artistic images should not always be interpreted at face value. Comanini's intelligent defense of Michelangelo, despite his own religious position, suggests how little support many of the Council of Trent's strictures may have had. By inserting his defence into the mouths of his only semi-fictional characters, Comanini barely veils his own opinions concerning the vital issue of religious images and decorum.

In order to assess the impact of Comanini's treatise, including his defence of Michelangelo, it would be important to know how widely read *Il Figino* was and by whom. This new edition unfortunately lacks any information on the history of the book itself. It would also be helpful to know more about the specific environment that inspired the academic discussions in this dialogue in order to more fully understand the intellectual debates in their original context. The ways of thinking and the points of view expressed in *Il Figino* evidently reflect discussions on art held in Milan and perhaps also, given the involvement of Tasso, in Ferrara in the decades leading up to 1600. And yet, how widespread were such modes of thought? Caravaggio was in Milan at this time apprenticing to become a painter. The impact of this academic ambient on Caravaggio's way of thinking about painting was apparently negligible.

CATHLEEN HOENIGER

Queen's University

Küpper, Joachim. *Petrarca. Das Schweigen der Veritas und die Worte des Dichters*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter 2002. Pp. xi, 201. ISBN 3-11-017557-6.

This book is a collection of articles on Petrarch by Joachim Küpper, Professor of Romance Philology and General and Comparative Literature at the FU Berlin. His scientific work covers a vast range of Romance literary and cultural fields, from French nineteenth-century novel to Spanish Baroque drama and from Augustine through Petrarch to Spanish seventeenth-century pre-Empiricism, Spanish culture being by far his most important centre of interest. The five texts assembled in the present volume consider, in the best philological tradition, Petrarch's works in their cultural and historical context, focusing on the *Canzoniere* within fourteenth-century cultural discourse. Küpper takes into consideration not only Petrarch's Latin production, thus commendably transcending the usual limits of Italian studies, but also relevant works from Antiquity to the Late Middle Ages. Küpper's method is characterized by a solid command of Latin and the vernaculars as well as deep-going knowledge of the history of Western thought.

The first article, 'Das Schweigen der Veritas. Zur Kontingenz von Pluralisierungsprozessen in der Frührenaissance (Petrarca, *Secretum*),' originally from 1991, focuses on one of the most important Latin works of Petrarch, his self-analysis in the form of a dialogue with "Augustinus"—a text, characteristically worked and reworked and finally left uncompleted. In contrast with the still rather common biographical interpretation of the dialogue as one between Petrarch—sometimes also seen as representing the author in the previous phase of his life—and Augustine—sometimes also seen as representing Petrarch reformed—Küpper, in

agreement with the analysis of K. Heitmann ('Augustins Lehre in Petrarcas *Secretum*', 1960), argues for "Petrarca" and "Augustinus" being dialogical figures for the purpose of representing certain views—a procedure later typical of full-fledged humanist dialogue (cf. David Marsh, *The Quattrocento Dialogue*). In fact, Küpper demonstrates that "Augustinus" represents the Thomistic-rationalist position according to which man may influence his salvation, whereas "Franciscus" professes the authentic Augustinian faith in salvation through grace only. Küpper explains this procedure on one hand with reference to the academic *disputatio*, the teacher ("Augustinus") taking up a position for the sake of the argument, the pupil ("Franciscus") showing his brilliance in defending his own, and on the other hand through the Ciceronian dialogue form that makes it possible to contrast these two positions, perfectly defensible from the Christian point of view. Furthermore, Küpper underlines that according to Lactantius and Isidore of Seville, a poet should express the truth *obliquis figurationibus* and not in a plain manner. Küpper also suggests that the *Secretum* would originally have been a kind of showcase for Petrarch's theological erudition in view of possible ecclesiastical employ, the subsequent re-workings being explainable through the abandonment of this original purpose.

In 'Mundus imago Laurae...', originally from 1992, Küpper's solid knowledge of Western theology and medieval hermeneutics as well as the value of close, philological reading of the text come to good use as he argues against a naive biographical interpretation of *canz.* 176 'Per mezz' i boschi' and also shows that the sonnet is no simple piece of emulation of *Hor. carm.* 1.22. As in the other articles, the author tackles the problem of Petrarch as a pre-humanist, coming up with a very nuanced analysis of Petrarch's place within fourteenth-century culture.

'Schiffsreise und Seelenflug...', originally from 1993, proposes a very convincing interpretation of *canz.* 189 'Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio' and 167 'Quando Amor i belli occhi a terra inchina' in Augustinian terms: a ship without a mast is man without Christ, earthly love leading to death and corruption.

The entertaining '(H)er(e)os...', from 1999, interprets the *Canzoniere* in the framework of contemporary medical discourse on love-sickness, the destructive *amor hereos* of medical treatises, one of the foremost characteristics of which being the *profundacio cogitationis* of the beloved one, Petrarch's *pensarelpensieri*. This article also throws light in an exemplary way on the impact of Aristotelianism on Western literature between the twelfth and the fourteenth centuries.

The final essay on *canz.* 365, 'Vergine bella, che, di sol vestita', shows (once again) the ambiguous nature of Petrarch's last sonnet, and argues that reversed meaning (praise of Virgin Mary) does not erase previous ones (praise of Laura in similar terms in most of the *Canzoniere*), but results in co-existence of several readings.

In short, this volume offers a very interesting series of studies that no Petrarch scholar should ignore, neither from the point of view of methodology nor from that of factual contents.

OUTI MERISALO

University of Jyväskylä, Finland