Gilson concludes his study with an entire section devoted to Cristoforo Landino and his *Comento sopra la Comedia*. While placing such great focus on one scholar in particular in a study that has, up to this point, provided what is in essence a survey (albeit a richly detailed and comprehensive survey), might seem inconsistent with the structure of the overall organization of the book, a thorough reading of the Landino section reveals it to be an apt conclusion. The 1481 production of the Landino *Comento* encapsulates and represents the culmination of the various projects and movements outlined and surveyed in the earlier chapters. Gilson characterizes Landino's work as having borrowed from "an intricate web of earlier authorities," from contemporary Florentine discussions and debates, and from idiosyncratic adaptations. The chapters on Landino's work then confirm what the earlier chapters have been suggesting and which the author himself concludes. The astonishing longevity of Dante's works is not attributable exclusively to their literary merit, but rather to their enormous utility in supporting and espousing a variety of political and cultural positions. Notwithstanding the enormous energy Dante put into the construction of a literary and political persona, and to shaping his readers' perception of him, his efforts in this regard, suggests Gilson, had little effect on Renaissance readers who were intent on reshaping Dante in whatever form best suited their cultural and political exigencies.

What Gilson, therefore, has done successfully in this volume is to present a cogent and revealing study of the factors and paradigms fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Florentines employed in constructing their own figure of Dante. While Gilson's work considers how Dante's persona and his writing were reordered, shifted, and distorted in Renaissance Florence, the processes at play are equally relevant to scholars concerned with reception theory in general and to scholars fascinated by the intertwining of culture and politics. It is well worth the read.

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Sebregondi, Ludovica. *Iconografia di Girolamo Savonarola 1498-1998*. Savonarola e la Toscana, Atti e Documenti, 19. Firenze: SISMEL Edizioni del Galluzzo per la Fondazione Ezio Franceschini, 2004. lxxxi, 598 pp., 38 colour and 341 b/w illustrations. 77 Euros. ISBN 88-8450-044-3

The 500th anniversary of Girolamo Savonarola's execution (1498-1998) gave rise to an array of excellent scholarly work on the Ferrarese friar, both in advance of and in the wake of the recurrence. Ludovica Sebregondi's masterful examination of the iconology of Savonarola over the course of this last half millennium and the rich treasury of images that she has collected are most welcomed contributions to this bounty. The product of ten full years of extensive research, international contacts and cooperation, not to mention meticulous study, the voluminous catalogue raisonné she has assembled is both impressive and easy to consult.

The volume opens with a preliminary section that includes three different bibliographies (archival and manuscript sources, incunabula, and general bibliog-

raphy) and a general introduction by the author. As Sebreghondi points out, images provide not only a physical description of someone's appearance but also, in the case of important individuals, an insight into how that person was viewed over time. In Savonarola's case, there is such a proliferation of images that, as early as 1513, Francesco Caloro (admittedly a defender of the friar) could say that they surpass in number those of "any pope, king, emperor, or other illustrious man" (p. lxxi). Caloro may have been given to hyperbole, but not so Sebreghondi when, describing her work on this project in the "Premessa" to the volume, admits that it suffered a long delay in publication precisely because of the constant discovery of new images often in the most unexpected of places. She rightfully admits that this volume concludes "for now" the research begun in 1994, thus leaving open the window for further discoveries and research. The main body of the volume is divided into two evenly balanced sections: one textual, the other visual. The former consists of ten chapters, each divided into a scholarly introduction followed by the relevant *schede* for images pertaining to that chapter's topic. The first seven chapters follow a typological approach while the last three are chronologically focussed. The impressive anthology of illustrations that makes up the visual component of this study contains fully 38 images in colour and a massive 341 in black and white. All images and *schede* are cross-referenced for easy consultation. Four different indices (names of persons, of places and institutions, subject, and inscriptions) complete the volume.

In her first chapter, Sebreghondi identifies and discusses the four prototypes for all subsequent images of the friar: the panel portrait of Savonarola by Fra Bartolomeo dated shortly after 23 May 1498 and once belonging to Saint Caterina de' Ricci, a second panel portrait by Fra Bartolomeo dated 1508-c.1510 long kept at the Ospice of the Caldine, near Florence, depicting Savonarola as Saint Peter Martyr; a cornelian cameo by Giovanni delle Corniole (dated post 23 May 1498) eventually purchased by Duke Cosimo I de' Medici, and a bronze medal by Francesco Della Robbia (Fra Ambrogio) dated c.1500. All four images show Savonarola in profile looking to the left, with his characteristic aquiline nose, thick lower lip, high cheek bones, piercing eyes, and (in the case of all but one image) with his head covered with a cowl. Because they are the work of ardent followers of the friar who had known him in life, these images can be (and were) taken to be accurate representations of him. Sebreghondi is to be commended for having identified these prototypes and underlined their importance, thus providing scholars with a solid foundation for future investigation and correct identifications.

The second chapter is dedicated to an iconic moment of the Savonarola story: the *Supplizio* or execution. The various exemplars depicting this scene and their many variants attest to the fundamental importance of this moment in the cult that quickly developed after the friar's death and to the persisting belief in his sainthood. The most ancient exemplar is the small panel currently in the Museo di San Marco in Florence that illustrates, faithfully enough, various moments leading to, and including the execution by hanging (the burning of the body followed). An enduring image, one of its most recent reproductions is to be found on a plastic serving tray for sale in Florence, evidence enough that today the dra-

matic elements of the image or its use for devotional purposes have completely disappeared and have given way to crass and unthinking commercialism.

In the following four chapters Sebreghondi changes direction slightly and continues her typological investigation by grouping images of Savonarola into categories based on *how* the friar was depicted in the first centuries after his death. Thus chapter three analyzes images of Savonarola as a person living in time (preaching, meeting or assisting people, writing, and so forth). Chapter four moves out of time and looks at images of him as a saint, a blessed, or a martyr, while a very brief chapter five turns the coin around and examines the one and only extant illustration (so far) of Savonarola as a heretic. Chapter six moves mostly (but not completely) north of the Alps to focus on the rich store of images of Savonarola as a precursor of the Reformation. In dividing the sizable iconographic corpus into these four major categories, Sebreghondi has made sense of the *mare magnum* produced over the centuries and once again provides scholars with a systematic approach for future work and analyses.

The next two chapters take a chronological turn and deal with the explosion of Savonarola illustrations in the nineteenth (chapt. 7) and twentieth (chapt. 8) centuries brought about by a variety of reasons, not the least of which were the liberal and anticlerical movements of pre- and post-unification Italy and, in a very different vein, the rise of new *neopiagnone* elements both within the Dominican order and among the laity. From this plethora of images showing Savonarola with his highly recognizable features Sebreghondi turns to an assortment of disparate images that are either "representative," that is, they do not rely on the standard elements of Savonarola's physiognomy but merely—or supposedly—allude to him (for example, Botticelli's *Mystical Nativity*) or, more strangely still, present confused or incorrect identifications of Savonarola (for example, in Raphael's *Mass at Bolsena*). As Sebreghondi points out, "The image of the Friar is so strong in the collective imaginary that historians and scholars are often led to recognize his features even if they have to force reality to do so" (p. 314). Although such forced designations are incorrect, they do indicate just how important Savonarola has become in our culture.

Chapter ten returns to more serious matters by providing a list of images that either have been lost or are currently unaccounted for, as well as a list of literary portraits of Savonarola. Despite the impressive number of images identified and located, Sebreghondi points out that there are still sixty or more recorded images that are currently Alost@ (p. 333). Her catalogue thus concludes with an invitation to continue the research and to look for these missing works.

Sebreghondi's discriminating eye and unassailable scholarship have produced a monumental catalogue raisonné that will serve as a basic reference tool well into the next centennial celebration of the friar's earthly demise. It is a "must have" for all serious Savonarola scholars and for every respectable research library.

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