affrontata con la cautela e la sottigliezza raccomandate da Friedrich Olhy, che non esclude una certa permeabilità e convergenza di modelli da una parte e dall'altra della *historia* e della *fictio* o *fabula*.

Lo specialista dei rapporti tra Boccaccio e i classici troverà di grandissima utilità *Boccaccio umanista*, le cui autorevoli argomentazioni, unite alla notevole conoscenza dei manoscritti da parte dell'autore, costituiscono già un punto di riferimento negli studi filologici sul certaldese.

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Guyda Armstrong. *The English Boccaccio: A History in Books*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013. 16 plates; 26 black-and-white images. Pp. xvi + 496. ISBN 9781442646032. \$ 95 (e-book \$ 66.95).

Guyda Armstrong's thorough study and handsome book situate themselves "deliberately within the framework of the new critical discipline of textual studies and the history of the book" (4). In the introduction to the text, Armstrong humbly provides other resources on the topics covered, but while introducing these alternatives, she is careful to guide the reader by noting the limits and benefits of these works. Historically, Armstrong explains, any research on Boccaccio's translated works usually, quite unabashedly, put emphasis on the English target text rather than on the entire valuable and enriching journey from the Italian source text. She indicates her place amongst other studies on Boccaccio in the English-speaking world by contrasting her work with the strand of scholars who focus on the Boccaccio-Chaucer duality. Amongst these is Herbert Wright's *Boccaccio in England from Chaucer to Tennyson* (1957), which, Armstrong insists, is an essential resource for Boccaccio study; however, she declares that it still bears a limitation absent from her own work: its primary focus is "the intertextual presence of Boccaccio within the English canon" (7).

The University of Manchester senior lecturer also introduces her predecessors and academic influences to still better locate herself amongst her peers, citing the examples of David Wallace, James Simpson, Ardis Butterfield, and Anne E.B. Coldiron, who "share a concern to reject the traditional master narratives to highlight instead a historically and materially situated plurilingual literary culture

in the pre-modern British Isles” (7). Though the title of this tome is *The English Boccaccio*, Armstrong necessarily traces the trajectory of Boccaccio’s work from the Italian peninsula to France, in its earliest translations, and, finally, to England and America. Every source-text excerpt in Latin or Italian, or any target-text selection in French, German, and even Old English, is immediately followed by modern English translations, typically done by Armstrong, so that no student or scholar misses a single delectable morsel of information that Armstrong readily provides. This is a refreshing trait for many modern Italianists, myself included, who have limited classical-language training.

The English Boccaccio has six chapters; a lengthy, varied bibliography (40 pages); an index of Boccaccio’s works; a general index; and, near the middle of the book, 26 gorgeous black-and-white plates, which aid in completing the vivid physical descriptions of the books examined and analyzed by Armstrong. In addition to the vast bibliography, almost every page in the book contains at minimum one footnote directing the reader to further resources, supplementary information, and even the occasional authorial anecdote.

Armstrong summarizes her aim in writing *The English Boccaccio* as an attempt to gather and organize the elements from the vast array of disciplines that study Boccaccio, including the diverse approaches of textual and translation studies—not just from the Italianist point of view—in order to “present for the first time a broad study of Boccaccio’s place in anglophone reading culture from the fifteenth to the twentieth centuries” (5). Additionally, her work focuses on the book as an object, not just as a medium containing Boccaccio’s text in translation. As a result, this study by Armstrong is comprehensive, complex, and complete, leaving few, if any, stones unturned for seasoned scholars and novices alike. Those who are new to book history, however, may need to keep a glossary or dictionary handy, for Armstrong wields the field’s lingo without explaining the terms. Where she consistently provides brief background, though, is in her presentations of Boccaccio’s works: she never takes for granted that the reader is an Italianist or a Medievalist. As she states in her introduction, her book’s goal is to examine the translated Boccaccio text as an object proper. Consequently, Armstrong’s described purpose is “not to provide a finite genealogy of Boccaccio in translation, but, rather, to highlight the accidents of history and the localization of each individual incarnation of the text in each translated book-object” (5–6). Nevertheless, Armstrong makes certain to bring even her most scholarly readers back to order with precautions against judging the past with our modern-day

sensibilities, stating that it is imperative that the diverse ways of reading a text be comprehended as positioned in a unique historical frame; the “book-object,” she clarifies, is expressed and elaborated for a particular reading situation.

If this book ever left me wanting, it was only because Armstrong creates a momentum so strong and captivating with her multi-century-spanning study that its concluding in the 1930s leaves readers eager to know where Boccaccio translation finds itself today. However, even to say that I was left wanting is a falsity, since Armstrong never leads readers to new territory without showing them where the rest of the journey lies. There is a reason for this somewhat-abrupt halt: Armstrong presents the jarring fact that, of the approximately 90 translated works explored in *The English Boccaccio*, just one is the labour of a female translator; this would be Frances Winwar’s (formerly Vinciguerra) 1930 translation of the *Decameron*.

Armstrong concludes the book with a statement not unlike a call to arms, saying that her book is merely the “first stage of this project” on Boccaccio in English translation. She declares that other scholars ought to continue this work in order to explore the translations, namely by females, made from the 1960s onwards, given that the feminine touch was “almost completely absent from the first five hundred years of [Boccaccio’s] English reception history, and [its] groundbreaking work in this particularly conservative field should be addressed as a matter of priority” (400). She notes, finally, that, contrary to those who declare that the biblio-apocalypse is upon us, Boccaccio in digital formats will guarantee the survival of the “book,” though she makes it clear that there is still some work to do; *The English Boccaccio* book provides the necessary, solid foundation for the next step of this fundamental research.

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Jo Ann Cavallo. *The World Beyond Europe in the Romance Epics of Boiardo and Ariosto.* Toronto; Buffalo; London: University of Toronto Press, 2013. Pp. 377. ISBN 9781442646834. \$ 85 (hard cover).

Il volume prende in considerazione i due capolavori dell’epica cavalleresca del Rinascimento italiano: l’*Orlando innamorato* di Boiardo e l’*Orlando furioso* di Ariosto, pubblicati a distanza di soli vent’anni l’uno dall’altro.