nell'imporre ai tre giornali canadesi, ormai privi di anche un barlume d'indipendenza editoriale, testi e materiale iconografico di propaganda miranti a diffondere spudoratamente le illusioni e le menzogne del fascismo all'estero.

Come anche in Australia, la cieca e servile aderenza alla politica del Regime da parte della comunità emigrata, a torto o a ragione riflessa da una parte della stampa italiana, diede in Canada i prevedibili risultati: all'entrata dell'Italia nella seconda guerra mondiale, il 10 giugno 1940, su una comunità di 42,578 emigrati nati in Italia, a seconda del censimento del 1931, circa 600 vennero internati nel campo di Petawawa nell'Ontario settentrionale. Se confrontato con la situazione australiana, questo fu un trattamento benevolo da parte delle autorità canadesi; infatti in Australia, su una comunità di 26,756 nati in Italia, a seconda del censimento del 1933, ben 4727 furono internati.

Principe illustra chiaramente le sfumature di atteggiamento dei tre giornali, soffermandosi sul relativo moderatismo dell'Eco in contrapposizione con l'estremismo degli altri due fogli, per poi mettere entrambi a confronto con le reazioni della stampa e delle autorità canadesi, reazioni spesso incredule e perplesse di fronte all'assurdità, alla sfrontatezza e all'ignoranza manifestati costantemente dagli articolisti dei tre giornali. Tale confronto risulta particolarmente illuminante, in quanto evidenzia la paranoia ideologica e il crescente isolamento politico, nonchè intellettuale, dei sostenitori italo-canadesi del Regime.

In conclusione, il libro del Principe colma una lacuna storiografica della storia degli italiani fuori d'Italia, ed indica la strada da seguire a chi vuole ricercare in altri paesi il ruolo d'informazione e di disinformazione svolto dagli organi del Regime. Contributo ancor più importante dato dal Principe è quello di comprovare inequivocabilmente, almeno per il Canada, la falsità dell'assunto che il fascismo all'estero era innocuo e che svolgeva solo opere di beneficenza ed attività sociali, quando la regimentazione delle idee, il conformismo, la subordinazione e il paternalismo erano in verità la lue sfrontatamente propagata dagli organi di stampa, lue che tarava le coscienze di chi per secoli aveva fatto parte del mondo dei vinti e che ora, in terra d'emigrazione, ancora non riusciva a liberarsi dalle catene ideologiche impostegli dai padroni di sempre.

GIANFRANCO CRESCIANI

***Medievalism. The Future of the Past.* Ed. Joseph Goering and Francesco Guardiani. Ottawa: Legas, 2000. Pp. 203.**

This collection of eleven essays is derived from the 2nd St. Michael's College Symposium, held in the spring of 1999. It is very much a part of a Catholic re-examination of the rich intellectual and spiritual heritage of the Middle Ages. The volume

does something that is—or should be—of increasing concern to university-based scholars; it addresses an audience composed of the interested public and explains what sometimes esoteric scholarship seeks to do and why this is important to the world in which we live. The essays cover a wide number of topics from a variety of humanities and social science perspectives. As a whole the collection would have benefited from firmer editorial direction. There is remarkable inconsistency in form and style between the essays (some use footnotes, others “Works Cited”, while one uses neither). This will not bother the casual reader, but it detracts from the presentation as a whole.

Mariel O'Neill-Karch examines the rather cynical way that modern advertising has used medieval images and conventions to sell consumer goods. Thus, the iconography associated with saints and knights, sanctity and chivalry (conveniently united in Grail imagery or Joan of Arc) add authenticity, mystery, or authority to goods as diverse as Scrabble, bathroom faucets, and liquor. Although the author stops short of a critical conclusion, one is nevertheless saddened at the way in which powerful medieval symbols are diminished, even sullied, at the hands of contemporary consumerism.

Another essay that focuses on the immediate relevance of aspects of the medieval world, albeit very differently, is John H. Simpson's study “The Presence of the Medieval: *Gubernaculum* and *Jurisdictio*.” By relating these medieval notions of law and its source of legitimacy to contemporary debates in the Canadian House of Commons, Simpson demonstrates perhaps most persuasively and positively of all the authors, the way in which a study of the medieval helps people understand their own society, its structures and institutions.

Three essays focus on the medieval philosophical inheritance that has influenced many modern scholars. Christophe Potworowski's essay examines the influence of Thomas Aquinas on French Dominican theologian and medievalist, Marie-Dominique Chenu. Chenu used his understanding of Christian revelation, developed in part from his reading of thirteenth-century theology, to examine current realities including, for example, the Second Vatican Council or the influence of Marxism. Similarly, the enduring relevance of sophisticated medieval theology occupies the attention of Elmar J. Kremer. He discusses Leibniz's appropriation, in the seventeenth century, of arguments which led to Abelard's condemnation at the Council of Sens in the mid-twelfth century. Thus, while seeking to develop arguments that could reunite a fragmented Church, Leibniz adopted Abelard's earlier views and can be subject to the same condemnation for limiting God's reasons for creating this world. This is a philosophical theological problem of enduring relevance.

Thomas Aquinas and his views of communication are the subject of an essay by Eric McLuhan. McLuhan examines how classical rhetoric and definitions of eloquence dominated education through Erasmus. Augustine, however, had already noted the limitations of rhetoric. A conversion brought about by the rhetor's skillful persuasion rather than an internal impetus was not a real conversion. Aquinas used and revised

classical rhetoric in a way that circumvented the problem of eloquent persuasion and rather attacked the audience to cure it of an illness of understanding.

Two essays focus on how drama can appropriate the medieval in the service of contemporary ends. Elizabeth Fitzpatrick focuses on how the playwrights W.B. Yeats and J.B. Synge used images culled from Ireland's heroic Middle Ages, transformed by nationalism and Romanticism, to create a new nation based on a glorious past. In a similar vein, Domenico Pietropaolo examines Nobel laureate Dario Fo's method of reaching back into the rich and complex tradition of medieval street theater to develop his own revolutionary theater, aimed at challenging contemporary oppression and empowering the poor. Using medieval jesters as his model, Fo developed a form of insurrectional clowning to bring people to laughter, and through laughter to reclaim their dignity.

Harvey Kerpneck's essay on "Victorian Medievalism" is a wide-ranging exploration of the views of authors such as Ruskin, William Morris, Tennyson, and Thomas Carlyle. Far from being fragmented, Victorians did not divide themselves according to proponents of classicism or medievalism. Frequently, the same person admired both cultures. Kerpneck argues, however, that nineteenth-century Anglican Englishmen such as Carlyle could find in Catholic medieval Christendom a unity, coherence, and integrity that spoke to the shortcomings of their own society. This is the same theme that Giulio Silano adopts in his study of "The Church's Social Doctrine and the Middle Ages: Leo XIII and Tonolo." Silano presents a careful discussion of how both pope and sociologist were able to find in the Middle Ages alternative visions and solutions to the problems of nineteenth-century society. Thus, medieval guilds might provide a non-adversarial alternative to trade unions. Indeed, Leo argues that the Middle Ages was the period which most benefitted from the civilizing presence of the Church, in part because scholasticism presented the right balance of reason and faith.

Certainly, no symposium on medievalism, held at St. Michael's College in Toronto, could be considered complete without some attention directed to the remarkable Etienne Gilson, founder of the Institute of Medieval Studies. Joseph Goering traces Gilson's intellectual development and how it led to the foundation of an Institute devoted to the interdisciplinary study of the Middle Ages. While his pursuit of knowledge might have been scientific in method, Goering argues that it cannot be separated from the religious interests of its Roman Catholic founder.

Marshall McLuhan, another of the St. Michael's intellectual luminaries, also receives attention in this collection. McLuhan's insights form the center of Francesco Guardiani's essay on "The New Middle Ages: Medievalism in McLuhan and Vacca." Vacca's essentially negative understanding of the Middle Ages as equivalent to Dark Ages is juxtaposed against McLuhan's somewhat different understanding. McLuhan viewed the new Middle Ages as linking the culture of manuscripts and the culture of electronic media (it was print culture that was "in the middle"). For McLuhan, the development of an electronic culture would allow for multidisciplinary and acoustic

space, rather than the disorder and destruction predicted by Vacca.

This volume presents an interesting collection of topics and interpretations of medievalism. It is a Middle Ages, however, that is decidedly confessional, the focus is very much on church, not state. It is also a collection that demonstrates most persuasively the value of ongoing study into our medieval past.

JACQUELINE MURRAY

University of Windsor

Eugenio L. Giusti, *Dall'amore cortese alla comprensione. Il viaggio ideologico di Giovanni Boccaccio dalla "Caccia di Diana" al "Decameron"*. Milano: Edizioni Universitarie di Lettere Economia Diritto, 1999. Pp. 188.

We gather from the subtitle of this small volume that it joins a classical critical tradition of Boccaccio studies, namely those surveys of the Certaldan's vernacular fiction that proceed from the first work to the *Decameron*, a chronological line pressed into an ascensional axis from minor to major, from ineptitude to perfection. Its paradigm, I suppose, was De Sanctis, whose followers for better and worse have counted among others Gigli, Di Pino, Grabher, Billanovich, Bergin, and Bruni. Although a few have imaginatively broken the mold—Branca with his *Boccaccio medievale*; more recently, Bragantini and Forni with their *Lessico decameroniano*—it has proven persistent. If one is going to “do” Boccaccio, this is the preprogrammed way to proceed.

A fifteen-page opening chapter covers *Caccia di Diana*, *Filostrato*, *Filocolo*, *Teseida*, *Comedia delle ninfe fiorentine*, *Amorosa visione*, and *Ninfale fiesolano*. Its confident concluding paragraph justifies such a condensed treatment of narratives characterized by “ripetitivita’”: “Ritengo quindi di poter con sicurezza affermare che l'autore ed i personaggi di ciascuna delle opere analizzate agiscono secondo schemi e formule a priori appartenenti ad un unico modello ideologico [sic].” The guilty model, Giusti argues, was courtly love as defined by Andreas Capellanus, a belief system that Boccaccio begins to question with the *Elegia di madonna Fiammetta* (ch. 2). In its heroine's impractical “scelta ideologico-letteraria” to be a victim, Giusti plausibly sees connections with the *Corbaccio* dreamer; he sets the romance and the *trattato* in a chiasmic relationship that schematizes their continuities as well as their polarities. From here he proceeds to the *Corbaccio* itself (ch. 3), belatedly releasing a statement that clarifies the rather puzzling first part of his book's title. As I understand it, Giusti is suggesting that Boccaccio's protagonists, from *Caccia di Diana* to *Decameron*, gradually become less deluded and more comprehending. Instead of behaving according to rigidly stylized conventions, they learn to interact more sensi-