respect then *Perché Dante* is also a compendium of the most relevant critical texts as well as an analysis of the entirety of Dante's literary output.

Finally, in contrast to the many commentators who tend to approach the three books of the *Divine Comedy* individually, Scott takes a different approach, examining themes that stretch across the fabric of the great poem, considering holistically those issues that are treated throughout the three canticles, thus encouraging the reader who might have been tempted to stop at the end of *Inferno*, to continue the literary journey. This comprehensive approach is, in my humble opinion precisely the type of approach that Dante himself would have urged.

Accordingly, John A. Scott has given readers a comprehensive perspective that is commensurate with the far reaching scope that Dante himself imagined when he caused his pilgrim to look down from the heights of Paradise to see how far he has come. *Perché Dante?* responds to the very question it asks by pointing out what the pilgrim poet discovered at the pinnacle of *Paradiso*; that in order to know something, even a miracle, one must see it from every angle. If the *Commedia* showed Dante the vast breadth of the cosmos, then *Perché Dante?* shows us the vast breadth of the *Commedia*. As such Scott's work serves the modern reader as competently as Virgil, Beatrice and Bernard served the poet, and is, therefore, a worthy addition to any Dante collection.

MARY WATT

University of Florida

Janis Vanacker. *Non al suo amante più Diana piacque. I miti venatori nella letteratura italiana.* Lingue e letterature Carocci, 106. Roma: Carocci editore, 2009. Pp. 359. ISBN 978-88-430-5150-2. €37.20.

"Non al suo amante più Diana piacque:" with this opening verse of Petrarch's fifty-second madrigal, Janis Vanacker sets the tone for the often epic scope of her chronological analysis of hunting myths—their interpretations and transformations—in Italian literature from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century. She chooses an appropriate place to start; Petrarch's madrigal draws a direct relationship between myth and mythographer, mythographer and poetic "I," poetic "I" and eye of the witness—and reader. Vanacker's thorough account explores these very issues with philological precision and stunning attention to detail.

Impeccably organized, Vanacker's book is a perfectly structured artifact that expands organically, each chapter in immediate conversation with the ones before. The goal of her "indagine" is instantly clear: "approfondire la conoscenza della tradizione mitologica nella cultura italiana attraverso lo studio di due miti precisi, quello di Diana e Atteone e quello di Venere e Adone" (9). Of course, her final product is much farther-reaching than advertised: in discussing the significance of these two myths, Vanacker also touches on others, and treats almost equally at length Myrrha and Cinyras's myth not only as contextual precursor to the story of Venus and Adonis, but also as a strong influence in its own right.

Before presenting the essential features of the mythological hunt in their ori-

ginal, ancient context, Vanacker begins with an observation on the omnipresence of ancient myth in Western culture. She then goes on to review the literature dedicated to this topic and states her position within it. In her first chapter as in each that follows, she considers both literary and visual representations of the myths in question, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* chief among them. Many of the motifs she will later expand upon are first presented in her opening pages: the "civilizing" potential of the hunt, the association between love, desire, and the act of hunting, the distinction of the active life from the contemplative, and the oppositions of fate and free will, *labor* and *otium*, love and *furor*. Her next chapter outlines the reception of ancient myth in the Middle Ages, and underlines the medieval tension between the Christian and pagan traditions, as well as the moralizing tendencies of medieval mythographers and their subsequent allegorical readings of ancient texts. These first two chapters, especially, contain information that only later reveals itself to be crucial to Vanacker's literary exercise as a whole: an intertextual analysis of the sources informing each new adaptation of hunting myths in the Italian literary tradition.

Vanacker's accomplishments in this volume are many and considerable. One of her most compelling original contributions is found in her fourth chapter on the Quattrocento. There, in analyzing Poliziano's *Stanze per la Giostra*, she highlights the role of Minerva as the defining distinction between a model that here sees the hunter transformed into a lover (passing from Diana's to Venus's influence) before finally becoming a noble knight (associated with Minerva's civil virtue), and the earlier model that instead features sublimated love, (represented by Venus) as the point of arrival catalyzed by a metamorphosis associated with a hunt (under Diana's jurisdiction) (201). The newness she finds in Poliziano and its participation in some of the key thematic enterprises of writers of his generation links up well with her examination of early Seicento revisions of Actaeon's and Adonis's episodes. In her sixth chapter, she looks specifically at Marino as quintessential revisionist who unapologetically appropriates all extant versions of Venus and Adonis's myth to make of it a distinctly baroque epic aimed not only at conversing with the classics, but also, perhaps more importantly, at representing the literary tastes of its period, author and intended audience.

Her most noteworthy achievements, however, are found in chapters three and five on the Trecento and Cinquecento respectively. Particularly striking in the former are her analyses of Dante's *symbolic* interpretation and inclusion of both Myrrha's and Actaeon's myths in canto XIII of his *Inferno* (and, later, Boccaccio's revisions of the same sources in *Decameron* 5.8), and the re-appropriation—and redemption—of Actaeon's tragedy as a personal myth in Petrarch's *RVF* and in Boccaccio's early works. Not surprisingly, the treatment hunting myths receives by these *tre corone della letteratura italiana* influences greatly those reworking them in the Cinquecento. Vanacker points to Petrarch's influence on Bembo and Giovanni Andrea dell'Anguillara, Dante's influence on Bruno, and Boccaccio's influence, together with Ariosto, on Lodovico Dolce. Also interesting is not only Vanacker's insistence on studying "minor" works (Dolce's *Favole d'Adone*, Giovanni Tarcagnola di Gaeta's *Adone*, and Girolamo Parabosco's *Favola d'Adone*), but also

on reviewing *their* influence on visual artists no less informed by their contemporaries than by their shared classical sources.

To be sure, Vanacker's book is dense; her occasional tangents at times obscure her arguments. Not unlike Tansillo in Bruno's *Eroici furori*, she often relies on her reader to anticipate her take-home-message. Indeed, until her last pages, readers are left to wonder what greater implication about the Italian literary tradition can result from her tireless work. Her conclusion, however, does not disappoint. There, she postulates potential reasons for the privileging of the Actaeon myth in the earlier centuries of the Italian literary tradition, as opposed to Adonis's myth in later centuries. Her assumptions speak to previously mentioned issues of literary tastes, literary practices, and readership. The debate she points to in chapter six on authenticity in literary production—or the “risemantizzazione [di una] fonte” (303)—further amplifies her closing comments. Perhaps most interestingly, however, in this exceptionally executed book, Vanacker raises many *more* questions about the importance of hunting myths as a keystone of Italian literary production throughout the ages than she answers, leading the way for inspired scholars to add to her work, much in the way the authors she studies often fill in the gaps left by their literary predecessors.

TANIA ZAMPINI

The Johns Hopkins University

Martin Wackernagel. *The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist. Projects and Patrons, Workshops and Art Market*. Renaissance Society of America Reprint Texts 18. Trans. Alison Luchs. Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press in collaboration with Renaissance Society of America, 2011. Pp. xxx, 447. ISBN 978-1-4426-1184-9. \$ 39.95.

The World of the Florentine Renaissance Artist is a three-part work, first published in German in 1938, that examines artistic life in Florence during the High Renaissance from 1480-1520. This comprehensive volume consists of fourteen chapters that collectively depict the physical and cultural cityscape of Renaissance Florence: artists and patrons, creations and commissions, interiors and exteriors, objects and edifices. In her introductory essay, translator Alison Luchs highlights the importance of Wackernagel's contribution to art history: his goals, aims, and the circumstances of his scholarship. This book is a translation of Wackernagel's masterful study: it is not, nor was it intended to provide, a systematic updating of his work, though Luchs has introduced updates and clarifications in the way of translator's notes.

Part one, “The Commissions,” is comprised of four chapters. The first chapter focuses on commissions for the Duomo and the Baptistery, the Church and the convent of Santa Maria Novella, and the Palazzo Vecchio. Chapter two explores the nature and range of sculptural works produced for churches and domestic buildings. In his survey of Church sculptures, Wackernagel discusses the relative preponderance and character of *Pietàs*, tombs, tabernacles, baptismal fonts, lava-