Filippa Modesto. *Dante's Idea of Friendship. The Transformation of a Classical Concept*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2015. Pp. 272. ISBN 9781442650596. \$ 75.00

A welcome contribution in the field of Dante Studies, Filippa Modesto's *Dante's Idea of Friendship* is the first monograph with a specific focus on the subject of friendship in Dante's work. Modesto's book is well researched and contains a valuable summary of Classical and Christian notions of friendship as well as a helpful analysis of the Dantean passages dealing with friendship. As the first to break ground in the field, Modesto's work opens research lines that this book alone cannot exhaust by itself. The main contention is that Virgil represents and offers Dante a type of friendship that coincides with classical theories, based in reason, while Beatrice's is a love that reflects Christian friendship, or *caritas*, disinterested and rooted in God. The author frames her discussion within the theories of Aristotle and Cicero, and the theology of Christian friendship as found in Augustine, Aquinas and Albert the Great.

Chapters One to Three explore Dante's idea of friendship in the *Convivio* against the backdrop of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and Cicero's *De amicitia*: Dante's philosophical treatise "is a gift offered in the spirit of friendship to the less fortunate members of society" (56) who lack the opportunity to pursue regular education in philosophy. Chapter Four tracks the evolution of the idea of friendship in Boethius, Augustine and Aquinas, connecting it with Dante's. The great amount of attention (more than half the book) given to classical and Christian writers on friendship has perhaps drawn Modesto away from some important critical literature on Dante and friendship. No mention is found of Emilio Pasquini's several contributions on friendship in Dante, nor of Michelangelo Picone's essay on Dante and Cino ("Dante e Cino: una lunga amicizia" *Dante*, 1, 2004), nor of the collective volumes edited by Anna Fontes Baratto and Maria Gagliano (*Écritures et pratiques de l'amitié dans l'Italie médiévale*, Paris: Cahiers de l'Arzana, Sorbonne nouvelle, 2013), by Isa Iori Sanfilippo and Antonio Rigon (*Parole e realtà dell'amicizia medievale*, Rome: Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 2012), and by Amyrose McCue Gill and Sarah Rolfe Prodan (*Friendship and Sociability in Premodern Europe: Contexts, Concepts and Expressions*, Toronto

UP, 2014). Also Franco Masciandaro's *The Stranger as Friend* (Firenze UP, 2013) and Luigi Pizzolato's seminal *L'idea di amicizia nel mondo antico classico e cristiano* (Torino: Einaudi 1993) did not find their way into Modesto's bibliography.

After some confusion and typos (21) treating Hermannus Alemannus' *Compendium Alexandrinum* (which Modesto erroneously attributes to Brunetto Latini, due to her misreading of John Scotts' entry on Aristotle in the *Dante Encyclopedia*; typos are unusually frequent in Italian and Latin quotes throughout the book and especially on 124–129), Modesto offers a learned discussion of Classical and Christian theories of friendship. In connecting her great knowledge of philosophical works on friendship to Dante's production, Modesto argues that, "in celebrating the virtues of Philosophy in the *Convivio*, Dante seems to celebrate Aristotelian friendship" (35). This prepares the ground for her argument about the continuity of poetic inspiration between the *Convivio* and the *Commedia*, for Lady "Philosophy finds fulfillment in Beatrice" (39). This reader has a different view of the poetic and philosophical dialectic between the *Convivio* and the *Commedia* (as one of opposition and palinode rather than continuity). Even though Modesto shows a respectable grasp of the texts, she has to admit (41) that Philosophy all but vanishes in the *Commedia*, appearing only rarely and in association with pagan thinkers, and that in the *Convivio*, Dante's "new love of philosophy erased all prior thoughts of his first love" (54). These considerations undermine Modesto's claim of Beatrice as fulfilling rather than rebutting Dante's love for Lady Philosophy.

The great amount of conceptual repetition helps readers keep their eyes on the book's main ideas. Modesto suitably handles a large body of bibliography to trace the origin of the notion of friendship from Greek to Latin writers, and then to early Christian authors, such as Augustine, Paulinus of Nola and Boethius. Modesto shows how *caritas* came to universalize love; friendship in the Christian world is only a finite good unless it is conceived within and toward God: "for Augustine all moral issues, including friendship, rest on faith, or on those things that are unseen" (66), whereas for Cicero and Aristotle, friendship was rooted in reason.

Chapter Five considers Dante's friendships with Guido Cavalcanti, but also Cino da Pistoia, Casella, Forese Donati as well the friendship between Statius and Virgil. One of the turning points in Dante's career takes place when he "moves away from his 'first friend,' Guido, and moves toward Beatrice who will become a true friend in Christ" (79). Modesto links Guido's poetics to secular knowledge and philosophy, while discussing Dante's move away from this poetic between

Vita nuova and *Commedia*. There, the Beatrician poetics of salvific love is rooted in divine grace and *caritas*, a theme treated in Chapters Six and Seven. Modesto concludes that before *trasumanar* is possible in Dante's poem, *umanar* must be dealt with (132), thus stressing her thesis of a continuity between the classical and the Christian notions of friendship that shape Dante's poetics.

The many relevant ramifications of the discourse on friendship which Modesto approaches deserve further critical attention, and *Dante's Idea of Friendship* must be credited with directing Dante studies to this largely under-represented topic. Those who study Dante's relationship with Cavalcanti—a topic that has on the contrary enjoyed a great deal of critical attention—will profit from reading this book, which represents a valuable starting point for any future research on Dante and friendship.

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Raffaele Morabito. *L'Evo e il tempo del Canzoniere*. Firenze: Olschki, 2015. Pp. 71. ISBN 9788822263872. € 19.00.

In questo breve saggio pubblicato da Olschki, Raffaele Morabito offre una suggestiva analisi del *Canzoniere* alla luce della concezione petrarchesca del tempo. Nella prima parte del volume (cap. 1–8) l'autore ripercorre a grandi linee le principali tappe che hanno segnato, dall'antichità in poi, l'evoluzione della concezione del tempo da un punto di vista filosofico e teologico. Particolare rilievo assume, nel contesto della cronologia petrarchesca, l'apparizione dei primi strumenti meccanici per la misurazione del tempo. Diffusi rapidamente dal primo Trecento in poi, infatti, l'orologio meccanico sancì una progressiva trasformazione del tempo "naturale", fondato sul ciclo giorno e notte, in tempo "convenzionale" o "astratto", inteso cioè come una successione di segmenti (secondi, minuti, ore, etc.) il cui avvicinarsi poteva essere misurato con precisione. Attraverso un'ampia, seppur schematica, panoramica di fonti che spazia dalla filosofia classica a quella medievale e che giunge sino a Leopardi passando per Campanella e Spinoza (sorprende, invece, l'assenza di un qualsiasi riferimento ai *Trionfi*, uno dei quali il Petrarca dedica proprio al Tempo), Morabito illustra come l'invenzione dell'orologio non abbia rappresentato una semplice rivoluzione tecnica ma una vera e propria svolta