medium	Full page	1400-1450
CaF	Paper 3	Humanistic bookhand	Small	Full page	*c.* 1390-1430

Tables of contents listing the rubrics that mark each section in the text are the most commonly occurring paratext in manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, being found at the beginning or end of seventeen exemplars in my sample (see Table 53). Although Boccaccio did not include a table of contents in his autograph manuscript, the text of *De mulieribus* lends itself to an indexing system, since each biography naturally forms a self-contained chapter. The relative homogeneity of the contents of *De mulieribus* also makes a table of contents attractive to the reader who wishes to move with ease from section to section in a non-linear fashion. However, although a table of contents would appear to have an obvious functional quality, many of those found in my sample contain

[34] *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 359.

a system of numbering which refers to the numbering of rubrics included in the table of contents, rather than one which corresponds to foliation or the numbering of biographies in the body of the work. In these cases, the table helps the rubricator and only assists the reader by illustrating the ordering of biographies. The table of contents included in P^5 is distinguished from the list of rubrics found in other manuscripts since it includes descriptive entries ranging from a single sentence to a paragraph of detail on the contents of each biography. In this case, therefore, the benefits for orientation and recall for the reader are clear.

There are marginally more paper manuscripts which include a table of contents than parchment exemplars, and tables of contents appear to occur more with more consistency within Type 3 exemplars of either support. Smaller-sized manuscripts also seem more likely to contain tables of contents than large-sized codices. This would suggest that readers of the less expensive manuscripts were more likely to use *De mulieribus* for study purposes, rather than read the text only for pleasure, or purchase the exemplar simply as a status symbol.

The text of *De mulieribus* occurs with more frequency together with other texts than it does on its own. These are always Latin texts, presenting Boccaccio in his guise as a proto-humanist and ignoring his vernacular output. Those manuscripts which collect *De mulieribus* together with other works by Boccaccio are listed in Table 54.

Table 54: *MSS which contain 'De mulieribus' and other texts by Boccaccio*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout	Date
L	Parchment 1	Humanistic cursive	Large	Full page	*c.* 1490
O^3	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Large	2 cols	1400-1499
Vsp	Parchment 1	Semi-gothic bookhand	Large	Full page	1375-1399
Vu	Parchment 1	Humanistic bookhand	Large	Full page	1450-1499
Ca^1	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	2 cols	*c.* 1450

All of this group of manuscripts include *De casibus*, indicating that Boccaccio's collection of biographies of illustrious men was seen as the natural companion to his biographies of illustrious women. L, which was copied for Lorenzo de' Medici, is a compendium of all the major Latin works written by Boccaccio, with the exception only of the *Genealogia*. From comments made in other sources, it is clear that the *Genealogia* continued to be read by humanists throughout the fifteenth century and was probably Boccaccio's most popular Latin work.[35] There is a sense, therefore, that the compendium of texts transcribed for Lorenzo represented Boccaccio's 'minor' Latin

[35] See, for example, the comment made by Paolo Cortesi in *De hominibus doctis* in section 3.15 of this thesis.

works. Vsp, which belonged to a cardinal, also reveals something of its owner's tastes and perception of Boccaccio. This fourteenth-century exemplar makes the common connection between *De mulieribus* and *De casibus*, includes several epistles by Petrarch, thereby implicitly recognizing the common interests and friendship shared by the two authors, and reveals something of the owner's religious concerns, with a transcription of the letter written by Lentulus, the Governor of Judea, to the Roman senate, describing Jesus Christ ('Epistola Lentuli de Christo ad Senatum').[36] There is remarkable consistency of presentation between four of the five manuscripts that contain *De mulieribus* and another work or works by Boccaccio. L, O^3, Vsp, and Vu are all high quality, highly decorated, large-sized parchment manuscripts, which confer high status on Boccaccio as a Latin author.

Table 55: *MSS which contain 'De mulieribus' and other texts not by Boccaccio*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout	Date
O^1	Parchment 1	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 cols	1375-1399
Lo^2	Parchment 2	Gothic bookhand	Large	2 cols	*c.* 1400
L^3	Parchment 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	1360-1399
Vc	Paper 1	Humanistic bookhand	Medium	Full page	1450-1499
Vz^2	Paper 1	Chancery minuscule	Medium	Full page	1400-1499
P5	Paper 1	Gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	*c.* 1450
Lo^1	Paper 3	Humanistic cursive	Medium	Full page	1400-1450
O^2	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Small	Full page	1400-1499
Vb	Paper 3	Humanistic cursive	Small	Full page	1450-1499
Vp^1	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	Full page	1400-1450

Table 55 shows that manuscripts containing *De mulieribus* together with works by authors other than Boccaccio are more varied in their presentation. There are a greater number of paper exemplars, but overall there are roughly equal numbers of Type 1 and Type 3 manuscripts. Some manuscripts include only one or two additional texts. Vz^2, for example, contains an epistle by Petrarch and an anonymous oration in praise of the Duchess of Milan. In contrast, Vb contains sixty additional texts.

Lo^2, Vz^2, and O^1 put texts by Petrarch together with *De mulieribus*. It is well-documented that Salutati, who probably owned O^1, was one of Petrarch's most ardent admirers, and that many of Salutati's conversations with Boccaccio hinged around their common regard for Petrarch. Over and above the personal relationship between Boccaccio and Petrarch, connections were made between their works. *Fam.* V. 4, which was included in Vz^2 and O^1, was seen as particularly relevant within the context of *De*

[36] Lentulus was a fictitious governor and the letter was a forgery, possibly translated into Latin from Greek in the thirteenth or fourteenth century. See A. J. Maas, 'Lentulus, Publius', in *The*

mulieribus, because it contains a lengthy description of a contemporary female warrior named Maria Puteolanae [Mary from Pozzuoli]. Similarly, Vsp includes *Sen.* XVII. 3, in which Petrarch provides a translation of the story of Griselda. Lo^2, O^1, and Vsp, at least, date from the fourteenth century or the very beginning of the fifteenth century when humanism was in its early stages and Boccaccio and Petrarch might yet be held up as models, and also when the relationship between the two authors was retained in living memory.

Extending the connection visible in manuscripts containing both *De mulieribus* and *De casibus*, two codices include versions of the anonymous *De viris illustribus* attributed to Pliny (Vc and Vb) and Girolamo Eusebio (Vc). The texts included in Vb indicate that this manuscript was copied for a humanistic reader, since it contains works by classical authors and fifteenth-century humanists such as Guarino and Leonardo Bruni. Other manuscripts contain *De mulieribus* together with non-literary texts, where it is difficult to find a connection other than one based on individual personal taste. For example, P^5 includes an anonymous treatise on the plague and a collection of aphorisms, and Vp^1 consists largely of a collection of legal texts.

Other additions made by scribes to *De mulieribus* consist mainly of devices designed to draw attention to particular sections of text. The scribes of O^2, O^3, Vl, and Vp^1 marked lines of text with the word 'Nota' in the margin, often written in red. In Vp^1 selected names are picked out from the text and repeated in the margin, underlined in black ink with a red stroke through the first letter of each for emphasis. Next to the beginning of several biographies, the scribe of O^3 thought it appropriate to give a brief summary of the contents, perhaps in place of a table of contents. For example, at the opening of the biography of Nicostrata the reader is told that she invented the alphabet ('de inventrice litterarum latinarum'(fol. 128^v)). In P^5, the scribe was more formal about his or her interventions and ruled a separate column for comments on the external margin of every page. In the extra column ruled next to the table of contents, the scribe passed judgement on Boccaccio's manner of writing, commenting, for example, 'notabiliter' [remarkably], 'satis notabiliter', or 'multum notabiliter' [very remarkably] next to some rubrics,[37] and 'pulcre' [beautifully] or 'satis pulcre' [very beautifully] next

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Catholic Encyclopedia, ed. by Charles G. Herbermann and others, 15 vols (New York: Encyclopedia Press, [*c.* 1913]), IX, 154, which includes a translation of the letter.

[37] These are the rubrics for Thisbe, Niobe, Iole, Almathea, Nicostrata, Penthesilea, Clytemnestra, Sappho, Tamyris, Hippo, Megullia, Virginia, Leontium, Claudia, Triaria, Joan, and Irene.

to others.[38] Occasionally additional biographical information is offered, for example 'uxor neronis' [wife of Nero] is written next to the rubric for Sabina.

8.1.4 TRACES OF READING

From the sample of twenty-four manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, three (FR, L, and Vu) contain no visible evidence to suggest that they were read prior to 1520. All three are high quality Parchment Type 1 manuscripts, and we know that at least L and Vu were copied for socially prestigious and wealthy owners: Lorenzo de' Medici and Federico da Montefeltro. It is possible that these exemplars were acquired as part of costly libraries that reflected, or were intended to create an image of, highly cultured individuals, but were not actually read. Luigi Michelini Tocci writes of the Duke of Urbino: 'Federico – è stato detto più volte – fu essenzialmente un bibliofilo, un amatore del libro bello e ricco, da sfogliare più che da leggere, oggetto prezioso da collezione più che strumento di studio'.[39] The fact that Federico might never have read *De mulieribus* does not detract from the fact that it was evidently considered appropriate for the Duke's library. The absence of marginalia or any other related marks in FR, L, and Vu might also be the result of the manner in which these manuscripts were read. If they were enjoyed as a leisure pursuit, particularly if the text was read aloud by one person to another, there would be little opportunity or desire to mark the text. The Duke of Urbino certainly had his courtiers read to him while he was eating or before bed.[40]

Table 56 illustrates the distribution of features in each category of traces of reading for the twenty-one manuscripts of *De mulieribus* that do contain visible evidence.

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[38] These are the rubrics for Hypermnestra, Medea, Pocris, Camilla, and Paulina. Next to the rubric for Lucretia is written 'laudabiliter' [praiseworthily].
[39] Michelini Tocci, p. 12.
[40] Ibid., pp. 12-13.

Table 56: *Distribution of traces of reading in MSS of 'De mulieribus'*

	Category 1	*Category 2*	*Category 3*			*Category 4*	
	Marginalia	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated Notes	Scribbles Smudges	Pen Trials	Related Illustration	Unrelated Illustration
Ca[1]	✓	✓					
CaF		✓		✓			✓
L[2]	✓	✓	✓				
L[3]	✓						
Lo	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Lo[1]		✓					
Lo[2]	✓	✓					✓
O[1]	✓	✓					
O[2]	✓	✓	✓				
O[3]		✓					
P[5]	✓	✓					
T			✓				
Vb	✓	✓				✓	
Vc		✓				✓	
Vl		✓					
Vl[1]	✓						
Vp[1]	✓	✓					
Vsp	✓	✓			✓		
Vz		✓					
Vz[1]		✓					
Vz[2]	✓						

The most popular trace left by readers is the mark or symbol, followed by marginalia, and this indicates that every manuscript except T, which contains neither marks, symbols, nor marginalia, was read by an owner who engaged actively with the text. In the majority of cases, however, the interaction was not sustained throughout the text. Ca^1 is the only manuscript which contains extensive and systematic marginalia. The other manuscripts contain only sporadic notes, or marginalia that peter out before the end of the text.

There are two types of marginalia in manuscripts of *De mulieribus*. The most common type can be described as notabilia: notes of key names, places, or events placed in the margin adjacent to the relevant text.[41] Sometimes the word or words are simply copied from the text, in other cases there is a short paraphrase. Often the note is written in red, or underlined and highlighted in red. This type of marginalia functions primarily as a memory device or orientation guide for the reader, making it easy to recognize a particular biography or part of a biography at a later reading.[42] The second type of marginalia found in these manuscripts consists of references to other sources that are relevant because they offer a different version of or perspective on the same narrative, or provide further details of a person or event mentioned only in passing by Boccaccio.[43] These notes not only provide evidence that the reader is fully engaging with the text, but also provide information about the reader's level of culture. It is clear from the marginalia in Vb that the reader was familiar with classical literature, and also that he or she had read at least one other work by Boccaccio, since there is a reference to *De montibus* (fol. 179^r).[44] Expressions of personal opinion are rare, but at the beginning of the biography of Sabina Poppaea in Vb a reader has noted in the margin 'mulieres ad lacrimans semper prompte' [women [are] always ready to weep] (fol. 211^v).

Table 57 illustrates the nature of the presentation of the manuscripts that contain marginalia. Manuscripts containing humanistic scripts are, on the whole, conspicuously absent. This is less surprising when it is remembered that a significant number of these 'humanistic' books were also Type 1 manuscripts that may have fulfilled the function of luxury courtly books, and therefore, like Vu, may have been owned as status symbols or read for entertainment, rather than consulted for studious reasons. It is tempting to conclude that Type 3 manuscripts, in contrast, often contain marginalia because they

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[41] See Vb, P^5, O^2, Vsp, Vp^1, Lo^2, Lo, and O^3.
[42] See Carruthers, p. 215, for the relationship between glossed books and memory.
[43] Vb, in particular, includes numerous detailed references to classical sources.
[44] MS Vb does not contain any texts by Boccaccio other than *De mulieribus*.

were designed as 'study' copies. In other words, their owners were interested primarily in the text, rather than its presentation. These owners might have been students and scholars, although the presumed wealth of the owners of Type 1 manuscripts clearly did not prevent them from studying and annotating their texts.

Table 57: *Presentation of MSS of 'De mulieribus' that contain marginalia*

MS	MS Type	Script	Size	Layout	Date
L^2	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Medium	2 cols	1389
O^1	Parchment 1	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	2 cols	1375-1399
O^3	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Large	2 cols	1400-1499
Vl^1	Parchment 1	Gothic bookhand	Small	Full page	1400-1499
Vsp	Parchment 1	Semi-gothic bookhand	Large	Full page	1375-1399
Lo^2	Parchment 2	Gothic bookhand	Large	2 cols	*c.* 1400
L^3	Parchment 3	Semi-gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	1360-1399
P^5	Paper 1	Gothic bookhand	Medium	Full page	*c.* 1450
Vz^2	Paper 1	Chancery minuscule	Medium	Full page	1400-1499
Ca^1	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	2 cols	*c.* 1450
Lo	Paper 3	Semi-gothic cursive	Small	Full page	1400-1450
O^2	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Small	Full page	1400-1499
Vb	Paper 3	Humanistic cursive	Small	Full page	1450-1499
Vp^1	Paper 3	Chancery minuscule	Medium	Full page	1400-1450

There are three exemplars containing notes that are unrelated to the text of the manuscript and separate from scribbles, smudges, and pen trials. On the blank leaves at the end of T a record of income and expenditure has been kept in Italian. Fol. 21^r contains the heading 'partition de denari vadagnati ala bancha di piovegi', with weekly dates in April and May 1502 corresponding to payments. On fol. 24^v there is a record of expenditure which is also dated to 1502. T is a high quality Type 1 manuscript written in humanistic bookhand, and this trace of reading falls into the category of financial transactions which Branca claims signifies mercantile interest in the *Decameron* and of which I have found three examples within Type 2 and Type 3 exemplars of the *Decameron* written in *mercantesca*.[45] This suggests either that MS T was initially enjoyed by wealthy, highly cultured readers but then passed into the possession of a different class of reader, or that the use of books in this manner is not restricted to low quality exemplars that may have been transcribed by 'copisti per passione'.

O^2 contains five blank leaves at the end, on the verso of the last of which a reader has also kept a record of his income and expenditure in mercantile script. The list includes names of people he has paid and from whom he has received payment, and the cost of goods such as bread, meat, and wood. Unlike T, this exemplar contains

[45] See section 7.1.5.

minimal decoration and is written in chancery minuscule, and is therefore more like some manuscripts of the *Decameron.*[46] However, there are no manuscripts of *De mulieribus* written in *mercantesca* and the text does not promote mercantile ethics or present biographies where merchants play key roles; hence it cannot be argued that there is a direct correlation between 'mercantile' traces of reading and vernacular texts such as the *Decameron.*

Traces of reading in manuscripts of *De mulieribus* also suggest that utilizing the blank spaces in manuscripts for unrelated notes is not a habit exclusive to merchant readers of the *Decameron.* T illustrates this most clearly with additional texts written in Latin, and drawings: notes and a diagram of a family tree indicate different possible relationships (fols 16^{v} and 22^{r}). A reader of O, who glossed his or her text of Seneca's *Tragedies*, also utilized the blank leaves at the beginning of the manuscript to give a list of the names of the first twenty-five women from *De mulieribus*, together with a small amount of descriptive material. The ordering of the names suggests that the reader had a copy of *De mulieribus* in front of him or her, and perhaps transcribed the rubrics from a table of contents and added his or her own summaries of the biographies, or consulted a manuscript with a comprehensive index. Although the placement of these notes on an unruled leaf does not suggest that the reader-copyist intended to transcribe the entire contents of *De mulieribus*, the fact that he or she chose to record them suggests that this information was useful in some way beyond simple pleasure in the narrative.

The category of unrelated texts also includes traces of reading such as scribbles, smudges of ink, and pen trials. On some leaves in CaF there is brown ink smudging across the text which, although it is impossible to date, does imply that the manuscript was read, and also that the reader was seemingly careless and not overly concerned with keeping the manuscript clean. Lo has more extensive evidence that a reader or readers did not hold much respect for the presentation of this manuscript. There appears to have been such a large quantity of scribbling or doodling in the margins of many of the leaves in this manuscript that it has been judged 'obtrusive' or 'irrelevant' for the twenty-first century reader and clean strips of paper have been recently glued over the margins to cover it up. Both CaF and Lo are paper Type 3 manuscripts. Vsp is a parchment Type 1 manuscript that contains pen trials, but these are on the blank leaves at the beginning of the manuscript and are therefore less invasive with regard to the text of *De mulieribus*.

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[46] See n. 45.

Another form of intervention in the text which falls between the categories of 'Marks or Symbols' and 'Scribbles and Smudges' occurs in Lo and suggests a form of censorship. Two leaves have been stuck together, thereby covering up the majority of the biography of Pope Joan. The beginning of this biography, which remains visible on fol. 120^{r}, has been crossed out in brown ink, and its entry in the table of contents has also been cancelled out. Although it is difficult to say with any certainty that this censorship occurred prior to 1520, it is an interesting example of a reader's response to the text.

The illustrations found in this sample which are related to the text are not always complex or detailed responses to *De mulieribus*. Vb contains an ink portrait of a male figure in the margin in the biography of Sabina Poppaea, which may, therefore, be a portrait of her husband, Nero (fol. 212^{r}). That a man was illustrated when the work is mainly about women might reflect the fact that the reader was male. A reader of MS CaF, however, has specifically responded to one of the women in *De mulieribus* and made a connection with a female character in the *Decameron*. An image of a heart in a chalice placed in the lower margin (fol. 83^{v}) of the biography of Cleopatra recalls the story of Ghismonda in *Dec*. IV. 1, who is presented with her lover's heart in a golden chalice. By drinking a mixture of tears and poison poured onto the heart, Ghismonda commits suicide. Cleopatra also commits suicide when she is thwarted in love. Beyond this fact there are few similarities, however, and Boccaccio treats the two women quite differently, considering Ghismonda to have committed a dignified and noble act, and sparing no sympathy for Cleopatra. The illustration in Vc is a response to Boccaccio rather than to a biography, but it may also demonstrate that its author was familiar with at least one other work by Boccaccio, in this case one where Fiammetta appears as a character or dedicatee. Below the *explicit* on fol. 145^{r} the profile of a man and a woman have been drawn facing each other, with each profile attached to two letters, which are respectively 'B' and 'F'. Dotted lines extending from the two profiles meet and join each other in the space between them. The letters 'B' and 'F' suggest that the two profiles may represent Boccaccio and Fiammetta.

Illustrations that are apparently unrelated to the text of *De mulieribus*, or to Boccaccio, can be even more difficult to explain. In Lo, the initial which begins the biography of Cassandra contains a drawing of an ear of corn, while the enclosed space within several other initials has been filled in with a roughly executed geometric pattern, such that these interventions could also be classified as doodles. Lo^{2} contains a very

rough sketch of the crucifixion in the margin on fol. 44^{v}, which may suggest that the reader was a member of the clergy, or simply devout.

8.2 THE PRINTED EDITION OF 1506

The only Italian edition of *De mulieribus* published before 1520 is a translation into Italian printed in Venice in 1506 by Giovanni Tacuino. The absence of earlier editions and of editions in Latin is initially striking, because the large number of extant manuscripts of *De mulieribus* dating from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries suggest that the work was particularly popular, and therefore suitable for print. However, my earlier hypothesis, that many of the extant manuscripts were in fact copied in Northern Europe and are therefore not representative of Boccaccio's success in his own country, is upheld by the printed tradition outside Italy: three Latin editions of *De mulieribus* were printed in Ulm (1473), Strasbourg (*c.* 1474-75), and Louvain (1487). Furthermore, the sample of Italian manuscripts of *De mulieribus* that I have analysed indicates that the work was transcribed most frequently in the fourteenth century and at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Interest in the Latin text in Italy may therefore have already begun to decline by the time print was introduced, making the absence of an incunable symptomatic of a general waning of interest in *De mulieribus* rather than a reaction to the printed medium.

In Italy *De mulieribus* was not the only Latin work by Boccaccio to lose favour towards the end of the fifteenth century and fail to be represented significantly in print. *De casibus* was not printed at all in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Petrarch's Latin works were also apparently unpopular in this period. The *Buccolicum carmen* and *De remediis utriusque fortunae* were printed four times, while *De viris illustribus* and the *Secretum* appeared only in Italian translation.[47] Boccaccio's *Genealogia* and *De montibus* had moderate success, appearing in print as early as 1472-73. Dionisotti notes: 'di quelle opere non potevano fare a meno, quand'anche sdegnassero citarle, gli umanisti impegnati allora a fondo nella esegesi dei testi classici'.[48] The absence of *De mulieribus*, therefore, suggests that it was not used as a study companion by humanists, and it evidently did not appeal as leisure material, perhaps because the style of Boccaccio's Latin was seen as an impediment.

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[47] The *Buccolicum carmen* was printed in Cremona in 1495 and Bologna in 1497, and EDIT16 attributes two editions to 1503 (Venice). *De remediis utriusque fortunae* was printed in Cremona in 1492, and in Venice in 1515, 1536, and 1549. *Le vite de gli huomoni illustri* was printed in Venice in 1527 and the *Secreto* was printed in Siena in 1517 and again in Venice in 1520. See Dionisotti, 'Fortuna del Petrarca', pp. 61-68.

The subject matter of *De mulieribus* was nevertheless attractive to some sections of the reading public, since a large number of imitations circulated in the second half of the fifteenth century, many of which borrowed directly from Boccaccio's text. These included Antonio da Cornazano's *De mulieribus admirandis*, Vespasiano da Bisticci's *Il libro delle lodi e commendazione delle donne illustri*, Domenico Bordigallo's *Sermo et carmen de nobilitate matronarum antiquarum*, Iacopo Filippo Foresti's *De plurimis claris selectisque mulieribus*, Sabadino degli Arienti's *Gynevera de le clare donne*, as well as works by anonymous authors.[49] Some of these texts were written in Latin, but others were composed in Italian, suggesting that biographies of famous women in this period appealed also to a non-humanist, vernacular audience. This readership did not appear with the introduction of print, but had always operated alongside those that read the Latin texts. The first translation into Italian of Boccaccio's *De mulieribus* may have been effected as early as 1367 by Donato degli Albanzani. Another translation was made before the end of the fourteenth century by an Augustinian friar from the Marche, named Antonio da Sant'Elpidio.[50] Antonio's text was 'retranslated' with a Florentine patina by a merchant named Niccolò Sassetti, and it is this version which Vincenzo Bagli published as his own in the 1506 edition of *De mulieribus*.[51]

The precise role that Bagli played in the edition is unclear. His name appears in the dedication and sonnet which are addressed to a Perugian noblewoman, Lucrezia Baglioni, and placed at the beginning of the edition, and from the language he uses in these paratexts it is evident that he was a learned man of Perugian origin, perhaps in the retinue of the Baglioni family.[52] In the dedication Bagli refers to Lucrezia Baglioni as a widow, indicating that the dedication, at least, was composed after the death of her

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[48] Ibid., p. 68.

[49] Torretta, 'Parte IV. I plagiari, gli imitatori, i continuatori'; Zaccaria, 'La fortuna del *De mulieribus claris*'; Benson, 'From Praise to Paradox'.

[50] Hortis lists three extant manuscripts containing Donato's translation and eleven containing that of Antonio (pp. 930-31). Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canon. It. 86 (Donato's translation) is also described in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 281-83. L^5, listed by Branca in *Tradizione*, II, 58, contains a translation, although I have not identified whether it is the work of Donato or Antonio.

[51] MS Pluteo LXII, 20 in the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence contains a translation of *De mulieribus* and the comment 'Traslato di latino in volgare per frate Antonio da San Lupidio Marchigiano, e poi ritraslatato in Fiorentino per Niccolò Sassetti'. See Hortis, pp. 600-04, 930-32. See also Torretta, 'Parte III. I traduttori'; Altamura, 'Donato da Casentino'; A. M. Giacomini, 'Antonio da Sant'Elpidio', in *DBI*, III (1961), 578; Scarpati, 'Note sulla fortuna editoriale'; Zaccaria, 'I volgarizzamenti del Boccaccio'.

[52] The text of the sonnets and dedication is included in Appendix IX. There are numerous examples of the use of an unstressed 'e' in place of 'i' (on this characteristic of Perugian language see Ignazio Baldelli, 'Correzioni cinquecentesche ai versi di Lorenzo Spirito', *SFI*, 9 (1951), 39-122 (pp. 41-43)). For example, in the dedication Bagli writes 'et essendo adormentato vide in visione', 'continue digiuni', 'ornate costumi'.

husband, Camillo Vitelli, in 1495.[53] Since Bagli does not say that Lucrezia is recently widowed, the dedication and other paratexts might have been written close to 1506, perhaps specifically for the edition. The money to finance *De mulieribus* may have come from Bagli, in which case he may have preferred to use Tacuino, rather than a Perugian printer, because of Tacuino's reputation for producing high quality editions of culturally reputable texts. By 1506, Tacuino was well established, having begun printing fourteen years earlier, and he continued to produce editions for a further thirty-six years.[54] Table 58 illustrates that Latin literature was Tacuino's primary concern, and the majority of editions are either classical works or humanistic texts, clearly destined for a highly educated and cultured audience.

Table 58: *Editions printed by Giovanni Tacuino grouped according to discipline and language*[55]

Type of work	Number of works	In Latin	In Italian
Grammar	21	21	0
History	6	6	0
Law	2	2	0
Literature	161	139	22
Medicine	6	5	1
Religion	27	20	7
Treatise writing	11	9	2
Alchemy, Astrology, Architecture, Cookery, Music, Philosophy	17	16	1
Totals	251	218	33

Authors who figure predominantly in the printer's repertoire include Cicero, Juvenal, Sallust, Ovid, Antonio Mancinelli, Lorenzo Valla, Polidoro Vergilio, Erasmus, and Pancrazio Giustiniani. Among these Latin texts also appears an edition of the *Genealogia* and *De montibus* (1507). The Italian works printed by Tacuino also reveal the sophisticated tastes of his readership and include a compendium of lyrics and epistles by the poet Vincenzo Calmeta (1517), Pietro Bembo's *Prose* (1525), a vernacular translation of Apuleius's *Asinus aureus* (1523), and Boiardo's *Timone* (1513 and 1517), as well as an edition of Boccaccio's *Ninfale fiesolano* (1519).

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[53] Vitelli's death in the war between the French and Italians is described in Francesco Guicciardini, *Storie fiorentine*, in *Opere*, ed. by Emanuella Lugnani Scarano, 3 vols (Turin: UTET, 1974), I, 141-44.

[54] See Ascarelli and Menato, p. 335.

[55] Based on information provided in the BMC, STC, and EDIT16.

8.2.1 ANALYSIS OF PHYSICAL STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

The decorative woodcut initials which open each biography consist of at least seven types of design, some containing a background of foliage or floral details, some which are historiated, and some which are simple letter shapes.[56] These were not designed specifically for Boccaccio's text, but had already been used by Tacuino in editions printed some years earlier, for example, in the edition of Ovid's *Tristia* printed in 1499 and in the *Fabulae* composed by the humanist Lorenzo Astemio (1499). The initials are the equivalent of the decorated or illuminated initials found in manuscripts of *De mulieribus*: they occur at the same positions and fulfil the same practical functions – identifying the beginning of the section of text and orienting the reader – as well as providing aesthetic appeal.

The woodcut illustrations that open each biography assume a more significant role as both position markers and decorative features. The illustrations can be divided into two types. The first consists of a single woodcut that provides illustrative details appropriate to the woman in question. Thus, the illustration for Eve shows a woman with a fig leaf and an apple, while Lucretia is depicted throwing herself on a sword. However, some of these woodcuts are repeated throughout the text so that in some cases particular attributes cease to be pertinent: for example, the illustration of Eve is also used for Venus, and that of Lucretia is used for Armonia. The second type of illustration consists of an image assembled from two woodcuts, one which forms the body of the female figure and the background landscape, the second which adds the head and neck to the figure. In this manner heads and bodies can be mixed and matched to create numerous different combinations. This practice was relatively common and allowed the printer to illustrate the text more cheaply than if individual blocks had been cut for each biography,[57] although it results in illustrations that bear little relation to the text.[58] The Prince d'Essling notes that some of the woodcuts, mainly those that consist of a single block, are signed by the same person that executed the woodcut on the title-page. Given that the title-page woodcut, which will be discussed in more detail in the

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[56] For a description of the edition see Appendix X. The reproduction of two leaves in Letizia Panizza, 'Women and Books in Renaissance Italy', in *Sguardi sull'Italia: miscellanea dedicata a Francesco Villani*, ed. by Gino Bedani and others (Leeds: Society for Italian Studies, 1997), pp. 84-116 (p. 110) shows the opening of two biographies, each displaying a different type of initial.

[57] With reference to this practice in Tacuino's edition of *De mulieribus*, Prince d'Essling notes: 'nous avons signalé, dans plusiers autres ouvrages, des représentations de personnages exécutées par le même procédé', (I. ii, 117, n. 1).

section below on paratexts, names the dedicatee for the edition, it is possible that a small selection of illustrations, at least, were designed specifically for Boccaccio's work.[59] The two-block woodcuts, like the initials, may have been re-used from other editions. According to Dennis E. Rhodes, Tacuino borrowed and loaned initials, woodcuts, and types between 1490 and 1510 with both Bernardino Benalio and Matteo Capcasa.[60]

The woodcut illustrations reinforce the function of the initials, marking the beginning of each biography and facilitating the reading process by breaking up the text into visually recognizable portions. With regard to the Latin tradition of *De mulieribus* in Italy, the illustrations seem to be an innovation introduced by print, closer in appearance to the tradition of French manuscripts of *De mulieribus*. Although illustrations can act as memory devices, the repetition of images in Tacuino's edition does not suggest that this was the primary function of the woodcuts in this case.[61] Rather, the use of interchangeable printed images would have been a relatively cheap method of making the book seem more attractive, by breaking the monotony of lines of text and introducing more space into the page. The ratio of text to illustration is such that it is rare to have more than one recto and verso in succession without a woodcut. This suggests that readers of the printed text needed more persuasion to read than the owners of Latin manuscripts, and also that the text was regarded more as an enjoyable narrative than a scholarly book. Given that Boccaccio does not frequently cite his sources in the text, readers of *De mulieribus* in translation may have found it relatively easy to overlook the scholarly image Boccaccio presented in the dedication and preface, and enjoy the text purely for its narrative qualities. Although the Latin text is clearly very different in style from a work such as the *Decameron*, Laura Torretta notes that Antonio da Sant'Elpidio's translation does not follow the Latin text faithfully.[62] It would be interesting, therefore, to compare the printed text with Boccaccio's Latin version to see whether changes have been made which emphasize the narrative elements, bearing in mind that the translation was not prepared specifically for print. The translation of *De mulieribus* executed by Giuseppe Betussi, which included some new biographies composed by the translator and was printed in 1545, almost certainly

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[58] Further details on the combinations of wood blocks are provided in *Mostra di manoscritti*, II, 53-54. The illustrations reproduced in Panizza (p. 110) clearly show where there is a break in the top border of the woodcut, caused by the addition of a different head.
[59] D'Essling, I. ii, 116.
[60] Dennis E. Rhodes, *Studies in Early Italian Printing* (London: Pindar Press, 1982), p. 13.
[61] On images and memory function see Carruthers, pp. 221-29.
[62] 'Parte III', p. 36.

had entertainment as its primary goal. Claudio Scarpati writes that: 'molti ritratti del Betussi non hanno altro scopo se non quello di introdurre nella raccolta dei pretesti per compaginare rapide novelle confezionate con l'impiego degli ingredienti più cari al pubblico cinquecentesco'.[63]

Roman type was commonly used for editions of classical authors and their humanist emulators. It is not unusual, therefore, that most of Tacuino's editions are printed in roman type.[64] A small number of editions use a combination of gothic and roman type, like the translation of *De mulieribus*, whose title is in gothic type. Among this group there are no obvious similarities in the type of work to suggest a reason for Tacuino's decision to use two different typefaces. He may have chosen gothic type for the title simply because it was larger than the roman types to which he had access.[65] The use of gothic on the opening page establishes a link with the majority of the Latin manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, which were written in gothic scripts, but humanistic bookhand is scarce among handwritten exemplars and the printing of the main body of the text in roman serves to emphasize the differences between manuscripts and the printed edition. The size of the roman type adds to the impression, already created by the decoration, that the text will be pleasant to read. It is quite large, and together with the small format of the book, reduces the amount of text that can be placed on the page, again making the text appear less dense and daunting to the reader.

Before 1506 Tacuino had produced editions in folio, quarto, and octavo. Works of classical literature and history in Latin were printed most frequently in folio, with the majority of grammars and humanistic texts appearing in quarto. Most of the Italian texts are in octavo format, including the *Ninfale*, suggesting that the decision to produce *De mulieribus* in quarto was a conscious one, which perhaps reflected its Latin, albeit fourteenth-century, origins. The small dimensions chosen for the edition are found quite infrequently among the manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, but mean that the book could be transported from location to location with the minimum of effort, and it did not take up as much space as a folio edition when it was stored. The reader was not bound to read in specific locations, which meant that deep concentration and writing in conjunction with the reading process was not always possible, but the size of the book was well suited for leisure reading, perhaps with the book on the lap, or even in bed.

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[63] Scarpati, pp. 215-16.
[64] I have only been able to gather information on type founts for the incunables printed by Tacuino using the BMC.

The text of the translation has been arranged across the full page, like the majority of the manuscripts. This leaves a wide outer and lower margin, but a very narrow inner margin and top margin (which may have been trimmed by a binder). Whilst it would be possible to use the outer and lower margins for annotation, the printer may have preferred to privilege large fount size and legibility over leaving wide margins around the whole text, recognizing that enjoyment of the text may have been more important to readers than being able to study the text and record their responses in the margins.

8.2.2 PARATEXTS

The translation of *De mulieribus* printed in 1506 contains several paratexts. The work opens with a title-page, consisting of a title, woodcut, and sonnet, followed by the dedication and a sonnet addressed to Lucrezia Baglioni. Both the dedication and the two sonnets declare themselves to be authored by Bagli. It is less clear whether he was also responsible for the design of the title-page, although I shall argue that there appears to be a distinct continuity in the underlying intention of each paratext.

The paratexts are clearly designed to throw into relief the theme of eternal fame which underpins the procession of illustrious women presented by Boccaccio. The woodcut on the title-page announces the theme figuratively, with a depiction of the Triumph of Fame. Boccaccio had experimented with the triumph device in the *Caccia di Diana* and *Teseida*, before composing the *Amorosa visione* in the early 1340s, where the narrator witnesses the triumphal processions of the allegorical embodiments of Wisdom, Fame, Wealth, Love, and Fortune in a dream-vision. Surrounding each triumph in this work is a host of historical or literary figures who have been influenced by the allegorical personification. The *Amorosa visione* draws on the earlier vision-traditions of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae* and the *Roman de la Rose*, as well as on the *Commedia*, but is thought to have initiated the genre of triumphs which inspired Petrarch to begin his own *Trionfi* in the 1350s.[66]

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[65] The BMC contains no evidence that Tacuino had access to roman type which was larger than that which he used for the body of the text, while he had used several large Gothic title types prior to 1506 (see vol. V, pp. 526-27).

[66] Branca discusses the notion of the dream-vision and triumph motif, but concludes that 'nothing, however, sanctions belief in the pre-existence of a "genre" of "triumphs"; on the contrary, the scarcity and insignificance of documentation would incline one to deny it'. See the introduction by Branca in Giovanni Boccaccio, *Amorosa visione*, trans. by Robert Hollander, Timothy Hampton, and Margherita Frankel (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1986), pp. ix-xxviii (p. xiii). On Petrarch's *Trionfi* and the Triumph genre see Zygmunt G. Barański, 'Le costrizioni della forma: verso una definizione provvisoria dei *Trionfi* di Petrarca', in his '*Chiosar con altro testo*', pp. 153-73.

The woodcut of the Triumph of Fame in *De mulieribus* may have been inspired directly by the *Amorosa visione* or the *Trionfi*, or influenced by the many iconographical representations of triumphs popular in the fifteenth century.[67] In either case, the Triumph of Fame would have been familiar to many readers, particularly since the iconography of this image was fairly standardized by the Renaissance.[68] Boccaccio chose not to compose *De mulieribus* in the triumph genre, but its procession of illustrious mythological, historical, and literary women clearly follow an invisible chariot of Fame. By making this device visible, and placing it on the first page, the author of the title-page was perhaps hoping to attract readers to a familiar emblem. The Triumph also associates *De mulieribus*, of which this was the first Italian printing, with Petrarch's *Trionfi*, editions of which invariably contained woodcut illustrations of Triumphs and might well have been known to readers, since it was reprinted many times in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[69] The respective printing histories of the *Trionfi* and *De mulieribus* suggest that Petrarch's work was by far the more popular, and hence it would have been in Bagli's interests to make a connection between the two vernacular works in the hope of attracting a wider readership.

On another level, reinforced by the close positioning of the woodcut to the opening rubric which gives the title and author's name, the image of Fame references not only the contents of the work, but also its author and its status as a whole, marking the work as a 'classic'. The large size of the woodcut indicates that it was obviously an important feature; despite the large fount of the title, the image dominates the page, leaving narrow margins on either side, and causing the sonnet beneath to continue on the verso. The sonnet, 'La fama parla', was clearly conceived as a written supplement to the woodcut image, providing Fame with the means by which to explain 'verbally' the extent of her power.

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[67] Many of these images can be related to the *Trionfi* in particular, although triumphal imagery also preceded Boccaccio and Petrarch. Scholars have suggested various sources for the iconography, including medieval drama. See Sandro Sicca, 'Petrarch's *Triumphs* and its Medieval Dramatic Heritage', in *Petrarch's 'Triumphs': Allegory and Spectacle*, ed. by Konrad Eisenbichler and Amilcare A. Iannucci (Ottawa: Dovehouse, 1990), pp. 47-62.

[68] Documenting the iconographic development of the *Triumphus Famae*, Sara Charney notes that: 'for the Renaissance artists, Fame is generally a winged woman wearing a long dress and crown. In her hands she holds a trumpet, or an orb, a palm, a book, a sword, a scale, a genius or a Cupid' in 'Artistic Representations of Petrarch's *Triumphus Famae*', in *Petrarch's 'Triumphs'*, ed. by Eisenbichler and Iannucci, pp. 223-33 (p. 227).

[69] The *Trionfi*, together with the *Canzoniere*, are printed continuously from 1470 to the mid-sixteenth century, sometimes more than once in the same year. There are also ten editions of the *Trionfi* alone before 1520. See the ISTC; EDIT16; Dionisotti, 'Fortuna del Petrarca'. On images from the *Trionfi* see Mortimer, pp. 539-42; Fowler, pp. 505-06.

Within the crowd of women surrounding the chariot, one figure in the foreground is singled out for our attention and labelled 'Lucrecia Perusina'. The bridle around the foremost griffin also contains the word 'Perusin'.[70] Together with the allegory of Fame, Lucrezia shares the focus of attention in the paratexts, since she also features as the recipient of the dedication and second sonnet. The Baglioni were a noble family, which by the end of the fifteenth century ruled Perugia in all but name, until 1540 when Pope Paul III finally dismantled their houses.[71] Lucrezia's husband, Camillo Vitelli, also belonged to an important Umbrian family. Camillo's father, Niccolò, spent the second half of the fifteenth century attempting to establish himself as the unofficial *signore* of Città di Castello. This led to Camillo's capture by papal troops in 1484, and Niccolò's subsequent decision to go into exile. However, after Niccolò's death in 1486, his sons returned to prominent positions in the city.[72] Whatever Bagli's personal connection with the Baglioni and Vitelli, by choosing to dedicate the translation of *De mulieribus* to Lucrezia, he was linking the work with a powerful and high-status patron, much as Boccaccio had done with his dedication to Andrea Acciaiuoli. An influential patron lends status and authority to the work, as well as to the author of the dedication, which reinforces the role of the triumph device, and also helps to safeguard it from critics.

Regardless of whether the woodcut was devised by Bagli, the inclusion of Lucrezia in the image fulfils two functions, which in turn lead back to this same overriding consideration: authorization of the translation of *De mulieribus* in order to make it as attractive as possible to a potential readership. Firstly, portraying Lucrezia in the company of illustrious women marked out by history and Boccaccio for recognition is flattery, which makes the patron more favourably disposed towards the work, which in turn raises its profile. Secondly, including an illustrious contemporary woman 'updates' the work and makes it of more relevance and interest to the sixteenth-century reader.

The significance of Lucrezia's name may also help to explain her inclusion in the image and her role as dedicatee. Bagli undoubtedly expected readers to make a connection between Lucrezia Baglioni and the ancient Roman Lucretia described by

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[70] Cf. the griffin in Dante, *Purgatorio* XXIX, 106-08.

[71] See Peter Laven, *Renaissance Italy 1464-1534* (London: Batsford, 1966), p. 136; R. Abbondanza, 'Baglioni, Rodolfo', in *DBI*, V (1963), 241-46. Rodolfo had three sons and seven daughters: Lucrezia is mentioned as the wife of Camillo Vitelli on p. 245, although no dates or further information is given for her. For information on her brother Gianpaolo, also mentioned by Bagli, see G. De Caro, 'Baglioni, Giampaolo', in *DBI*, V (1963), 217-20.

Boccaccio in *De mulieribus*. Not only do they both appear in the same work, but Bagli included a sonnet after his dedication to Lucrezia Baglioni in which he comments on the similarities between the two women, thereby making their relationship explicit.[73] Boccaccio presents Lucretia as a model for modesty, chastity, virtue, and beauty, therefore, an association between the two women acts as implicit flattery for the dedicatee and provides a natural entrance to the text for readers. It may also be significant that Lucrezia Baglioni shares a name with a contemporary of hers, Lucrezia Borgia. Bagli's choice of dedicatee may thus have been influenced by Jacopo Caviceo's *Libro del Peregrino*, which was dedicated to Lucrezia Borgia.[74] In the dedication to this work, Caviceo draws on Boccaccio's reputation as the author of *De mulieribus* to describe how the *trecentista* appeared to Peregrino in a dream-vision. Boccaccio explains to Peregrino that he has returned as a citizen of Ferrara in order that he might contemplate and praise the beauty and wisdom of the text's dedicatee. Although the text of Bagli's dedication does not suggest that Bagli borrowed directly from the *Libro del Peregrino*, his dedication is also focused around a dream-vision of Boccaccio who praises a dedicatee of the same name.

As in the woodcut on the title-page, the focus of Bagli's dedication is two women, Fame and Lucrezia, with the overall aim being the authorization of *De mulieribus* and its commercial success. The dedication begins with Bagli describing how he became pained contemplating how fragile and short-lived human life is, and in particular, how unfair that Lucrezia's virtues would be forgotten after her death. He then falls asleep and has a dream-vision in which Boccaccio reassures him that this will not be the case, citing several women from *De mulieribus* as examples of eternal fame. He then reminds Bagli at some length that Lucrezia's virtues surpass even those of the pagan women in *De mulieribus*. In fact, he laments that she was born too late to include in his list of illustrious women: 'Quanto me doglio io non esser nato a questa felice et aurea età de haverla possuta cognoscerla! O almancho dapo de lei, aciò ch'io havesse possuto le sole egregie virtù e ornamente intendere e da poi descriverle'. Boccaccio then instructs that his work, 'la quale longo tempo è stata incognita et occulta', be dedicated to Lucrezia, and departs, at which point Bagli realizes who has been speaking to him and entrusts the work to Lucrezia.

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[72] Christine Shaw, *The Politics of Exile in Renaissance Italy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 12-13.
[73] See Appendix IX.

The account of the dream-vision occupies the majority of the dedication, which points to its central importance. By recounting a vision, Bagli is referencing the genre in which Triumphs are often witnessed, thereby reinforcing the validity of the opening image, which in turn reaffirms the status of Lucrezia, *De mulieribus*, and Boccaccio. The medium of a dream-vision is often used to express other-worldly truths. Therefore, praise of Lucrezia uttered in this context is vested with greater veracity, and becomes yet more authoritative when expressed by a recognized author, who, moreover, is famous for praising women. As protection against potential criticism of the decision to resurrect *De mulieribus* Boccaccio gives explicit instruction that the work 'a lei [Lucrezia] per te [Bagli] sia intitulata'.

As well as acting as a vehicle for the protection and authorization of the edition, the vision is designed to make the work appear more attractive to readers. In order to do this, Bagli tries to give a different emphasis to Boccaccio's claim in the original proem that 'claritas' is not synonymous with 'virtus'. In the dream-vision, Bagli has Boccaccio recount to him a select list of women and their virtues which act as a preface to the work, a taste of what is to come. These women, with the exception perhaps of Helen, seem to be carefully chosen for their outstanding positive qualities, such as modesty and chastity. Bagli therefore seems to suggest a way of reading *De mulieribus* that encompasses values consistent with Christian morality, despite Boccaccio's emphasis on pagan women. This intention seems explicit when Bagli's comment: 'tacio quelle che per sfrenata libidine, audacia et avaritia forono famosissime', is contrasted with Boccaccio's disclaimer in his proem: 'non enim est animus michi hoc claritatis nomen adeo strictim summere, ut semper in virtutem videatur exire; quin imo in ampliorem sensum – bona cum pace legentium – trahere et illas intelligere claras quas quocunque ex facinore orbi vulgato sermone notissimas novero' [it is not in fact my intention to interpret the word 'famous' in such a strict sense that it will always appear to mean 'virtuous'. Instead, with the kind permission of my readers, I will adopt a wider meaning and consider as famous those women whom I know to have gained a reputation throughout the world for any deed whatsoever] (pp. 10-11).

When, in the dream-vision, Boccaccio is made to admit that Lucrezia surpasses the women he had included in *De mulieribus* on account of her virtues, which he lists at great length, this again updates the original choice of women, and in effect, creates a revised edition. Boccaccio had included only one account of a contemporary woman in

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[74] The *Libro del Peregrino* was first printed in 1508, but it was probably composed between 1484 and 1500 (on dating see Jacopo Caviceo, *Il Peregrino*, ed. by Luigi Vignali (Rome: La

De mulieribus – Queen Joanna. By adding another contemporary woman to the list of illustrious pagans, Bagli makes the text seem more accessible and relevant to the audience. Bagli uses the second sonnet, also addressed to Lucrezia, to justify her inclusion in the illustrious list by comparing Lucrezia with her Roman namesake, and finding that 'la sol vostra differentia è questa | Voi Perusina sete e lei Romana'. Later editors evidently approved of Bagli's strategy. Giuseppe Betussi went one step further and added accounts of a number of contemporary women to the edition printed in 1545, which were retained in the editions of 1547 and 1558.[75] Filippo Giunti printed Betussi's translation in Florence in 1596, keeping Betussi's account of contemporary women, and including yet another new account of both ancient and modern women by Francesco Serdonati. The additions made by Betussi and Serdonati are announced in the titles of these later editions, while Bagli's addition is more subtle. This suggests that by the middle of the sixteenth century interest in Boccaccio's text had waned to the extent that it was necessary for editors and printers to be more direct in their strategies for attracting a new readership.

Bagli is the most explicit about the reasons behind his decision to dedicate the translation of *De mulieribus* to Lucrezia at the end of the dedication. Here he says that he wants Lucrezia to accept the work 'non perché io pensa questa havere a essere cagione de la vostra immortalità, ma perché questa sotto l'ale e ombra del vostro vero e integro iuditio sia da ogni mordacità e censura diffeso e sicuro'. Sentiment of this kind forms part of literary formulae for dedications, but it is nonetheless rooted in the practical observation that if someone influential lends their support to a cause it is likely to be more successful. It is this reasoning that underpins the inclusion of the paratexts. Boccaccio, acting as his own publisher, also placed his work under the protection of a female patron, Andrea Acciaiuoli. However, there is a fundamental difference between the dedications written by Boccaccio and Bagli. Boccaccio urges Andrea to read his book for entertainment, but also in order to be inspired by his account of pagan women and to encourage her to achieve higher good.[76] Bagli has already demonstrated that Lucrezia is worthy in her own right for inclusion among Boccaccio's women, although he obviously did expect her to read the work, commenting that it will be protected under her 'vero e integro iuditio'.

Fenice, 1993), pp. ix-x). Bagli may therefore have had access to the text in manuscript form.

[75] A new translation into Italian of *De mulieribus* was made by Giuseppe Betussi and printed by Comin da Trino in Venice in 1545. It was reprinted by Pietro de' Nicolini da Sabbio (Venice, 1547) and Francesco L'Imperadore (Venice, 1558).

[76] *Famous Women*, pp. 4-6.

The printed title-page, sonnets, and dedication found in the 1506 translation of *De mulieribus* are quite different from the paratexts found in manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, which tend to be tables of contents, and scribal notabilia or short glosses. Additional texts included in the manuscripts are, without exception, written in Latin and it seems that none of the scribes felt moved to compose a dedication to the recipient of the manuscript, although the presentation indicates that many manuscripts were read and owned by readers of high social, cultural, and economic class. The primary difference between Bagli's printed texts and their handwritten counterparts, however, is that the sonnets and dedication are carefully designed to enhance and promote *De mulieribus*, while other texts copied into manuscripts alongside *De mulieribus* are independent compositions in their own right, related only on occasion to Boccaccio's text through commonality of authorship or subject-matter. Handwritten texts included with *De mulieribus* can yield interesting information about scribal and reader perceptions of literary status, but ultimately are more likely to provide clues about individual readers' responses to Boccaccio, while printed paratexts reflect the perceptions printers and editors have about a potential readership, which might number hundreds of individuals.

Tables of contents have been added to the majority of manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, which suggests that they were requested by readers or considered a useful tool for scribes and rubricators. The printed edition does not include a table of contents, perhaps because the beginning of each biography is easier to find than in most manuscripts, since each one is marked with a large woodcut illustration. In addition, it is no longer necessary to count up the number of rubrics in the printed edition, since these were printed at the same time as the text and not filled in afterwards. The reader is also provided with running titles across the recto and verso of each leaf, clearly indicating where each biography begins and ends. In some respects, this device is a more effective means of finding one's place in a work than a table of contents which does not reference the relevant pages. However, running titles do not allow the reader to get an idea of the overall scope of a volume as fast as a table of contents, which lets one see at a glance how many biographies there are and in what order they are arranged. Scribes of five manuscripts of *De mulieribus* included additional devices for guiding the reader and facilitating reading, namely notabilia and short glosses, but the editor of the printed edition does not intervene in this fashion on the printed translation.

8.2.3 TRACES OF READING

Copies of the 1506 translation of *De mulieribus* are held in at least twenty-two different libraries in Italy and across the world.[77] I have seen four copies of this edition, to which I have attributed the following sigla:

L London, British Library, 10603.d.5

FL Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, 22.4.88

FN Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Landau Finaly 198

V Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, R.G. Lett. it. IV 1060

All four copies contain some traces of reading, and Table 59 illustrates how these are distributed among the five categories of features I have defined in Chapter 4.

Table 59: *Distribution of traces of reading in copies of the 1506 edition of 'De mulieribus'*

	Category 1	*Category 2*	*Category 3*		*Category 4*	
	Marginalia	Marks & Symbols	Unrelated Notes	Scribbles/ Smudges	Related Illustration	Unrelated Illustration
L				✓		
FL	✓	✓	✓		✓	
FN	✓	✓				
V				✓		

Two copies, FL and FN, contain marginalia of the type most frequently found in manuscripts of *De mulieribus*: notabilia. The reader of FL has made a note of several names, and occasionally reminds him or herself of key events at the beginning of certain biographies. The reader of FN provided a more extended summary of selected biographies in the margins, although in many places this is hard to read after trimming has removed some of the notes, and the hand may well date from later than 1520. The nature of these marginalia indicates that readers wished to recall certain passages or facts, which in turn suggests that readers intended to return to the volume on more than one occasion. Notabilia may mark particular sections of text which the reader particularly enjoyed and wished to read several times for pleasure, but also imply a deeper engagement with the text through study. None of the above four copies contains marginalia that reference other texts or sources for Boccaccio's text. Thus, there is no evidence that readers were interested in this practice, perhaps because reading for leisure took greater priority, or because a vernacular text was not supported by a long

[77] Seventeen libraries in Italy are listed by EDIT16. Five additional libraries outside Italy are listed in the Index Aureliensis.

tradition of this manner of study. Readers of the translation may also have been unable to access Boccaccio's sources, which were all written in Latin.

Both FL and FN contain only one incidence where the reader has added a mark or symbol to the text. In FN, a horizontal line has been drawn in the margin next to a line of text in the biography of Pompeia Paulina which refers to her decision to die together with her husband (fol. R5^{v}). It is difficult to interpret what the reader meant with this note: whether it struck a personal chord, or was thought to be particularly admirable or ridiculous. The reader of copy FL drew a dotted line underneath a proverb in the biography of Epicharis: 'la femina non sapere tacere, se non quello che non sa' (fol. R4^{v}). It is tempting to hypothesize that this was a female reader showing her support for Epicharis for proving the proverb false, or that this was a male reader singling out this saying because he was in agreement with it. However, it is perhaps more likely that the reader, whether male or female, was simply noting that this proverb had already been referenced in the biography of Leaena.

FL is the only printed copy of *De mulieribus* I have seen to contain what best fits the category of 'unrelated notes'. In reality, this trace of reading does not correspond to the unrelated notes found in manuscripts of *De mulieribus*, which are often records of financial transactions. Rather, it is a single word, 'Salane'(?) squeezed onto the pendant which is carried by one of the women surrounding the chariot of Fame in the opening woodcut. The same reader has also added the words 'fama volar', surrounded by a circle of vertical pen strokes, at the end of the trumpet blown by Fame. If 'Salane' or 'Salani' is a family name, perhaps representing the owner of the book, this would indicate that the reader was fully aware of the significance of the Triumph of Fame, and wished to include their own family within its influence.[78] This corresponds to Esther Nyholm's observation that at the end of the fifteenth century Petrarch's *Trionfi* were approached in a different manner: 'interest was no longer directed to the ensemble of the six poems seen as parts of a single triumph, but to each of the poems as a triumph in itself [...]. By choosing the appropriate one, it was possible to introduce one's own personality; thus Fame could blow her trumpet for the patron and the family'.[79] Clearly, the decision to focus on one triumph has already been made by the editor, but the reader is then appropriating this for his or her own benefit.

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[78] There is currently an Italian publisher with the name 'Salani' (Salani Editore).
[79] Esther Nyholm, 'A Comparison of the Petrarchan Configuration of the *Trionfi* and their Interpretation in Renaissance Art', in *Petrarch's 'Triumphs'*, ed. by Eisenbichler and Iannucci, pp. 235-55 (p. 240).

A reader of V has also added to the illustrations, in this case with some shading in ink on some of the woodcuts which precede each biography. I have classified this trace of reading under the category of 'scribbles/smudges', since these additions might be seen as un-thinking or un-interested additions, although this intervention might equally be interpreted as an attempt to increase the aesthetic value of the copy. L also contains traces of reading I have classified as scribbles, but in this case, they seem to be guided by a precise motive. The lower half of fol. T1^{v} contains the beginning of Pope Joan's biography. Brown ink lines have been drawn across the text of this biography alone. Thus, although the lines are roughly executed and look more like scribbles than deliberate cancellation, it is noteworthy that they cover only the text relating to Pope Joan, leaving untouched the text of the preceding biography which is on the same page. Supporting the hypothesis that a reader has deliberately censored his or her copy of *De mulieribus* is the additional fact that fol. T2^{r}, which contains the majority of the Pope Joan biography, has been removed.[80] It is particularly interesting to compare this trace of reading with a similar intervention in MS Lo. There, leaves containing Pope Joan's biography appear to have been stuck together, obscuring most of the text. The text which remained visible was then cancelled in ink, as was the entry for Pope Joan in the table of contents. It seems that this biography aroused particularly strong emotions in some readers of *De mulieribus*, perhaps among particularly religious (male?) readers horrified by finding a woman holding the highest office in the church. Alternatively, these interventions might signal the actions of a reader (again, possibly male?) censoring the text for other readers in his household or circle of acquaintances.

The traces of reading found in FL which I have classified as 'related illustration' are additions to the woodcuts found at the beginning of the biographies of Virginia (fol. M1^{r}), Portia (fol. P2^{v}), and Hortensia (fol. P4^{v}), rather than independent illustrative responses. A sword (?) has been added to the woodcut of Virginia, which might relate to the sword with which she was killed, and a staff (?) topped with a cross has been added to Hortensia's woodcut image, which is more difficult to interpret in the light of her biography. Harder yet to interpret is the image added to the fireplace in the woodcut of Portia, which looks more like a decorative doodle than a recognizable feature from the biography. The woodcuts prefacing the biographies of Virginia and Hortensia

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[80] Panizza reproduces fols T1^{v} and T3^{r} and notes that: 'the life of Pope Joan has been scratched out by a disapproving contemporary hand' (p. 91). It should be noted, however, that the scribbles on this folio may have been made by the same reader that also left a small amount of marginalia in brown ink, which, on the basis of the style of handwriting was almost certainly added post-1520.

consist of generic female figures, whereas the woodcut used for Portia illustrates the protagonist about to swallow burning coal. Thus, in this instance there seems to be less necessity for the reader to 'customize' the woodcuts.

8.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter has traced the changing responses to *De mulieribus* in Italy over almost a century and a half. The contrast between large illuminated parchment manuscripts written in book hand and small paper manuscripts written in cursive hands with minimal decorative elements reveals that Boccaccio's text appealed to different types of reader and was adapted for different purposes. Thus, both the scholarly and the aristocratic exhibited an interest, while some kept their manuscripts as status symbols and others preferred to annotate them heavily. Despite these differences, there is some considerable overlap between parchment and paper manuscripts in terms of overall quality, and a significant contrast in physical structure and presentation between the majority of manuscripts containing this Latin text and those holding the *Teseida* and *Decameron*. A more extensive comparison of the similarities and differences in the evidence for readership exhibited by manuscripts and printed editions of *De mulieribus*, the *Teseida*, and *Decameron* is conducted in the overall conclusion to the thesis which follows.

Most of the scribal activity surrounding *De mulieribus* occurred in the first fifty years or so after Boccaccio's death, but I would argue that the Latin text was never widely popular in Italy or achieved the same significance for scholars as a text like the *Genealogia* in the fifteenth century. Rather, it was the vernacular tradition operating alongside the Latin text that ultimately was longer lived and found expression in a printed edition that was unrecognizable in many respects from the text which Boccaccio had originally compiled for a primarily scholarly audience. However, although the 1506 edition of *De mulieribus* seems to have been marketed as literature which would provide pleasure and entertainment, Boccaccio was by no means abandoned to an indiscriminate and undiscerning audience, as Bagli's attempts to emphasize the respectability of the text demonstrate.

Some common aims between Boccaccio's autograph and the printed edition also remain. Most significantly, the decision made by both Boccaccio and Bagli to dedicate *De mulieribus* to a woman indicates that the work was considered, theoretically at least, appropriate reading material for women. Boccaccio's incitement to Andrea to read *De mulieribus*, and Bagli's assumption that Lucrezia will do so, supports this hypothesis,

although Boccaccio's relationship to Andrea at least is problematized because he considers her an unusually 'male' woman.[81] Given the dearth of critical evidence that reflects female responses to Boccaccio, the lack of information relating to ownership or traces of reading that can be specifically linked to women is disappointing and must leave open the question of whether women were actually reading Boccaccio's *De mulieribus*.

[81] *Famous Women*, p. 4.

CONCLUSION

The *fortuna* of Boccaccio in medieval and Renaissance Italy is a rich and complex one, which varied over time and reflected established cultural trends, as well as the tastes of less culturally prominent readers. Broadly speaking, the critical evidence examined in the first part of the thesis provides a detailed survey of the manner in which Boccaccio was interpreted by the cultural élite, while the evidence derived from the material and paratextual responses, discussed in the second part of the thesis, reflects a wider and more varied readership, which included artisanal and merchant readers. This final conclusion draws together some of the responses presented in Parts I and II with the aim of highlighting the importance of using both types of evidence. In addition, the material and paratextual evidence from Chapters 6-8 is assessed comparatively in order to place the reception of the *Decameron* in the context of Boccaccio's other works and understand fully the impact of production techniques on Renaissance readers' perceptions of Boccaccio.

Humanism was the dominant cultural trend in much of the period under discussion and the critical responses traced in Chapters 1-3 illustrate how the figure of the author was continually measured against humanistic ideals, and how aspects of Boccaccio's authorial image were selected and manipulated in accordance with the reader's individual relationship to humanism. At the end of the fourteenth century, when humanism was in its early stages and Boccaccio's readers had first-hand knowledge of his contribution to the recovery of classical culture, acquaintances of Boccaccio such as Salutati were content to embrace his Latin works, whilst ignoring his vernacular output, despite Boccaccio's own enduring preoccupation with the *Decameron*, at least. Only a generation later, the responses to Boccaccio exhibited by Bruni and the circle of Florentine humanists around him are much more difficult to interpret. Not only is it clear that the quality of Boccaccio's Latin was beginning to provoke negative reactions, but consideration of his qualities was subordinated to political propaganda and the perception that other authors, such as Petrarch, occupied superior positions in the literary canon. The linguistic qualities of Boccaccio's works occupied a large proportion of the discussion surrounding him, and he was frequently evoked in the debates over the nature of the relationship between the vernacular and Latin in ancient Rome, which ran throughout the fifteenth century and into the beginning of the sixteenth century. Even when Boccaccio was the focus of attention, responses reflect the overriding importance of humanistic ideals. Thus, in his biography

of the author, Manetti is keen to stress Boccaccio's contribution to the development of Greek studies. By the second half of the fifteenth century, the influence of Ciceronianism ensured that Boccaccio's Latin works attracted as much criticism as praise. However, Ciceronianism also promoted the idea that one author should act as a model for prose and one for poetry. For Latin literature these authors were Cicero and Virgil respectively. The same rationale spread to vernacular literature, leading to the elevation of Boccaccio as a vernacular prose writer among those wanting to promote him, and to Petrarch being praised as a vernacular poet. In this climate, texts such as the *Amorosa visione*, *Ninfale fiesolano*, and the *Teseida* were ignored, while the *Filocolo* and *Decameron* received increased critical prominence. With the help of Bembo, this critical tendency culminated in Boccaccio's fame as the author of the *Decameron* to the virtual exclusion of other works.

Although many of Boccaccio's works, in particular those written in the vernacular and in verse, do not occupy a significant or explicit place in a history of his critical reception, it is nevertheless true that the author is mentioned with considerable frequency before 1520. Even those who clearly expressed their reserves, such as San Bernardino, who would have liked to ban the *Corbaccio* entirely, or Palmieri, who felt able only to praise the quality of Boccaccio's intellect whilst condemning his choice of subject-matter, or Sabellico, who conceded that Boccaccio played a small part in preparing the way for humanism, must have been familiar with at least some of the author's works in order to be able to pass judgement.

The evidence for ownership of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* examined in Chapters 6-8 generates an additional dimension to Boccaccio's reception, which can confirm the conclusions generated by the critical evidence, or reveal a different approach. As the only Latin work under discussion, *De mulieribus* seems to have commanded the most consistently cultured and wealthy owners in manuscript form, supporting the impression given by the critical responses that this work enjoyed a higher status than many of the vernacular works. Although the *Decameron* is mentioned with as much frequency as *De mulieribus*, comments about the former work are sometimes negative, while responses to *De mulieribus* tend to be positive or neutral. This indicates that the cultural élite who commented on *De mulieribus* are likely to be the same people that owned and read copies of the work, as witnessed by the physical evidence. Thus, it is no surprise that Salutati, who presented an image of himself as a cultivator of Latin works and of Boccaccio in his letters, owned a copy of *De mulieribus*. Likewise, Vespasiano let it be known that the Duke of Urbino owned

copies of Boccaccio's Latin works. However, Lorenzo de' Medici is best known, in the context of Boccaccio's reception, for his promotion of the Tuscan vernacular and his support for the *Decameron.* The fact that he owned an extremely high quality copy of Boccaccio's collected works in Latin reveals an additional dimension to the cultural taste he promoted in public and indicates that his private interest in the author extended beyond linguistic concerns.

The physical structure and presentation of manuscripts of *De mulieribus* also reflects the picture of its reception painted by the critical responses. At the end of the fourteenth century and beginning of the fifteenth century, before humanists began to criticize the quality of Boccaccio's Latin, *De mulieribus* was frequently copied into high quality parchment, illuminated manuscripts, but as humanistic taste developed and references to the work became fewer in number, manuscript copies were more likely to be written on paper and include less expensive ornamentation. These trends are also witnessed by the number of extant books containing *De mulieribus.* It is difficult to compare critical responses relating to *De mulieribus* with the physical evidence for its manuscript production, since a detailed bibliography of all the extant exemplars containing this work remains to be completed. However, on the basis of the sample of manuscripts which I have seen and described in Chapter 8, and the absence of Latin editions in Italy, it would seem that numbers of exemplars containing *De mulieribus* declined over the course of the fifteenth century. Thus, Vespasiano da Bisticci's reference to *De mulieribus* in the 1470s must be seen as an isolated comment, reflecting personal knowledge rather than a general interest in the work. The appearance of a translation in print, together with the imitations and continuations in circulation, mean that the reference to *De mulieribus* included by Foresti in his biography of Boccaccio in the 1480s might have sounded familiar to readers mediated only through their knowledge of another author's work.

The *Decameron* aroused comment in a significant number of readers, and thus is well represented in the first part of the thesis. However, almost all the references dating from the fourteenth century were made by merchants in a 'private' context, in other words in letters and diaries destined for a limited circulation, rather than in the literary works published by humanists that enjoyed a more extended diffusion throughout Italy. Insights into merchant readers are rare in this context and their existence is confirmed by the evidence relating to scribal habits, ownership, paratexts, and presentation, albeit to a lesser extent than Branca has previously argued. Manuscripts of the *Decameron* contain more examples of professional decoration and scribal practice than evidence of

merchants copying for themselves, and socially and economically prominent readers such as Ferdinand I of Naples also owned copies of the *Decameron*, in which they left traces of reading which rarely related to the financial transactions described by Branca. Judgements passed by humanists indicate that the *Decameron* only aroused interest in this sector of the reading public in the second half of the fifteenth century, and in particular in the sixteenth century, and once again, the physical and presentational evidence supports this impression. Although there is no explicit evidence relating to humanist ownership, the only manuscripts written in humanistic scripts date from after the 1460s. A greater number of sixteenth-century manuscripts also survive for the *Decameron* than for either the *Teseida* or *De mulieribus*. These witness humanistic interest, since many are written in humanistic scripts and include extracts from the text which often appealed to humanistic sensibilities. The early editions, which were printed frequently, may also have been aimed at humanists, as well as at the wealthy middle classes. The physical and presentational evidence reveals, however, that interest in the *Decameron* was not polarized between merchants and humanists, but encompassed a wider range of professionals and middle class readers.

As a vernacular work, the *Teseida* inevitably retained a low profile in the context of predominantly humanist critical responses. References to the *Teseida* all but disappear after the first decade of the fifteenth century, and it is true that most of the extant manuscripts containing the work were copied in the first half of the fifteenth century. However, this does not mean that the text did not enjoy some notoriety in both the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, because similar numbers of manuscripts containing this work exist as for the *Decameron*, and the *Teseida* was printed twice before 1500. The critical silence surrounding the *Teseida* does not reveal the whole picture in this case, not only because the physical evidence reveals that it was enjoyed by significant numbers of less cultured readers than many of those passing judgement on Boccaccio in Part I of the thesis, but because there is evidence for ownership indicating that it was also read by humanists and the aristocracy. Courtly readers in Ferrara took a particular interest in the *Teseida* and undoubtedly helped to maintain its presence in the fifteenth century, revealing the discrepancy that no doubt existed between the prescriptions for reading uttered by Guarino and Leonello d'Este in an 'official' cultural context, and the private reading tastes of those around them and perhaps even of Guarino and Leonello themselves. Guarino may have commissioned a manuscript of the *Teseida* himself, and Everson notes the inconsistency in Leonello's attitude towards literature when she comments that: 'in spite of Leonello's emphatically

classical interests and culture, the acquisition of manuscripts of works of chivalric literature continued on a regular and frequent basis'.[1]

According to Branca, it was among Florentine merchants and financiers that the *Decameron* first found success, principally in Florence, but also in Naples.[2] The critical responses certainly demonstrate that this work was read by Tuscans in Tuscany and Naples in the fourteenth century and at the beginning of the fifteenth century. Evidence from the manuscript tradition confirms that the provenance of many early exemplars can be traced to Tuscany, but also reveals that some codices were copied in the Veneto as early as the fourteenth century. Branca himself has argued elsewhere that the nature of the *Decameron* would have made it popular with merchants all over Italy.[3] Precisely because merchants such as Francesco Buondelmonti were accustomed to travel and work away from home, their enthusiasm for the work could easily be transmitted to others with whom they came into contact on their travels. Both critical responses and physical evidence from manuscripts document that the *Decameron* continued to circulate outside Tuscany in the fifteenth century, particularly in Ferrara and the Veneto, and the role which Venice played in the transmission of the work assumed even greater significance in the age of print.

Most of the scant critical evidence available for the *Teseida* points to its early diffusion in Tuscany, and a considerable proportion of manuscripts for which a provenance can be ascertained hails from Tuscany. However, manuscript evidence also reveals that the *Teseida* was read in Ferrara and Naples in the first half of the fifteenth century, and the provenance of the printed editions demonstrates that there was considerable and enduring interest in the work in these two locations. It has been noted frequently that *De mulieribus* was particularly popular in print in Northern Europe. The evidence discussed in Chapter 8 indicates that the text in manuscript form also had great international appeal, with a significant number of extant manuscripts probably originating from non-Italian copyists. Within Italy, and in contrast to both the *Teseida* and *Decameron*, there is no critical or physical evidence to suggest that *De mulieribus* was known and read in the south. Rather, it was diffused among a more restricted range of readers, focused in the centre and north of the country.

As well as demonstrating the importance of drawing on a range of types of evidence in order to build up a more comprehensive picture of Boccaccio's reception, my research has helped to define features which might be considered characteristic of

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[1] 'Read What I Say', p. 39.
[2] *Tradizione*, II, 163.
[3] 'L'epopea dei mercatanti', pp. 140-44.

the reception of the *Decameron*, and others which are common to one or more works by Boccaccio. The manuscript tradition for the *Decameron*, which Branca described as 'umile e borghese', was by no means typical only of this work.[4] Many exemplars containing the *Teseida* are also characterized by the use of paper and simple ornamentation, and it is even likely that the ink and watercolour drawings included in one of the *Decameron* manuscripts had a direct influence on the illustrations in a contemporaneous manuscript of the *Teseida*.[5] The large number of manuscripts written in semi-gothic bookhand and the high proportion of large-sized exemplars are features which are not shared with the *Teseida*, however, but which align the *Decameron* more closely with *De mulieribus*. In these respects, the manuscript tradition of the *Decameron* is that which has the most features in common with the extant autograph. Overall, codices containing *De mulieribus* are of a much higher quality than those containing either the *Teseida* or *Decameron*. They are more likely to be written on parchment, and to include illumination, or even highly decorative title-pages of the type found only in luxury manuscripts. None of the manuscripts of *De mulieribus* which I have seen, or for which there is published information, contain narrative illustration, and humanistic bookhand occurs more frequently than in exemplars containing either of the vernacular texts.

The presentation of the first printed editions of the *Teseida* and *Decameron* does not reflect a dramatic change in Boccaccio's readership resulting from the introduction of a new technology. Many elements, such as the provision for hand-decoration, remained unchanged as printers naturally looked to manuscript models for inspiration. The early editions of both the *Teseida* and *Decameron* were also aimed at an established readership. The consistency and the high quality of the presentation exhibited by incunabula containing the *Decameron* are emphasized through a comparison with the presentation of fifteenth-century editions of the *Teseida*. This varies dramatically between the high quality *Teseida* printed in Ferrara for cultured courtly readers and the lower quality text printed in Naples aimed at the middle classes. The translation of *De mulieribus* printed in 1506 cannot be seen as a direct continuation from the Latin manuscripts. Once again, a comparison between the edition of *De mulieribus* and the Neapolitan *Teseida* highlights the disparity in quality which exists between the two editions, despite the use in each case of a quarto format for a vernacular text.

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[4] *Tradizione*, II, 199.
[5] See Ciardi Dupré dal Poggetto's comments in *Boccaccio visualizzato*, II, 36.

The critical responses to the *Decameron* discussed in Chapter 3 support Branca's thesis that this work was read by Tuscan merchants in the fourteenth century and at the beginning of the fifteenth century. However, I have also uncovered critical evidence which demonstrates that other vernacular works by Boccaccio were enjoyed by merchant readers, and the evidence for ownership of manuscripts of the *Teseida* presented in Chapter 6 indicates, in fact, that the *Decameron* was no more popular among merchants and artisans than the *Teseida*. Both works even appealed to readers in the same mercantile family. In 1438, Lodovico di Cece da Verrazzano commissioned a manuscript of the *Decameron* from a notary whilst he was acting as podestà at Pisa,[6] and nearly fifty years later in 1481, his son, Fruosino, who was also acting as podestà at Pisa, transcribed his own copy of the *Teseida*.

It would also be erroneous to hold that merchants were the sole, or even the primary, readers of either the *Decameron* or *Teseida*. Cursi's palaeographical research has demonstrated that only a small proportion of those that read the *Decameron* can be classed as merchants, and I have uncovered critical evidence in a commentary to a *canzone* written by de' Bassi which indicates that this work was known and read at the court in Ferrara early in the fifteenth century. The *Teseida* was also popular among courtiers throughout the fifteenth century, and copies of both the *Teseida* and *Decameron* belonged to Ferdinand I of Naples. Critical evidence from religious establishments reveals that the clergy were familiar with the *Teseida*, and a priest identified himself as the owner of a high quality fifteenth-century paper manuscript containing this work.

Branca's thesis that Florentine merchants were the primary group reading and enjoying the *Decameron* during its initial diffusion is closely linked to his claim that many of these merchants were also 'copisti per passione'. Cursi has convincingly argued that many of the scribes Branca identified as amateurs were in fact semi-professional or professional 'copisti a prezzo', and the analysis of presentational features carried out in Chapter 7 supports this argument. My research also demonstrates that the phenomenon of reader-copyists, which did exist for small numbers of *Decameron* manuscripts, is not linked exclusively to this text or to merchants, nor can a connection always be made between low quality manuscripts lacking in ornamentation and amateur scribes. There is explicit evidence that the *Teseida* was transcribed by mercantile and artisanal reader-copyists, and while none of the scribes of *De mulieribus*

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[6] For details of this manuscript (L^8) see Cursi, 'Produzione, tipologia, diffusione', pp. 521-25; Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 83-84.

explicitly state that they copied for themselves, according to Branca's criterion they would be classified as 'copisti per passione', since there is no evidence to document their scribal activities in major catalogues.[7] It is natural that those accustomed to writing in their professional lives would be best placed to copy their own manuscripts, and there are examples of notaries, the clergy, and scholars transcribing all three of Boccaccio's works. Some merchants were also quite wealthy, for example as I noted above, Lodovico da Verrazzano was able to afford to commission a notary to transcribe the *Decameron* for him. He may not have had sufficient scribal ability to undertake the task himself, or more than likely could not spare the time that would have been required to transcribe such a long work. Lodovico's professionally transcribed manuscript, which contains only coloured initials by way of decoration, must be compared with that of his son. Fruosino was able to copy the shorter *Teseida*, but chose to commission an illuminator to decorate his exemplar with illuminated initials, coloured initials, and border decoration. Thus, while my research challenges the 'copisti per passione' thesis and the idea that reader-copyists were more concerned about the contents of the text than the appearance of the book containing it, it calls into question the use of the term 'merchant' to describe a culturally and economically homogenous class of reader.

The analysis of paratexts and traces of reading carried out in Chapters 6-8 also highlights ways of reading that are particularly characteristic of the *Decameron* and other ways of approaching the text that are symptomatic of all three works by Boccaccio. Many of the paratexts included in manuscripts and editions are concerned with facilitating orientation and provide little information about how individual readers approached the work. Notabilia which underline or single out salient information in the margin, the use of colour, running titles, and tables of contents are all features included by readers, as well as by scribes, printers, and editors, highlighting their importance for those who wished to read both for leisure and for scholarly purposes. The history of the *Decameron* in print illustrates that competition and marketing, combined with increasing numbers of readers from many different backgrounds, put more pressure on printers and editors to supply ever greater numbers of tools to facilitate consultation of the text.

The impact of print on the way in which texts were marketed is also seen in other types of paratext. Editors began to include prefaces addressing the reader, hoping to divert the attention of potential buyers away from rival editions and focus it on their

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[7] In relation to the *Decameron* Branca writes: 'invano si cerca qualcuno dei nomi di amanuensi più noti in quel periodo in calce ai codici a noi pervenuti' (*Tradizione*, II, 194).

own contributions. Both Filippo Giunta, for the *Decameron*, and Vincenzo Bagli, for *De mulieribus*, employed the melodramatic, but presumably effective, device of resurrecting Boccaccio from the dead to speak on their behalf.[8] The significance of features that may have been requested by individuals for individual manuscripts is magnified in editions which had to appeal to many readers. Thus, Agostino Carnerio's decision to include de' Bassi's commentary in his edition of the *Teseida* assumes a political significance far above that which it held in manuscript exemplars.

The introduction of a biography of Boccaccio in printed editions of the *Decameron* reveals a significant sensitivity towards the image of the author as an individual creator. There is some debate over the status of authorial authority in medieval literature. According to Michel Foucault, the author-function is not universal or constant in all discourse, since literary texts were sometimes circulated without the identity of their author. Their anonymity was not a problem because their ancientness was regarded as a sufficient guarantee of their status, while 'scientific' texts were accepted as 'true' only when marked with the name of their author.[9] Chartier makes a case for a different distinction, not based on genre, which admits that there are some vernacular works which are linked to author-function. His evidence is based on the large number of manuscripts which contain texts by Petrarch alone, demonstrating that readers make the link between the singularity of the author and their creations, as well as the presence of author portraits for writers, including Boccaccio.[10] The research on manuscripts of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* discussed in Chapters 6-8 seems to support the argument that a clearly defined author-function existed for vernacular texts. Manuscripts containing all three works often include some additional texts, but *De mulieribus* appears more often in miscellanies than either the *Teseida* or the full text of the *Decameron*. By the time print was introduced, however, the text of all three works was consistently designed to stand alone. The sonnets and dedication which Bagli added to the edition of *De mulieribus* support Boccaccio's text and cannot

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[8] See sections 7.2.2 (Giunta's preface) and 8.2.2 (Bagli's dedication).

[9] Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?', in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by Donald F. Bouchard, trans. by Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1977), pp. 113-38 (pp. 124-25).

[10] Chartier, pp. 52-58; Burt Kimmelman also argues for a greater degree of individuality in the Middle Ages than is often presumed in his *The Poetics of Authorship in the Later Middle Ages: The Emergence of the Modern Literary Persona* (New York: Lang, 1996). Victoria Kirkham has surveyed author portraits of Boccaccio in manuscripts and other media (see her 'A Preliminary List of Boccaccio Portraits from the Fourteenth to the Sixteenth Century', *StB*, 15 (1985-86), 167-88). Her research seems to suggest that portraits were included in Latin manuscripts, but that they were more common in vernacular exemplars.

function independently of this context, while the three *novelle* which Giunta included in his edition of the *Decameron* were apparently passed off as Boccaccio's own work.

In terms of manuscripts, *De mulieribus* is the most heavily annotated text, with exemplars of the *Decameron* being least likely to contain traces of reading. As one might have predicted, therefore, more readers of the Latin text seem to have associated reading with writing, while readers of the *Decameron* may not have been familiar with the scholarly habit of annotation, and in any case may have been reading only for entertainment. As the work which most obviously combines material designed to satisfy those seeking to increase their knowledge and those seeking only pleasure, manuscripts of the *Teseida* contain traces of reading which, in terms of quantity, fall in between those found in *De mulieribus* and the *Decameron*. In this general sense, and also in relation to individual types of traces, therefore, readers seem to have conformed to the guidelines for reading laid down by Boccaccio in texts, discussed in Chapter 1.

Manuscripts of *De mulieribus* contain the greatest quantity of marginalia, and also marks and symbols, which are the traces of reading most likely to be associated with learned activity. The only traces of reading which are explicitly 'scholarly', because they reference other literary sources, are found in exemplars containing *De mulieribus* and the *Teseida*. In contrast, manuscripts of the *Decameron* have the largest percentage of unrelated notes, which reveal how readers utilized the blank spaces in their books for other purposes. As Cursi has already pointed out, notes of a financial nature, which Branca uses as evidence for mercantile engagement, are scarce among the exemplars containing the *Decameron*. My research has also revealed that the use of blank leaves and margins in literary manuscripts for records of financial transactions is not limited to the *Decameron*, and suggests that neither is it a habit exclusive to merchants. Despite the evidence for mercantile readership of the *Teseida* and the medium to low quality of many *Teseida* manuscripts, I have found no examples of financial transactions in exemplars containing the *Teseida*. However, as I have discussed in Chapter 8, there are two instances in manuscripts of *De mulieribus* where blank leaves have been used in this manner. This type of interaction is not confined to manuscripts, but is also found in printed editions of the *Decameron*.

A comparison between other traces of reading in manuscripts and printed books suggests that the owners and readers of books may have had a different relationship with a mechanically-produced printed text than with a hand-written volume. Editions of the *Teseida*, *Decameron*, and *De mulieribus* exhibit significantly increased quantities of scribbles and smudges of ink in comparison with their manuscript counterparts. This

indicates that greater numbers of readers were engaged in reading and writing simultaneously, and that perhaps books had begun to be kept less as precious status symbols to be taken out only on special occasions, and were a more fully integrated part of daily life. A significant rise in the numbers of readers correcting their texts is also discernible in printed books, which may witness the increased availability of texts with which one could compare readings, and also greater interest in, and knowledge about, the editing process and standardizing principles. Printed books of the *Decameron* contain more traces of reading that reveal a linguistic concern than either the *Teseida* or *De mulieribus*, demonstrating that the interest of the cultural élite in Boccaccio's language, as witnessed also by critical responses, was largely confined to the *Decameron.*

Some traces of reading are of a more personal nature, but can nevertheless provide valuable insights into the reception of Boccaccio. The drawing of two profiles attached to the letters 'B' and 'F' at the end of a late fifteenth-century manuscript of *De mulieribus* (Vc) assumes added significance when considered in relation to Domenico da Prato's poetic reference to Boccaccio and Fiammetta as famous lovers. The image which Boccaccio projected of himself as the frustrated lover, which helped to align him with his mentors Dante and Petrarch and their respective Muses, Beatrice and Laura, evidently had some currency in the fifteenth century beyond the works in which Boccaccio specifically mentions Fiammetta, or his beloved. Religion naturally played a significant part in the lives of all those involved in Boccaccio's reception in the Renaissance, as witnessed by the inclusion of 'yhs' on the blank leaves of a manuscript and doodles of the crucifixion, and the participation of owners and copyists from the religious community, which have already been discussed. The *Decameron* contains the greatest quantity of anti-clerical material likely to offend readers, but the text seems to have survived virtually unedited before 1520. Some of the more salacious images in the printed editions may have been censored, but this is as likely to have happened at the printer's as in the home. Indeed, the author of the Strozzi fragment seems to have concurred wholeheartedly with Boccaccio's presentation of the clergy in the *Decameron.* Matteo Palmieri focused only on Boccaccio's vernacular output when he commented that he had not written 'cose morali' and that as a consequence his works had caused harm, but it is in fact *De mulieribus* which solicited the most striking responses of moral outrage from readers of the text in manuscript and print. Evidently Boccaccio's assurances that reading his text could only result in a positive moral outcome were not convincing enough, obliging some readers to censor the biography of

Pope Joan completely. Boccaccio's instructions to Andrea in the dedication to read all the parts of the text were therefore ignored, and the selective method for reading which Boccaccio advises in the conclusion to the *Decameron* was adopted instead.

This research has drawn on a range of different disciplines to chart the history of Boccaccio's *fortuna*. The quantity of material gathered which relates to Boccaccio, together with the breadth of the responses, in terms of the social, cultural, and economic backgrounds of those reading and producing his texts, has constructed a detailed picture of the significant role which Boccaccio played in the cultural life of many Italian readers throughout the Middle Ages and Renaissance. The methodology has highlighted the limitations implicit in using only one type of evidence and pointed up new areas for investigation. Combining a study of both manuscripts and printed books has illustrated how the arrival of moveable type may have revolutionized the process by which books were produced, and the numbers in which they appeared, but the dynamic interchange between the producers of the text (now the printer and editor rather than the scribe) and the reader continued to exist, albeit with different emphases. Reader response was not frozen by the unifying elements of print, but continued to develop and diversify, much as it does today, as the advent of new information technologies continues to encourage re-readings and re-evaluations of Boccaccio and his works.

APPENDIX I

Manuscripts of the 'Teseida'

The discussion in Chapter 6 is based on a sample of twenty-six manuscripts that I have viewed in the following libraries.

FLORENCE, BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE CENTRALE

F	Nuovi Acquisti 983
M^1	II. I. 157
M^2	II. II. 25
M^3	II. II. 26
M^4	II. II. 27
M^6	II. IV. 72
M^7	II. II. 82
P^1	Palatino 351
P^2	Palatino 352
P^3	Palatino 353
Pn	Panciatichiano 15

FLORENCE, BIBLIOTECA RICCARDIANA

R^1	1055
R^2	1056
R^3	1057
R^4	1058
R^5	2733

PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

Pr	Ital. 580
Pr^1	Ital. 581
Pr^2	Ital. 582
Pr^3	Ital. 583

TREVISO, BIBLIOTECA COMUNALE

T	340

VATICAN CITY, BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATICANA

V^1	Chigiano L.VI. 224
V^2	Chigiano L.VII. 263
V^3	Vat. lat. 10656
V^4	Urbinate lat. 691

VENICE, BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE MARCIANA

Vz	Marciana it. IX. 61

APPENDIX II

The Opening of Pietro Andrea de' Bassi's Dedication to Niccolò III d'Este

The following transcription is based on the copy of the *Teseida* (Ferrara: Agostino Carnerio, 1475) held in the John Rylands Library, Manchester (8943, fols $\pi 1^{r}$-4^{v}).

Adsit principio Virgo Beata meo.

[P]erché, Preclarissimo Principe, con elegantissima facundia li philosophanti ne dimostra la iocundissima arte de poesia essere processa da una relevata nobilità de animo, la quale fu ne li principii de l'alma natura, per la opera de la quale poesia occorre che le virtù e relevati gesti de memoria digni de li illustrissimi signori, essendo li lor corpi de le anime orbati, per la resonante tuba e modulato scrivere de li poeti la loro gloriosa fama verde e viva per lo universo mondo divulgata in eterno rimane. Ma haa dolore immenso, che a questi nostri tempi el si trovino li poeti più rari che la fenice, che unica in el mondo e in una sola regione si ritrova! La penuria de li quali poeti la gloriosa fama de li vostri progenitori, e de vuy quasi semisepulta lassa trascorrere, benché tali e tanti excelentissimi exercitii daravano uberrima materia de sonoro e alto scrivere a ciaschuno più eximio vate.

Le quale cose, quando ne la mente mia rivolvo, me atrista la anima in tanto che questo pocho de rimanente de la mia vita, inveterata al fidele famulato di vuy, con gravi affani e acerbi dolori trapasso, e certo nel mezo di tante anxietade mi nasce uno dolce pensero che lo alto Dio, iusto remuneratore a ciascuno che de drito core a lui serve, produca[1] uno excelente e purificato inzegno che li famosi gesti de vostri sublimi proavi e de vuy renderà senza morte; e chi non crede che 'l somo Dio si racordi quanti relevati adiutorii la Ecclesia sua e li pastori de quella habia recevuti da li vostri passati e da vuy e ogni dì riceva? Lassiamo li exercitii de Azzo primo, che per sua magnanimità la ferrace vostra Ferrara liberò, e fu de la sublime vostra casa el primo che per soi meriti dal somo pontifice obtene di quella il vichariato segno rezando l'anticha Modena e la uberrima Verona, dove felicemente terminò li dì soi; e anchora de Aldrovandino suo primogenito, el quale, debellati quelli che infestan[2] la ditta ecclesia del Sancto Padre de la Marcha anchonitana, obtene el marchionato, dove essendo anchora giovenetto se

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[1] The original reads 'produra'.
[2] The original reads 'infesta'. A past tense would seem more likely, however.

extinse felicemente el fiore de la soa animositade. Recordiamo Azzo secondo, del primo Azzo figliolo, el quale mostrando la grandeza del suo animo, strenuo in le bataglie, prudentissimo in consigli, campione e protectore de Sancta Ecclesia con astutia e possanza, non altremente che 'l divino Scipione chazasse lo audace Hanibale, domasse la fiera Carthagine, e liberasse Italia e la Romana republica. Cusì questo Azzo sconfitò el secondo re Federico potentissimo, che anni trenta aveva ateso a li damni de la Ecclesia, liberò e la Italia e la Ecclesia da la sua acerba possanza. E con non minore ardire la crudele e sanguinolenta superbia del maligno Eccerino de Romano, segnore e occupatore de la Marcha trivisana, federato e colligato con lo ditto re Federico, con potentissimo brazo debellò. E perseguitandolo il constrinse la infelice anima rendesse al diavolo, del quale sì se diceva apertamente e per spontanea confessione de la madre, lui essere stato figliolo. E benché molto tempo sia passato, se ricorda ancora che Obizo, primo figliolo de Raynaldo del ditto secondo Azzo figliolo, con animosa possanza, aiutato dal vechio primo re Carlo, obtene victoria de Manfredo, figliolo del ditto re Federico, nonmeno infesto a la Ecclesia che stato fusse el padre e dilatando le sue forze di Rezo e di Modena, la secunda volta obtene la signoria e ritornato a Ferrara, la felice anima rende al so creatore. Lasso questo primo Obizo.

Azzo terzo, so figliolo, homo cupido di gloria, dispresiatore di robba e de dinari, e per la soa liberalità acquistò tanta fama che fuora de Italia d'altro signore italico non si parlava, segnorezò le terre a lui lassate dal padre e capitaneo de Sancta Ecclesia, longo tempo guerezò con la opulente Bologna e con la possente Parma, nel qualle exercitio se infermò e, tornato a Ferrara, chiuse lo dì extremo. Rimase in signoria Aldrovandino so fratello, el quale generò la inclita prole de la quale vuy, magnanimo Principe felice e glorioso signore, avete la origine, e prima Rainaldo, el quale vendicandose con grande strage liberò la vostra Ferrara da le mane de li franceschi e con lo primo Nicolò e Obizzo signorezarno Ferrara, Modena, e Parma. Da questo Obizzo, vostro prestantissimo avo, furno generati li illustri Aldrovandino, Nicolò, dal quale avete el nome, Folco, Ugo, e Alberto, vostro inclito genitore, Beatrice, Alda, Aylise, e Constanza. Quanti valorosi exercitii siano per Aldrovandino, Nicolò secondo, e Alberto, li quali l'uno dappo l'altro signorezono, è sì recente memoria ch'io non me extendere più oltre,[3] se non che per la loro probatissima sapientia fra li baroni italici più digni de reverentia sono stati reputati e da li somi pastori sono stati de amplissimi privilegii honorati che più honora la sublime vostra casa. E avegna che la illustrissima

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[3] A verb such as 'to want' seems to be missing here. Cf. 'non mi voglio troppo extendere' at the end of this paragraph.

vostra prosapia de li vostri proavi resplenda de una insigne anticha generosità, da li primordiali initii de la quale per longa vetustà non è memoria anchora più coruscante, chiareza acquista per le parentele contrate con serenissimi regali. E per non recercare le antiquità, assai fresco ricordo è del serenissimo Roberto, re de Cicilia, doppo Salomone in scientia tenuto el secondo, e de Andrea, serenissimo re de Ungaria, el quale ave la ditta Beatrice veramente beata, se la virtute heroica po li mondani beatifficare come se crede. Come vuy Nicolò terzo, capitaneo de Sancta Ecclesia, ge aquistassi Bologna occupata da la casa potentissima de li Visconti, lo abiamo veduto, de la celeberrima virtù del quale in li facti de arme e in ogni altra generation de exercitio, vogliando a pieno descrivere non mi bastaria el tempo; e abiandome restreto in scrivere le altre cose, in questa non mi voglio troppo extendere.

Ma pur chi me domandasse come, tra tanti anfracti de guerre, di noglie, di tribulatione da le quale tutta Italia è stipata e oppressa, questo vostro preclaro, mirifico, e quasi regale imperio in tanta requie se conservi, nel quale nuy vostri citadini veramente felici, veramente beati, usiamo tanta optima libertà, in tanta copia de tutte le cosse, in tanta ubertà, tranquilla pace, e somma quiete, responderia (benché ciaschuno come mi el po discernere): chi considera, ben remossa da sé ogni passione de animo, le sublime virtute vostre in ogni generatione de prudentia, e' comprenderà aperto le casone del nostro bono e optimo essere; e se io con tutte le forze mie de lo inzegno e de lo animo contemplo la singulare magnitudine de lo animo vostro, la acutissima prudentia, la integerrima iustitia, la abundante misericordia con exquisita alegreza di core, existimo ogni persona come mi con grandissimi voti, amplissime preghiere, supplichi a lo omnipotente Dio ne vi conservi senza morte. Tante sono le innumerabile laude, le preclarissime vostre dignità, li ornatissimi vostri exercitii, che nessuna vetustà[4] de tempo li poterà absorbere, non se potrano per invidia rompere, né per la longeza de li labili anni conminuire. E a questo provederà, mi afferma l'animo, la infinita possanza de lo eterno Dio come disopra ritocho, el quale recordandossi e avendo a la memoria fixi li prenominati exercitii de immortalità digni operati al suo servitio amando, temendo, e obsequendo sempre el suo Somo Pastore, non comportarà la gloriosa vostra fame senza eterna recordatione trascorsa.

E Azzo mi dà ferma credenza la tenera e grande affectione, la quale sempre aveti avuta a li poeti e a le loro opere, facendo grandissima reputatione de la medulla quale se cava de le fictione poetice, racordandovi che poesia non è numerata fra le altre scientie liberale, ma abrazandole tutte più excelsa e veneranda rimane. E come el principe fra el

[4] The original reads 'verusta'.

numero de li grandi citadini è reputato el più digno, cussì de le altre scientie l'arte poetica è preeminente, e come de le altre più nobile, più se inzegna de accostare a li cori magnanimi de excelsi signori e possenti. Crediamo nuy che se Octaviano, Iulio Cesare, e li altri Cesari, e molti a li quali la nobile e insigne sapientia de li poeti con profunde fictione per loro preponderati[5] versi ànno dato eterna fame, non avessero con la serenità de lo sapientissimo loro inzegno cognosciuto e amato la sublime poesia, che Virgilio, Homero, e molti altri poeti a li quali el misericordioso Dio de li premii recompensatore ha soffiato del suo intelleto, perché queli homini electi da Lui al governo de li altri, e che optimamente sé e altri governano, li renda immortali, avessero durati cotanti affani? Certe el convene essere quello che Cicerone dice nel suo libro de la senetute: 'pares con paribus vetere proverbio facile congregantur', zoè, il vechio proverbio dice legiermente: se congrega inseme l'uno che sia con volontà pari a l'altro.[6] Nel presente proposito parla[7] il poeta Claudiano nel suo maiore volume e dice: 'gaudet enim virtus testes sibi iungere Musas. Carmen amat quisquis carmine digna gerit', zoè, ciaschuno homo virtuoso se ralegra de agiungerse in testimonio la poesia.[8] E ciaschuno el quale adopera cosse digne da essere scripte per verso ama el verso di poeti, e se mai ad altro signore magnanimo piaque, vuy seti quello.

Cognosco ben ch'io non scrivo apieno né de li relevati gesti de li vostri, né da la grandeza de l'animo vostro e del suo glorioso operare, e zo procede per debilitade e grosseza de intelleto, e anche per non essere ascripto a la abominanda turba de li assentatori, la quale sempre me dispiaque, e più a vuy e a li altri sapientissimi signori de dispiacere. E per lo amore, el quale a poesia portati, avendo vuy de la lectura del *Theseo* sommo piacere, ritrovandossi alchun a li quali le historie poetice non sono cussì note come a vuy, vi ha piazuto commandare a mi, Piero Andrea[9] de i Bassi, vostro antiquo e fidele famiglio, dechiari lo obscuro texto del ditto *Theseo*, facendo a quello giose per le quale li lecturi possano cavare sugo de la loro lectura, el quale texto per la obscurità de le fictione poetice è difficile ad intendere. Io, quantunque accusì la ruvideza mia per piacere a la signoria vostra, come meno male mi responderà il mio pocho sapere mi sforzarò ad ubedire, forse occorrerà de mi come de Ennio, che legendo Virgilio, sommo poeta, li versi de Ennio, el quale ruvidamente scripse, fo con meraviglia domandato quello che faceva. Respose: 'io coglio oro de quello che

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[5] The original reads 'preponderaci'.
[6] *De senectute*, III. 7.
[7] The original reads 'perla'.
[8] *De consulatu Stilichonis*, III. Preface, 6.
[9] The original reads 'Andrea' with an abbreviation over the *n*.

someno[10] Ennio nel suo letame'.[11] Forsi consentirà lo omnipotente Dio che qualche perspicace intellecto, legendo el mio simplice e grosso scrivere, con relevato stille conspira a gloria de vuy el mio somo disiderio, el quale priego mi pona ne la gratia vostra come merita la mia pura fede.

Circa la expositione del presente libro, sì come nel principio de li altri libri è costume de fare, se de' volere sapere cinque cosse.[12] La prima chi fo lo auctore. La seconda qual'è il titulo del libro. La terza quale è la materia de che vole tractare. La quarta a quale fine lo auctore lo ha compilato. La quinta a quale parte de philosophia la opera del presente libro è sottoposta. Quanto a la prima diremo che lo auctore del presente libro fo Zohanne da Certaldo, cognominato Bochazo, el quale benché la sua fronte non fusse coronata de lauro, sì optima prova fa la sua scientia che poeta se de' nominare. Circa la seconda è da sapere che 'l libro è intitulato *Theseida de le noze de Emilia*, e questo titulo è iustamente facto, perché la invocatione di profunda poesia abundante lo auctore cominza a parlare de Theseo, poi finisse a le amare e alegre noze de Emilia. Quanto a la terza parte, cognoscemo lui auctore volere tractare et essere la materia el suo subiecto de bataglie, de la possanza de amore, de li effecti de Venere, le quale cosse con abondante copia de polito parlare, inserto[13] a infinite poetice fictione e historie, lui elegantissimamente preferisse. Vole lo auctore presente ne la quarta parte denotare che a optimo fine è compilato el libero presente, azò che per le sue velate demostratione lo homo veda li mutamenti de la fallace fortuna, e guardisse da lo operare che a lui menaza damno. La quinta se vole sapere a quale parte de philosophia el presente libro è sottoposto. Diremo adunque el libro[14] presente e la narratione de quello essere sottoposti a philosophia morale, perché per la experientia de le cosse in quello descripte, e per li effecti moralemente ne amaestra che procaciamo schivare li pericoli et attendere adoperare tali exercitii che ne conducano al fine quale desideriamo. [...][15]

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[10] This might be interpreted as 'seminò'.
[11] The anecdote is taken from Aelius Donatus's Life of Virgil: 'quom Ennium in manu haberet rogareturque quidnam faceret, respondit se aurum colligere de stercore Ennii' (*Vitae Vergilianae*, ed. by Iacobus Brummer (Leipzig: Teubner, 1912), p. 31).
[12] De' Bassi is following traditional commentary practice; see A. J. Minnis, *Medieval Theory of Authorship: Scholastic Literary Attitudes in the Later Middle Ages* (London: Scolar Press, 1984), pp. 15-33.
[13] The original reads 'inscerto'.
[14] The original reads 'llbro'.
[15] De' Bassi ends the dedication with an extended explanation of Boccaccio's opening words.

APPENDIX III

Bibliographical Descriptions of Editions of the 'Teseida'

FERRARA: AGOSTINO CARNERIO, 1475

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 8943 (IGI 1810; GW 4499; BMC, VI (1930), 606-07; STC, p. 111). 166 fols, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: [π^4a-b^{10}c-d^{8}e-g^{10}h-i^{8}k^{10}l-m^{8}n^{10}o-p^{8}q-r^{10}s^8]. 332 x 226 mm (fol. π2^r).

TEXT[1]

Includes Pietro Andrea de' Bassi's dedication to Niccolò d'Este (fols π1^r-4^v) and commentary. Boccaccio's two introductory sonnets have not been included.

COLOPHON

(Fol. s6^v) Hoc opus impressit theseida nomine dictum | Bernardo genitus bibliopola puer: | (Augustinus ei nomen:) cum dux bonus urbem | Herculeus princeps ferrariam regeret | M°. CCCC°. LXXIIIII°

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. The dedications written by de' Bassi and Boccaccio are arranged in a fully justified full-page layout, with 38 lines of text per page, measuring 213 x 145 mm (fol. π2^r). The poem is arranged in one column of four octaves per page and measures 197 x 85 mm (fol. a3^r). Commentary is placed in the margins surrounding the text, and is distributed in such a way that some pages contain no gloss, while others contain gloss in all four margins. When commentary fills an entire margin-length there is space for 50 lines of text (fol. b5^r). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fol. π1^r) Beginning of de' Bassi's dedication: printed rubric in red, 'Ad sit principio virgo beata meo', followed by blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a1^r) Beginning of Boccaccio's dedication: blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a2^r) Beginning of Book I: blank space for an initial.

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[1] Under this heading I list any texts for which Boccaccio is not the author and note whether any changes have been made to the main text by the author of the text-object.

At the beginning of each subsequent book, blank space for an initial has been added at the beginning of the opening sonnet and first stanza. The beginning of each subsequent book is also marked by a printed rubric in black capital letters announcing its number.[2] The word order in this title can vary, for example, 'INCIPIT LIBER SEXTUS', or 'LIBER OCTAVUS INCIPIT'. Printed rubrics in black are supplied throughout the text, sometimes within the text space, above or to the right of the stanza, sometimes within the internal or external margin.

[NAPLES: FRANCESCO DEL TUPPO, *C.* 1490]

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, E. 6. 2. 29 (IGI 1811; GW 4500; *Mostra*, II, 42-43). 84 fols, unnumbered. Chancery 4°: a-k^{8}l^{4}. 222 x 155 mm (fol. a4).

TEXT

No commentary is included.[3]

COLOPHON

(Fol. l3^{v}) Questo libro si chiama el Teseo | composto per misser Johanni Bo | chacio daciertaldo finito adi. xxvj. | del mese de novembro

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. The dedication written by Boccaccio is arranged in a full-page layout, with 35 lines of text per page, measuring 145 x 110 mm (fol. a3^{r}). The poem is arranged in two columns of 32 lines per page. On some leaves this corresponds to two columns of four octaves each, although the inclusion of rubrics often disrupts this system, dividing octaves over two pages. Each column of text space measures 145 x 55 mm (fol. f3^{r}), with a 2 mm wide space between the columns. Roman type.[4]

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[2] The title for Book V is missing, and no space has been left for it. The title for Book XII is placed inbetween the sonnet and first stanza.
[3] The GW mistakenly notes that de' Bassi's commentary is included in this edition.
[4] The GW and IGI both mistakenly describe the type as gothic.

DECORATION

(Fol. a2[r]) Beginning of dedication: printed rubric in black, 'Incomenza el Theseo composto per misser Johani Bocchazo etc.'. Printed paragraph mark in black precedes the initial letter of the dedication.

(Fol. a3[v]) Introductory sonnets: printed rubrics in black precede each sonnet, for example, 'Soneto nel quale si contiene uno argumento generale etc.'

(Fol. a4[r]) Beginning of Book I: printed rubric in black 'Principio del Teseo', preceded by a paragraph mark and followed by blank space for an initial.

There are printed rubrics in black at the beginning of each book and throughout the text, each one preceded by a printed paragraph mark in black.

APPENDIX IV

Manuscripts of the 'Decameron'

The discussion in Chapter 7 is based on a sample of thirty manuscripts that I have viewed in the following libraries.

FLORENCE, BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE CENTRALE

F	II. II. 8
F^1	II. I. 24
F^2	II. II. 20
F^3	Banco Rari 37
F^6	Magliabechiano VII. 1040
F^8	IV. 39
F^9	II. II. 18
F^{10}	II. II. 56

FLORENCE, BIBLIOTECA RICCARDIANA

FR	1061
FR^1	1095
FR^2	1118
FR^3	1121

LONDON, BRITISH LIBRARY

Lo	Add. 10297

PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

P^1	Ital. 483
P^2	Ital. 484
P^3	Ital. 487
P^4	Ital. 488
P^5	Ital. 1474
P^6	Ital. 62

VATICAN CITY, BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATICANA

Vb	Barberiniano lat. 4057
Vb^1	Barberiniano lat. 4058
Vb^2	Barberiniano lat. 4105
Vb^3	Barberiniano lat. 4106
Vch	Chigiano M. VII. XLVIa
Vf	Ferraioli 885
Vl^1	Vat. lat. 5337
Vl^2	Vat. lat. 9893
Vr	Rossiano 947

VENICE, BIBLIOTECA NAZIONALE MARCIANA

Vz	Ital. X. 14
Vz^1	Ital. X. 446

APPENDIX V

Bibliographical Descriptions of Editions of the 'Decameron'

Vittore Branca, when considering the textual tradition of the *Decameron* in print, commented that: 'sarebbe, se non inutile, certo ozioso e superfluo dare in questa sede l'elenco e la descrizione delle edizioni: non si farebbe che ripetere quanto già egregi studiosi hanno pubblicato e che proprio chi scrive ha avuto occasione di completare e aggiornare'.[1] I have found it essential, however, to compile my own descriptions of editions of the *Decameron*, since published bibliographical descriptions do not cover all the areas of presentation discussed in Chapter 7. Descriptions are based on exemplars seen by myself, unless otherwise stated.[2]

(N) [NAPLES?: PRINTER OF TERENTIUS, *C.* 1470?]

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 16686 (IGI 1772; GW 4440; *Mostra*, II, 25). 254 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: [a^2b-r^{10}s^{8}t-z^{10}A^{10}B^{10}C^{14}].[3] 280 x 198 mm (fol. d1).[4]

TEXT

Table of contents.[5]

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[1] Branca, *Tradizione*, II, 305. Branca includes a list of previous bibliographical descriptions in note 1.

[2] In the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana I came across an edition of the *Decameron*, missing a colophon, but with the title-page supplied in a handwritten modern facsimile, claiming to have been printed in Venice in 1517 (Ferraioli IV, 4046). I have not found any printed catalogues which include an edition with this date, and the wording of the title, 'IL DECAMERONE | DI MESSER GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO NOVISSIMAMENTE | ALLA SUA VERA ET SANA | LETTIONE RIDOTTO. [trefoil motif] | CON LA DICHIARATIONE D' I VOCABOLI DIFFICILI. | IN VINEGIA M D XVII. | *Con privilegio*' brings to mind the 1541 edition printed by Francesco Bindoni and Maffeo Pasini, sold without the letter by Curtio Navò, and with an altered title-page. Ferrari reproduces the title in this edition as 'IL DECAMERONE | DI MESSER GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO NOVISSAMAMENTE | ALLA SUA VERA ET SANA | LETTIONE RIDOTTO | [fregio in forma di trifoglio] | CON LA DICHIARATIONE | D' I VOCABOLI DIFFICILI | POSTA IN FINE | IN VINEGIA MDXLI. | *Con privilegio*' (p. 127, n. 53) See also Trovato, *Con ogni diligenza*, p. 98, n. 33, p. 216. However, it remains to be explained how the person transcribing the title-page (presumably with an exemplar in front of them) mistook MDXLI for MDXVII, and EDIT16 does not record the existence of any exemplars of the 1541 edition in the Vatican library. I intend to pursue this matter further at a later date.

[3] I have used the collational formula given in *Mostra*, II, 25.

[4] The book has evidently been heavily trimmed, since the copy held in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence (B. R. 89) measures 328 x 220 mm (fol. 94^r).

[5] In this copy the original leaves containing the table of contents are missing, but two extra leaves have been added after the colophon, and the text supplied in a modern hand. In the copy

COLOPHON

None.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column, with an average of 40 lines on each page. The text space measures 202 x 138 mm (fol. f10^{r}). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols a1^{r-v}) Table of contents: blank space for an initial left at the beginning of the rubric in black uppercase type which begins the summaries for each day.[6]

(Fol. b1^{r}) Beginning of proem: blank space for an initial.

(Fol. b2^{v}) Beginning of Day I: blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial.

Blank space for a rubric and an initial has been left at the beginning of each subsequent day. At the beginning of each *novella* blank space for a rubric has been left, followed by blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout each *novella* are marked by blank spaces for initials.

(CV) [VENICE]: CHRISTOPH VALDARFER, 1471

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 17659 (IGI 1773; GW 4441; BMC, v (1924), 183; STC, p. 109). 268 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: [A^{8}a-d^{10}e^{8}f-i^{10}k^{8}l-s^{10}t-u^{8}x-z 2a-2c^{10}2d^{8}]. 289 x 198 mm (fol. c1).[7]

TEXT

(Fols A2^{r}-8^{v}) Table of contents.

(Fol. 2d8^{v}) Colophon in the form of a tailed sonnet.

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of the same edition held in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence (B. R. 89), the table of contents is found on fols a1^{r}-2^{v}.

[6] I have based this information on B. R. 89.

[7] This copy has evidently been heavily trimmed, since the copy held in the British Library (IB. 19756) measures 313 x 215 mm (fol. 133^{r}).

COLOPHON

(Fol. 2d8^{v}) I Oson Vn cerchio dor che circonscrive | Cento giemme ligiadre: inchui si stila | Le oriental perle: chanoda e perfila | Le tosche lingue pelegrine & diue. | P Ero qual cercha lombre disuo Riue. | Mi cholga Inpresso: che amor mi postila | Vostre dolceze: epar che anchor sfavila | Gioco e miserie di qualunche Viue. | M E ser giouan bochacio el primo Autore | Fu di mie prose e di quel bel paese | Che marte venero per degno honore. | C Hristofal Valdarfer Indi minprese | Che naque in ratispona: ilchui fulgore | Dalciel per gratia infra mortal disese | Se donque di mi arnese | V estir voleti isuono ad ogni spirto | El mio Vulgar che orna diloro e mirto | .M: CCCC: LXXI:

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column, with an average of 40 lines on each page. The text space measures 218 x 133 mm (fol. c1^{r}). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols A2^{r}-8^{v}) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by blank space for an initial and a descriptive rubric. Summaries for each *novella* have a hanging indent.

(Fol. a1^{r}) Beginning of proem: blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a2^{r}) Beginning of Day I: blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial.

Blank spaces for a rubric and an initial are also left at the beginning of subsequent days. Each *novella* is preceded by blank space for a rubric and an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked by blank spaces for initials.

(M) MANTUA: PIETRO ADAMO DE' MICHELI, 1472

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 8658 (GW 4442; BMC, VII (1935), 927; STC, p. 109). 264 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: [a^{8}b-f^{10}g^{8}h-n^{10}o^{12}p-t^{10}v^{8}x-z^{10}A-C^{10}D^{8}].[8] 280 x 187 mm (fol. b4).[9]

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[8] I have used the collational formula given in GW, IV (1930), 259.

[9] The book has evidently been heavily trimmed, since the copy held in the British Library (IB. 30605) measures 310 x 220 mm (fol. 1^{r}).

TEXT

(Fols a2^{r}-8^{v}) Table of contents.

The Author's Conclusion has been omitted.

COLOPHON[10]

(Fol. D7^{r}) Io. Bocacii poetae lepidiss. decameron: opus facetum: Mantuae impressum: | Cum eius florentiss. urbis principatum foeliciss. ageret diuus Lodouicus | gonzaga secundus. Anno ab origine christiana. M.cccc.lxxii. | Petrus adam de michaelibus eiusdem urbis Ciuis imprimendi auctor.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column, with an average of 41 lines per page. The text space is 214 x 131 mm (fol. h1^{r}). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols a2^{r}-8^{v}) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by blank space for an initial and a descriptive rubric. Summaries for each *novella* have a hanging indent.

(Fol. b1^{r}) Beginning of proem: blank space for an initial.[11]

(Fol. b2^{r}) Beginning of Day I: blank space for an initial.

At the beginning of subsequent days, blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial is provided. The beginning of *novelle* is marked by blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout *novelle* are marked by blank spaces for initials.

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[10] The final leaf of this copy, which contains the colophon, is damaged. The main text has been glued to a new leaf, and ends with the words 'IL FINE'. I have supplied the colophon found in the copy of de' Micheli's edition held in the British Library (IB. 30605). Neither the ISTC nor BMC indicates that there is a variation of the colophon reading 'IL FINE', which suggests that the colophon is missing in the Manchester copy of the edition.

[11] Since fol. 1 is missing, I have supplied this information on the basis of the decoration found in the copy held in the British Library (IB. 30605).

(A) BOLOGNA: BALDASSARE AZZOGUIDI, 1476

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Cambridge, Cambridge University Library, Inc. 3. B. 10. 1 (2060) (GW 4443). 222 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: [a^6b-f^{10}g-l^8m-n^6o-p^8q-s^{10}t-$u^8y^6x^8z^6$A-D^8]. 265 x 182 mm (fol. h4).

TEXT

(Fols a2^r-6^r) Table of contents.[12]

(Fol. a6^r) The five stanzas of verse used as a colophon in the 1471 edition of the *Decameron* printed by Christoph Valdarfer are reproduced, with the fourth stanza modified to read: 'Baldasar Acioguidi indi mimprese | In Bologna alma ilchui fulgore'.

COLOPHON

(Fol. D8^r) Io Bocacii poetae lepidiss. | de Cameron: opus facetum | Bononie impressum in do | mo Baldassaris Azogui | do. Anno ab origine chri- | stiana. M. cccc. lxxvi.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 44 lines of text in each column. The text space measures 213 x 141 mm, including a space of 15 mm between columns (fol. b4^r). Roman type.

DECORATION

Each *novella* is preceded by a printed rubric in black distinguished by a printed paragraph mark in black, and followed by blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked by blank spaces for initials.

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[12] Since leaves a1-6, b1, D1, and D6-8 are missing in this copy, where necessary I have used the information given in M. Pellechet, *Catalogue général des incunables des bibliothèques publiques de France*, 3 vols (Paris: Picard, 1905), II, 22. Pellechet does not provide information on decoration, however.

(Z) MILAN: ANTONIO ZAROTTO, 1476

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

(GW 4444).[13] 242 leaves, unnumbered.[14] 2°: $\pi^{6}a^{10}b\text{-}m^{8}l^{8}2^{10}n\text{-}z^{8}\tau^{8}\vartheta^{8}\varphi^{8}2\varphi^{8}$.

TEXT

(Fols 237^{r}-242^{v}) Table of contents.

COLOPHON[15]

(Fol. 236^{v}) Johannis Boccacii poetae lepidissimi decameron opus facetum Mediolani | impressum anno domini. M. cccc. lxxvi. | Antonius Zarotus parmensis imprimendi auctor egregius impressit.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column with 41 lines on each page. Gothic type.

(R) [VICENZA]: GIOVANNI DI RENO, 1478

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 16820 (GW 4445; BMC, VII (1935), 1040-41; STC, p. 109). 236 leaves unnumbered. Chancery 2°: $\pi^{6}a\text{-}f^{10}g\text{-}k^{8}l\text{-}m^{6}n\text{-}q^{10}r\text{-}t^{6}u\text{-}z^{8}A^{8}B\text{-}C^{10}D^{8}$. 284 x 190 mm (fol. b1).

TEXT

(Fols π1^{r}-5^{r}) Table of contents.

(Fol. D8^{r}) Colophon in the form of a tailed sonnet.

COLOPHON[16]

(Fol. D8^{r}) The five stanzas of verse used as a colophon in the 1471 edition of the *Decameron* printed by Christoph Valdarfer are reproduced, with the fourth stanza modified to read: 'Giovanne da Reno quindi minprese | Cum mirabile stampa: il cui fulgore'.

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[13] There is only one extant copy of this edition in the Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, which I have been unable to view. This information is taken from GW, IV (1930), 259. See also Ganda, p. 141.

[14] Fava gives the number of leaves as 232 (p. 132).

[15] The colophon is reproduced in ibid., p. 132.

[16] In this copy, the leaf containing the colophon is a modern facsimile.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 44 lines in each column. The text space measures 208 x 136 mm, including a space of 11 mm between columns (fol. 12^{r}). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols π1^{r}-5^{r}) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by blank space for an initial and a descriptive rubric. The first line of text in the summary for each *novella* is indented.

(Fol. a1^{r}) Beginning of proem: blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a1^{v}) Beginning of Day I: blank space for an initial.

At the beginning of subsequent days blank space for an initial is provided. *Novelle* begin with a short printed rubric, e.g. 'Novella de ser Ciappelletto', followed by blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with blank spaces for initials.

(S) VENICE: ANTONIO DA STRADA, 30 MARCH 1481

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 16819 (IGI 1774; GW 4446; STC supp., p. 21). 174 leaves unnumbered. Chancery 2°: $\pi^{4}a^{10}b^{8}c^{6}d^{8}e^{6}f^{8}g^{6}h^{8}i^{6}k^{8}l^{6}m^{8}n^{6}o^{8}p^{6}q^{8}r^{6}s^{8}t^{6}u^{8}x^{6}y^{8}z^{6}A\text{-}B^{8}C^{10}$. 289 x 186 mm (fol. f4).

TEXT

(Fols π1^{v}-4^{v}) Table of contents.

COLOPHON

(Fol.C9^{r}) Impresso per Antonio da Stra | da Cremonese in lalma Cittade di Ve | nesia. Iohanne Mocenigo felicissimo | Principe Imperante negli anni del Si- | gnore. M. CCCCLXXXI. aligiorni. | .XXX. de Mazo.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 48 lines in each column. The text space measures 215 x 137 mm, including a space of 9 mm between each column (fol. e2^{r}). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols $\pi 1^{v}$-4^{v}) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by blank space for an initial and a descriptive rubric. The first line of text in the summary for each *novella* is indented.

(Fol. a1^{r}) Beginning of proem: blank space for a rubric, followed by blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a1^{v}) Beginning of Day I: blank space for an initial.

The beginning of subsequent days is marked by blank space for an initial. *Novelle* begin with a short printed rubric, e.g. 'Novella de ser Ciappelletto', followed by blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked by blank spaces for initials.

(F) [FLORENCE: SANT'IACOPO DI RIPOLI, 1483]

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 18201 (IGI 1775; GW 4447; *Mostra*, II, 38). 302 leaves, ff. 2-4 (fols π2-4). Chancery 2°: $\pi^{8}a^{8}b$-$h^{6}I^{6}l$-$r^{6}f^{6}s$-$z^{6}\&^{6}A$-$H^{8}2I^{8}R^{8}L^{8}M$-$S^{8}T^{4}$ (O1, O2, and P3 unsigned). 282 x 198 mm (fol. g1).

TEXT

(Fols $\pi 2^{r}$-8^{v}) Table of contents.

COLOPHON

None.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column, with an average of 37 lines in each column. The text space measures 186 x 120 mm (fol. s3^{r}). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols $\pi 2^{r}$-8^{v}) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by a decorative woodcut initial and a descriptive rubric. Summaries for each *novella* have a hanging indent.

(Fol. $a1^{r}$) Beginning of proem: blank space for an initial.

(Fol. $a2^{r}$) Beginning of Day I: printed rubric in black, which begins with a decorative woodcut initial and is followed by a decorative woodcut initial.

The beginning of subsequent days is marked with a printed rubric in black and a decorative woodcut initial. *Novelle* begin with a descriptive printed rubric in black, together with a note of its number, followed by a decorative woodcut initial.[17] Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with decorative woodcut initials. There are occasional spaces that have not been filled with woodcut initials.

(T) VENICE: BATTISTA TORTI, 8 MAY 1484

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, D. 7. 5. 3 (IGI 1776; GW 4448; *Mostra*, II, 38-39). 138 leaves, ff. I-CXXXVII (printed foliation begins at fol. $a2^{r}$). Chancery 2°: a-$q^{8}r^{10}$.[18] 294 x 195 mm (fol. r1).

TEXT

(Fol. $r9^{v}$) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. $r9^{r}$) Venetiis per baptistam de tortis | M.CCCC.lxxxiiii. die viii. Maii.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 60 lines of text in each column. The text space measures 229 x 146 mm, including a space of 6 mm between columns (fol. $a7^{r}$). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fol. $a2^{r}$) Beginning of proem: blank space for an initial.

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[17] The first two *novelle* of Day I include the rubric 'Novella' and the relevant number. At I. 3 the wording changes to 'Rubrica' and the relevant number.
[18] I used the collation given in *Mostra*, II, 38.

Blank space for an initial is left at the beginning of each day, as well as at each *novella*, additional sections in the *cornice*, and throughout each *novella*.

(JGG) VENICE: GIOVANNI AND GREGORIO DE' GREGORI, 20 JUNE 1492

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 18204 (IGI 1777; GW 4449; *Mostra*, II, 43-47). 144 leaves, ff. 3-137 (printed foliation begins at fol. a3, misprinting 3 as '6'). Chancery 2°: $\pi^6a^8b\text{-}r^6f^6t\text{-}y^6z^4$. 319 x 216 mm (fol. f1).

TEXT

(Fol. $\pi1^r$) Title-page, with 'DECAMERONE O VER CENTO NOVELLE DEL BOCCACCIO' placed in the middle of the leaf.

(Fols $\pi2^{r\text{-}v}$) 'Vita de Bocchaccio' by Girolamo Squarzafico.

(Fols $\pi3^r\text{-}5^v$) Table of contents.

(Fol. $z3^r$) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. $z3^r$) Impresso in Ve | netia per Giovanni & Gregorio de gregorii fra- | telli. Imperante Augustino Barbarigo felicissimo | principe: nellanno della humana recuperatione. | MCCCC. Lxxxxii. ad di. xx. de Giugno.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 59 lines of text in each column. The text space measures 243 x 159 mm, including an 8 mm space between each column (fol. $h2^r$). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols $\pi2^{r\text{-}v}$) Life of Boccaccio: woodcut illustration which extends the width of one column (57 x 73 mm) with a printed rubric in black below: 'Vita de Giovan Bocchaccio da certaldo', followed by blank space for an initial. A printed rubric in black concludes the text.

(Fols $\pi3^r\text{-}5^v$) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'TAVOLA DELLA PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by blank space for an initial. The first line of text in the summary for each *novella* is indented.

(Fol. a1[r]) Beginning of proem: full-page woodcut illustration encompassing the beginning of the text, including blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a1[v]) Beginning of Day I: blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a5[r]) Towards the end of the introduction to Day I, above the passage which begins 'Licenziata adunque dalla nuova reina la lieta brigata': woodcut illustration which extends the width of two columns (105 x 156 mm), followed by blank space for an initial.

The beginning of subsequent days is marked with a woodcut illustration extending the width of two columns (*c.* 105 x 156 mm), followed by blank space for an initial. *Novelle* are preceded by a woodcut illustration which extends the width of one column (*c.* 56 x 74 mm), followed by a short printed rubric in black, e.g. 'Novella de ser ciappelletto', and blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with blank spaces for initials.

(B) VENICE: MANFRINO DE' BONELLI, 5 DECEMBER 1498

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

London, British Library, IB. 23834 (GW 4450; BMC, v (1924), 505-06; STC, p. 109).

138 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: $A^8B^6c\text{-}y^6z^4$.[19] 287 x 198 mm (fol. B2).[20]

TEXT

(Fols z3[r]-4[r]) 'Vita de Bocchaccio' by Girolamo Squarzafico.

(Fol. z4[r]) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. z4[r]) Impresso in Ve | netia per Maestro Manfrino da monteferrato da | Sustreuo de Bonelli. Imperante Augustino Bar- | barigo felicissimo Principe: nellanno della huma | na recuperatione. M. CCCC. LXXXXVIII. | Adi. 5. de Decembrio.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 59 lines of text in each column. The text space measures 243 x 157 mm, including a space of 7 mm between each column (fol. g2[r]). Roman type.

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[19] I have used the collational formula given in BMC, v (1924), 505.

[20] This copy has evidently been trimmed, since the copy held in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (RES-Y2-296) measures 301 x 209 mm (fol. u2[r]).

DECORATION

(Fol. A1[r]) Beginning of proem: full-page woodcut illustration encompassing the beginning of the text, including blank space for an initial.

The beginning of each day is marked by a woodcut illustration which extends the width of two columns (*c.* 105 x 156 mm). Each *novella* is preceded by a printed rubric in black and a woodcut illustration which extends the width of one column (*c.* 56 x 73 mm). Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked by blank spaces for initials.

(BZa) VENICE: BARTOLOMEO DE ZANNI, 5 JULY 1504

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-209[21] (EDIT16 2371; Index Aureliensis 120.158). 126 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: 2a-2x^{6}. 285 x 195 mm.

TEXT

(Fol. 2a1[r]) Title-page bearing a title in gothic type: 'Decamerone ouer Cento nouelle | de miser Johanni Boccaccio'.

(Fols. 2a1[v]-4[r]) Table of contents.

(Fols 2a4[v]-5[r]) 'Vita de Bocchaccio' by Girolamo Squarzafico.

(Fol. 2x5[v]) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. 2x6) Impresso in Venetia per Bertolamio | de Zani de Portese. M. CCCCC. IIII. adi cinque de Luio. | FINIS.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 62 lines in each column. Roman type (title in gothic).

DECORATION

(Fol. 2a4[v]) Life of Boccaccio: woodcut illustration (*c.* 57 x 73 mm).

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[21] I was not allowed to take measurements or study this copy at length, therefore the majority of this description is compiled from Essling, p. 101 and Mortimer, pp. 95-96.

(Fol. 2a5[r]) Beginning of Proem: full-page woodcut illustration encompassing the beginning of the text, including blank space for an initial.

(Fol. 2x4[v]) Author's Conclusion: woodcut illustration (*c.* 57 x 73 mm).

The beginning of Days II-X is marked with a woodcut illustration (104 x 157 mm).

Novelle are preceded by a printed rubric in black, a woodcut illustration (*c.* 57 x 73 mm), and a woodcut initial.

(BZb) VENICE: BARTOLOMEO DE ZANNI, 5 AUGUST 1510

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

London, British Library, c. 125. f. 3 (1) (EDIT16 2374; Index Aureliensis 120.166).

126 leaves, unnumbered. Chancery 2°: 2a-2x[6]. 286 x 199 mm (fol. n5).

TEXT

(Fol. 2a1[r]) Title-page bearing a title in gothic type: 'Dechamerone ouer Cento novelle | de misser Johanni Boccaccio'.

(Fols 2a1[v]-4[r]) Table of contents.

(Fols 2a4[v]-5[r]) 'Vita de Bocchaccio' by Girolamo Squarzafico.

(Fol. 2x6[v]) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. 2x6[v]) Impresso in Venetia per Bartolameo | de Zanni da Portese. M. D. X. adi cinque de Agosto. | FINIS.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 62 lines in each column. The text space measures 243 x 159 mm, including a space of 5 mm between each column (fol. d1[v]). Roman type (title in gothic).

DECORATION

(Fol. 2a1[r]) Title-page: beneath the title is a woodcut illustration (101 x 155 mm).

(Fols 2a1[v]-4[r]) Table of contents: rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'TABULA DELLA PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by a decorated woodcut initial.

(Fols 2a4^{v}-5^{r}) Life of Boccaccio: woodcut illustration which extends the width of one column with a printed rubric in black below: 'Vita de Giovan Bocchaccio da certaldo'.
A printed rubric in black concludes the text.
(Fol. 2a5^{v}) Beginning of proem: woodcut illustration which extends the width of two columns (101 x 155 mm), followed by a decorated woodcut initial.
The beginning of subsequent days is marked by a woodcut illustration extending the width of two columns (101 x 155 mm), followed by a decorated woodcut initial.[22]
Novelle are preceded by a woodcut illustration which extends the width of one column, a short printed rubric in black, e.g. 'Novella de ser Ciapelleto', and a decorated woodcut initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with decorated woodcut initials.

(GG) VENICE: GREGORIO DE' GREGORI, MAY 1516

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, 17700 (EDIT16 2379; Index Aureliensis 120.183; *Mostra*, II, 60-61). 364 leaves, ff. I-CCCLII (printed foliation begins at fol. a3^{r} and ends at fol. 3B10^{r}). Chancery 4^{o}:
A-3A^{8}3B^{12}+^{8}. 192 x 133 mm (fol. I4).

TEXT

(Fol. a1^{r}) Title-page, with the rubric 'IL DECAMERONE DI M. | GIOVANNI BOC- | CACCIO' printed in the middle of the page.
(Fol. a2^{r}) Preface entitled 'ALLE GENTILI ET VALOROSE DONNE | NICOLO DELPHINO'.
(Fols 3B11^{r}-12^{r}) 'Errori fatti stampando'.
(Fols +1^{r}-7^{v}) Table of contents.

COLOPHON

(Fol. 3B10^{v}) Impresso in Vinegia per Gregorio de Gregori il | mese di Maggio dell'anno .M. D. XVI. | CON PRIVILEGIO.

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[22] Except Day X, which does not begin with a woodcut illustration.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column, with an average of 36 lines on each page. The text space measures 151 x 81 mm (fol. 2A2^{r}). Italic type.

DECORATION

(Fol. a2^{r}) Editorial preface: printed rubric in black uppercase roman type, preceded by a printed paragraph mark in black, and followed by blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a3^{r}) Beginning of proem: printed rubric in black uppercase roman type, followed by blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a4^{r}) Beginning of Day I: first initial of the first line of text is set into the left-hand margin.

The beginning of subsequent days is marked by a rubric in black uppercase roman type, followed by blank space for an initial. *Novelle* are marked with a printed descriptive rubric in italic type, with the first initial set into the left-hand margin, and followed by blank space for an initial. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with an initial set into the left-hand margin.

(Fols +1^{r}-7^{v}) Table of contents: printed rubric in italic type for the beginning of each day, followed by blank space for an initial. Summaries for each *novella* have a hanging indent.

(G) FLORENCE: FILIPPO DI GIUNTA, 29 JULY 1516

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Manchester, John Rylands Library, R5054 (EDIT16 2380; Index Aureliensis 120.180). 338 leaves, ff. 1-329 (printed foliation begins at fol. a1 and ends at fol. P9). Chancery 4°: 2A^{8}a-f^{8}s-z^{8}&^{8}?^{8}R^{8}A-O^{8}P^{10}. 205 x 128 mm (fol. f4).

TEXT

(Fol. 2A1^{r}) Title-page containing the rubric: 'IL DECAMERONE DI MESSER GIO- | VANNI BOCCHACCIO NVOVA- | MENTE STAMPATO CON | TRE NOVELLE AG- | GIVNTE' in the middle of the page.

(Fol. 2A1^{v}) Editorial preface entitled: 'MESSER GIOVANNI BOCCHAC | CIO AL LECTORE'.

(Fols 2A2^{r}-8^{v}) Table of contents.

(Fols N6^{v}-P9^{v}) Three additional *novelle* attributed to Boccaccio follow the explicit to the *Decameron.*

(Fol. P9^{v}) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. P9^{v}) Impresso in Firenze per Philippo di giunta Fiorenti | no, & con grandissima diligentia emendato | M. D. XVI. Adi. XXIX. Luglio.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of one column, with an average of 38 lines of text per page. The text space measures 156 x 94 mm (fol. e1^{r}). Italic type.

DECORATION

(Fol. 2A1^{v}) Preface: Printed rubric in black followed by a large black printed initial.

(Fols 2A2^{r}-8^{r}) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase roman type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA'. The descriptive rubric for the first day begins with a large black printed initial. The first summary of I. 1 begins with a large black printed initial. Summaries for subsequent *novelle* have their first (normal-sized) initial set into the left-hand margin. Each day concludes with a rubric in italic type.

(Fol. a1^{r}) Beginning of proem: woodcut illustration which extends the width of the text space (74 x 93 mm), followed by a rubric in black uppercase roman type and blank space for an initial.

(Fol. a2^{r}) Beginning of Day I: descriptive rubric in italic type with the first line indented, followed by a woodcut illustration (44 x 70 mm) (fol. a2^{v}) and a large black printed initial.

Each day concludes with a rubric in italic type, and the beginning of the subsequent day is marked with a woodcut illustration which extends the width of the text space (74 x 93mm),[23] followed by a rubric in italic type and a large black printed initial. *Novelle* are marked with a descriptive rubric in italic type, followed by a woodcut illustration (43 x 70 mm) and large black printed initials. Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with large black printed initials. The beginning of the three additional *novelle* is marked with a descriptive rubric in italic type, followed by a large black printed initial. Subsequent sections are marked with large black printed initials.

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[23] Days III-V do not begin with a woodcut illustration.

(AZ) VENICE, AGOSTINO DE ZANNI DA PORTESE, 12 NOVEMBER 1518

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

London, British Library, 85. k. 7 (EDIT16 2385; Index Aureliensis 120.185). 126 leaves, ff. I-CXXI (printed foliation begins from the proem). Chancery 2°: π^4A-O^{8}P^{10}.^{24} 291 x 204 mm (fol. A7).

TEXT

(Fols $\pi 3^r$-4^v) Table of contents.

(Fols P3^r-9^v) Three additional *novelle* attributed to Boccaccio follow the explicit to the *Decameron.*

(Fol. P9^v) Register.

COLOPHON

(Fol. P9^v) Impresso in Venetia per Augustino de Zanni da Porte | se. Nel. M. D. xviii. Adi. xii. Nouembrio.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Layout of two columns, with an average of 62 lines in each column. The text space measures 247 x 167 mm, including a space of 5 mm between each column (fol. H5^r). Roman type.

DECORATION

(Fols $\pi 3^r$-4^v) Table of contents: short rubrics in black uppercase type for each day, e.g. 'PRIMA GIORNATA', followed by a decorative woodcut initial. Each day ends with a printed rubric in black. The first summary of each day begins with a decorated woodcut initial.

(Fol. A1^r) Beginning of proem: woodcut illustration, which extends the width of two columns (130 x 155 mm), followed by a printed rubric in black uppercase type, and a decorated woodcut initial.

The beginning of subsequent days is marked with a woodcut illustration,[25] followed by a decorated woodcut initial. *Novelle* are introduced with a printed rubric in black, preceded by a printed paragraph mark in black, and followed by a woodcut illustration,

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[24] I have used the collational formula given in Essling, p. 103.
[25] The woodcut is not included at the beginning of Days I-III.

which extends the width of one column (*c.* 53 x 74 mm). Sections in the *cornice* and throughout the *novelle* are marked with decorated woodcut initials. Each of the three additional *novelle* begin with a printed rubric in black and a woodcut illustration.

APPENDIX VI

Editorial Prefaces to the 'Decameron'

PREFACE TO GREGORIO DE GREGORI'S VENETIAN EDITION OF 1516

The following transcription is based on a copy of the *Decameron* held in the John Rylands Library, Manchester (17700, fol. A2[r])

Alle Gentili et Valorose Donne, Nicolò Delphino:

[N]obilissime Donne, tralle cose nella prosa volgare iscritte (di quante hoggidi si veggono), niuna ve ne ha, che nel vero tanto commendare si debba et havere dal mondo cara, quanto il *Decamerone* dal lo eccellente M. Giovanni Boccaccio già a vostra consolatione composto, le cui molte bellezze non sono meno maravigliose a chi con giudicioso occhio sottilmente le mira, ch'elle vaghe stelle ne' lucidi et aperti sereni, né forse minori di quelle, che gioiosi amanti sovente discernono ne' vostri gratiosi lumi. Ma perchè egli insino adhora in ogni sua parte manchevole et oscuro è stato letto, mi è paruto essere ben fatto, con quella diligenza che usare per me si è potuto maggiore, di recarlovi alla sua intera et chiara lettione. Né altrimenti quasi ho fatto in questa correttione che fece già di voi appresso Crotoniati Zeusi, nobile dipintore, il quale trall'altre alquante elettene delle più belle, da ciascuna di quelle le più eccellenti parti togliendo, con sommo artificio la poi tanto famosa Helena ne dipinse; perchè havuti molti antichissimi testi (né altrimenti sarei stato oso di torre questa impresa), da ciascuno di quegli, quelle parti sciegliendo che più belle et più confacevoli alla intentione dello auttore mi sono parute, non risparmiando fatica alcuna, questa opera alla sua prima bellezza (come a ciascuno leggendola con animo sincero et intendente assai chiaro apparirà) mi sono ingegnato di rendervi, della quale parimente non picciol diletto dalle varie cose in essa narrate, et utile consiglio pigliare potrete. Adunque, Amorose Donne (a voi dico, che non solamente per nobiltà di cuore, ma etiandio per eccellenza di leggiadri costumi dall'altre divise siete, perciò che a tutte questa opera non è iscritta), hora con lieto volto leggete, et rileggete il vostro non mai bastevolmente lodato *Decamerone*; che percerto leggendolo, anchora quella virtù, che hanno le volgari rivolta in ornamenti del corpo, sentirete ne' vostri animi gentili destarsi talmente, che da molto più tenute, et più di loro dal mondo honorate sarete.

PREFACE TO FILIPPO GIUNTA'S FLORENTINE EDITION OF 1516

The following transcription is based on a copy of the *Decameron* held in the John Rylands Library, Manchester (R 5054, fol. 2A1^{v})

Messer Giovanni Bocchaccio al lectore:

Nessuna cosa, quantunque allegra, accade à miseri mortali che col tempo contrario affecto all'animo non porga. Quand'io intesi esser trovato lo imprimer de' libri, presi tanta letitia quanto mai d'altra cosa che à mia orechi pervenissi, giudicando la mal tractata inopia di quelli in laudabile fertilità havere ad convertirsi, il che sarebbe accaduto se gl'impressori, non meno alla commune utilità che al privato guadagno, havessino havuto l'ochio. Ma tale avidità, insieme con la audacia di molti, i quali stimano meglio intendere la lingua altrui, che quegli che in essa son nati, et nelli studij delle lettere exercitati in luogho di correggere hà scorretti molti libri, et infra questi pretermettendo l'opere degli altri, in molti luoghi bruttamente ha corropte; et più haria guaste le mia, se la buona intentione di Philippo di Giunta non ci havessi posto mano, il quale, raccolti più testi dallo originale transcripti, hà nuovamente impresso il mio *Decamerone*, adoperando il iudicio di più docti huomini Fiorentini in forma che 'l ha ridocto in quel termine, che veramente si può dir mio, peró che non era altrimenti facto quando uscí delle mia mani. Piglia adunque o lectore con prospera fortuna queste mia novelle per relevar l'animo nelli occorrenti casi affaticato, et in brieve aspecta tutte, o gran parte delle mie opere, in simil forma corette. Vale.

APPENDIX VII

Sigla for Copies of Editions of the 'Decameron'

The discussion on traces of reading in editions of the *Decameron* in Chapter 7 is based on a sample of forty-four copies, which relate to the following editions.

N NAPLES?: PRINTER OF TERENTIUS, *C.* 1470?
- N^1 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, B. R. 89
- N^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 16686
- N^3 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-203

CV VENICE: CHRISTOPH VALDARFER, 1471
- CV^1 London, British Library, IB. 19756
- CV^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 17659
- CV^3 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-396

M MANTUA: PIETRO ADAMO DE' MICHELI, 1472
- M^1 London, British Library, IB. 30605
- M^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 8658
- M^3 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-397

A BOLOGNA: BALDASSARE AZZOGUIDI, 1476
- A^1 Cambridge, University Library, Inc. 3. B. 10. 1 (2060)
- A^2 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-294

R VICENZA: GIOVANNI DI RENO, 1478
- R^1 London, British Library, IB. 31775
- R^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 16820
- R^3 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-295

S VENICE: ANTONIO DA STRADA, 1481
- S^1 London, British Library, IB. 21223
- S^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 16819
- S^3 Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Inc. II. 413

F FLORENCE: SANT'IACOPO DI RIPOLI, 1483

- F^1 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, E. 6. 7. 12
- F^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 18201

T VENICE: BATTISTA TORTI, 1484

- T^1 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, D. 7. 5. 3

JGG VENICE: GIOVANNI & GREGORI DE GREGORI, 1492

- JGG^1 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, B. R. 365
- JGG^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 18204
- JGG^3 Oxford, Bodleian Library, S. Seld. C.2 (1)
- JGG^4 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-401

B VENICE: MANFREDO BONELLI, 1498

- B^1 London, British Library, IB. 23834
- B^2 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-296

BZa VENICE: BARTOLOMEO ZANNI, 1504

- BZa^1 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-209

BZb VENICE: BARTOLOMEO ZANNI, 1510

- BZb^1 London, British Library, C. 125. f. 3 (1)
- BZb^2 Venice: Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari Ven. 175

GG VENICE: GREGORIO DE GREGORI, 1516

- GG^1 Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Palat. E. 6. 5. 17
- GG^2 London, British Library, 87. i. 12
- GG^3 London, British Library, G. 10200
- GG^4 Manchester, John Rylands Library, 17700
- GG^5 Manchester, John Rylands Library, R 52187
- GG^6 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-799
- GG^7 Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Capponi IV, 503
- GG^8 Venice: Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari Ven. 98
- GG^9 Venice: Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari Ven. 387

G FLORENCE: FILIPPO GIUNTA, 1516

- G^1 London, British Library, c. 34. f. 44
- G^2 Manchester, John Rylands Library, R5054
- G^3 Vatican City: Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Rossiana 6943

AZ VENICE: AGOSTINO ZANNI, 1518

- AZ^1 London, British Library, 85. k. 7
- AZ^2 Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, RES-Y2-204
- AZ^3 Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Rari Ven. 189

APPENDIX VIII

Manuscripts of 'De mulieribus claris'

The discussion in Chapter 8 is based on a sample of thirty-three manuscripts that I have viewed in the following libraries. P^3 could not be released from the strongroom; in its place I have used microfilm and measurements made by library staff.

CAMBRIDGE, FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

CaF McClean 174

CAMBRIDGE, UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Ca^1 Ll.2.8

FLORENCE, BIBLIOTECA MEDICEA LAURENZIANA

L Pluteo LII 29

L^2 Pluteo XC sup. 98^{II}

L^3 Pluteo XC sup 98^{III}

L^4 Strozziano 93

FLORENCE, BIBLIOTECA RICCARDIANA

FR 791

LONDON, BRITISH LIBRARY

Lo Add. Mss. 28811

Lo^1 Harley 4923

Lo^2 Harley 6348

OXFORD, BODLEIAN LIBRARY

O Canon. class. lat. 93

O^1 Canon. misc. 58

O^2 Digby 78

O^3 Lincoln College 32

OXFORD, MAGDALEN COLLEGE LIBRARY

OM 165

PARIS, BIBLIOTHÈQUE NATIONALE

P Lat. 6069, N

P^1 Lat. 6069, O

P^2 Lat. 6069, P

P^3 Lat. 6069, Q

P^4 Lat. 10806

P^5 Lat. 9676

TREVISO, BIBLIOTECA COMUNALE

T 341

VATICAN CITY, BIBLIOTECA APOSTOLICA VATICANA

Vb Barberiniano lat. 42

Vc Capponiano 2

Vl Vat. lat. 2031

Vl^1 Vat. lat. 2032

Vp^1 Palatino lat. 870

Vr Reginense lat. 895

Vsp Archivio San Pietro C 133

Vu Urbinate lat. 451

VENICE, BIBLIOTECA MARCIANA

Vz Marciano lat. X 56

Vz^1 Marciano lat. X 57

Vz^2 Marciano lat. X 254

APPENDIX IX

Dedication and Sonnets by Vincenzo Bagli from the 1506 Edition of 'De mulieribus'

The following transcription is based on the text of the copy of *De mulieribus* held in the British Library, London (10603.d.5).

(Fols a1^{r-v}) La fama parla

Chi al mondo acquistar vole honor e gloria
Segua de queste qui l'orma e la via
Che intorno al carro mio fan compagnia
Ch'ancor per lor virtù sonno a memoria
Ne tempo o morte havran de lor victoria
Ben che milli anni già sien morte o pria
Ch'io vo ch'ogniuna desse immortal sia
Depinte o in marmoro o per poema o historia
Che per me sol se vive in sempiterno
E so el nome immortal de chi me adora
Alzolo e mando in fine al cel superno
Beato e adonque quel che mama e honora
Contrario e chi me spreza: che in eterno
Morte son morte: e vive morte anchora

(Fols a2^{r}-3^{v}) Vicentio Bagli a la sua inclita et illustre madonna Lucretia, figliola del magnifico signore Ridolfo del Baglioni. S.P.D.:

Considerando io un giorno quelle sententiose et auree parole de lo eximio e preclarissimo historiographo Crispo Salustio inn el proemio che fa de la historia iugurtina, le quale dicono in questa forma: 'omnia orta occidunt et aucta senescunt',[1] che voglion dire tutte le cose nate morano e quelle che crescono invechiano, e vedendo io questo esser vero senza exceptione alcuna, multo de la nostra miseria e fragilità humana me atristava e doleva; e tanto più, quanto che io cognoscieva al tempo nostro de quelle che non solamente meriterieno vivere quanto visse Priamo, Nestore o Titone, e poi dopo la longa vita loro perpetua laude e honore consequere, ma degne anchora de

[1] Jugurtha, II.

eterna gloria e immortalità serieno, tra le quale voi, inclita e gratiosissima mia madonna, senza nigiuna comperatione degnissima esser iudicava, sì per esser voi d'alta e generosa stirpe procreata, e sì per esser voi speciosissima e formosissima che l'uno e l'altro è non piccol dono da la natura a noi mortali concesso, ma multo più per esser voi de tanti probi e sanctissimi costumi, e de tante varie e innumerabile virtù dotata, che non che a voi, ma ad una regina de questo e de quello altro hemispero più che a la sufficientia ciascuno iudicaria.

E considerando da poi non molto spatio de tempo, anzi quasi in uno momento, che così la nostra debile misera e mal fondata vita possemo dir che sia haverse el corpo adurre in poca polve, e la fama non molto da poi haverse anichilare, sentie dentro dal mio core una sì grande e acerbissima passione che lengua humana non seria sufficiente a poterla exprimere, e con questo afanno e dolore stei finché vita dal sonno al afannata mente fo forza riposare, et essendo adormentato, vide in visione uno, el quale subito che fu gionto in tal modo e forma, incominciò a parlare: 'O quanto, Vincentio mio, sei in grandissimo errore, credendo questa tua, anzi nostra, illustre e diva madonna possa dopo el fatal corso de la sua longa vita senza nome e fama preterire. Che si Helena et Europa per una sol gratia ch'ebero da li celesti influxi d'essere formosissime meritorono da poeti e historici esser celebrate, e si Lucretia e Virginia per una sol virtù de pudicitia forono da esser summamente laudate, e si Artemisia e la minore Antonia sol per havere servata integra viduità hanno eterno nome e fama consequito, e si Hortensia e Proba per essere loro state d'alto ingegno e facundia son degne da noi mortali in terra esser venerate, e si Sulpitia per esser lei sola intra mille electa a lo edificio del podico tempio ha possuto a sempiterna gloria e laude pervenire, e si molte altre: chi per esser ornate del infinita[2] modestia, sapientia, e pudore, chi per esser armate di clementia, perseverantia, e de iustitia, chi per esser anchora de nobile e regale sangue generate, hanno meritato eterno nome e immortalità fruire (tacio quelle che per sfrenata libidine, audacia, et avaritia forono famosissime), quanto più adonque costei dovera da ogni homo, in ogni libro e pagina, da essere celebrata? Che non è come l'altre d'una sol gratia e d'una sol virtù ornata, ma tutte quelle che divise fanno l'homo beato, eterno, e immortale, tutte in costei ad una ad una parimente pullulano, germinano, fioriscano, e redundano costei prima da la benigna natura de incomparabile beltade, c'anzi da esso amore speciosissima formata, costei lucido fonte e specchio de proba e sancta castità e pudicitia, costei perpetuo et immortale exempio de integra e immaculata viduità, costei mellifluo, largo et abundante fiume de mansueto dolce e angelico parlare, costei a lo

edificare e restaurare de tempie studiosissima, e verso Idio ferventissima e a li continue digiuni, limosine e oratione solertissima, costei inviolato assylo de infinita modestia, sapientia, e pudore, costei unico hospitio e nido de clementia, perseverantia, e de iustitia, costei de generosa stirpe e alta sobole procreata de Troilo, reverendissimo episcopo, e de quello magnianimo, invicto, e glorioso Capitano, Zuan Paulo Baglione, sorella, e donna de quello extrenuo et excellentissimo Capitano, Camillo Vitello, costei ultimamente magnanima, liberale, e gratiosa. Chi porria mai brevemente ogni sua laude e virtù transcorrere? Chi seria quello che parlando de costei più presto non se straccasse che se sentisse satio de laudarla, extollerla, e inalzarla, quanto felice serà colui che le soi opera con sì degna, ampla, e laudabil materia porrà, non senza invidia, de quel de Smyrna e del mantuano poeta exornare?[3] Quanto me doglio io non esser nato a questa felice et aurea età de haverla possuta cognoscerla! O almancho dapo de lei, aciò ch'io havesse possuto le sole egregie virtù e ornamente intendere e da poi descriverle. Ma poi che el celo n'è stato ad ambe contrario, anzi a me solo che contra el mio desiderio me ha facto indegno de sì nobile subiecto e degna materia, voglio che quella opera da [sic] claris mulieribus, da me composta e intitulata a madona Giovanna,[4] la quale longo tempo è stata incognita et occulta, non confidandose[5] a palesare, temendo la censura de i maligni e de i detractevoli homini, a lei per te sia intitulata, aciòche sotto l'ombra del suo optimo[6] iudicio, da ogni invido e laceratore sia diffesa e sicura'. E dicte queste parole subito se departi.

Alhora sì come advene infine a la visione subito me destai et imaginando cognobbe questo al opera da lui nominata essere stato el nostro misere Iohanne Boccacio, e cercato per quella alquanti dì ritrovai. Onde magnifica e generosa mia madonna, sì per comandamento de esso auctore, sì anchora perché, come dice el philosopho, ch'ogni simile apetiscie el suo simile,[7] essendo questa opera a le vostre innumerabile virtù e ornate costumi conforme, et essendo voi sopra ogni altra clarissima et illustre, ho voluto questa presente e utile opera a voi intitulare. Sì che quando questa non parturischa apresso de voi alcuno sdegno, ve degnerete acceptarla, non perché io pensa questa havere a essere cagione de la vostra immortalità, ma perché questa sotto

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[2] The original reads 'ifinito'.
[3] Homer and Virgil.
[4] Bagli undoutedly means Giovanna, Queen of Naples, to whom Boccaccio says he considered dedicating *De mulieribus*, before settling on a dedication to Andrea Acciaiuoli (*De mulieribus*, p. 2).
[5] The original reads 'confidadose'.
[6] The original reads 'optio'.
[7] Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, VIII. 1.

l'ale e ombra del vostro vero e integro iuditio sia da ogni mordacità e censura diffeso e sicuro. E mediante li vostri meriti, come esso auctore desidera, possa perpetua immortalità et inextinguibil gloria fruire. Vale atque iterum Vale.

(Fol. a3^{v}) Idem Vincentio Bagli ad dominam Lucretiam

Quando madonna ben considro e veggio
Vostre excelle virtù, vostri costume
Tra tante donne illustre, e chiari nume
Che son qui scripte a voi nulla apareggio
Ma i parenti presagi vostri creggio
Vedendo voi de pudicitia un lume
Lucretia ve chiamar dal sacro fiume
Prima cagion d'andar nell'alto seggio
E poi per far più l'opra manifesta
Natura ambe creò formosa e humana
Generosa, prudente, grata, e honesta
Hospitio de virtù spechio e fontana
Ma la sol vostra differentia è questa
Voi Perusina sete e lei Romana

APPENDIX X

Bibliographical Description of the 1506 Edition of 'De mulieribus'

VENICE: GIOVANNI TACUINO, 1506

LOCATION AND GENERAL INFORMATION

London, British Library, 10603.d.5 (EDIT16 2372; Index Aureliensis 120.160; STC, p. 109; *Mostra*, II, 51-54). 154 fols, unnumbered. Chancery 4°: $a^{6}b\text{-}c^{8}D\text{-}T^{8}V^{4}$. 212 x 150 mm (fol. R1).

TEXT

(Fol. $a1^{r}$) Title-page: 'L opera de miser Giovan | ni Boccacio de mulie | ribus claris', printed in gothic type.

(Fols $a1^{r\text{-}v}$) Sonnet: '[paragraph mark] La fama parla.'

(Fols $a2^{r}\text{-}3^{v}$) Dedication to Lucrezia Baglioni: '[paragraph mark] Vicentio bagli. ala sua inclita & illustre madonna lucretia fi | gliola del magnifico signore ridolpho del baglioni. S. P. D.'

(Fol. $a3^{v}$) Sonnet: '[paragraph mark] Idem Vincen. Bagli ad dominam Lucretiam'.

(Fols $a4^{r}$) Boccaccio's text begins with the dedication to Andrea Acciaiuoli.

COLOPHON

(Fol. $V4^{v}$) 'Stampado in Venetia per maistro Zuanne | de Trino: chimato Tacuino: del anno | de la nativita de Christo.m.d.yi.adi.yi. | de marzo: regnante linclito Principe | Leonardo Lauredano'.

TEXTBLOCK

Paper. Full-page layout, with an average of 28 lines of text per page, measuring 152 x 99 mm (fol. $N2^{v}$). Roman type, Body 110.

DECORATION

(Fol. a1[r]) Title-page: woodcut (95 x 112 mm) depicting the Triumph of Fame on a chariot drawn by two griffons, surrounded by a crowd of women. One woman in the foreground is named as 'LVCRECIA PERVSINA'.[1]

(Fol. a2[r]) Beginning of dedication to Lucrezia Baglioni: printed rubric in black preceded by a paragraph mark and followed by a woodcut initial with interlocking branch decoration, 5 lines high.

(Fol. a4[r]) Beginning of dedication to Andrea Acciaiuoli: printed rubric in black preceded by a paragraph mark and followed by a historiated woodcut initial depicting a swan and small boy, 9 lines high.

(Fol. a5[r]) Beginning of preface: printed rubric in black preceded by a paragraph mark and followed by a woodcut initial with interlocking branch decoration, 4 lines high. Each biography opens with a printed paragraph mark and rubric in black, a woodcut illustration, which in the majority of cases consists of a standing female figure posed against a landscape (approx. 71 x 58 mm), and a decorative woodcut initial approximately 3 lines high.

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[1] The title-page is reproduced in Panizza, p. 110.

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