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# *Notes on the Presence of Boccaccio in Cristoforo Landino's Comento sopra la Comedia di Danthe Alighieri*

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SIMON A. GILSON

RECENT YEARS HAVE SEEN A RESURGENCE OF CRITICAL INTEREST IN CRISTOFORO Landino's celebrated and widely influential Dante commentary, the *Comento sopra la Comedia di Danthe Alighieri*, which was first printed in late August 1481 and underwent some 20 reprints, in various formats, before the end of the sixteenth century (see Cardini 1973, 1974, 1990; Dionisotti 1965, 1972; Field 1988, 231–49; Gilson 2003a; 2003b; 2005, 163–230; Haywood 2004; La Brasca 1985, 1986, 1987; Lentzen 1971; Parker 1993, 76–85; Procaccioli 1989). Scholarly inquiry has focused upon the ideological qualities of the *Comento*, in particular its *proemio*, or prologue, as well as upon its extensive body of glosses, or *chiose*, which has received particular attention with respect to Landino's interest in allegory and Platonism, his indebtedness to the trecento tradition of Dante commentary, and his reliance on his own earlier activities both as teacher of vernacular and classical poetry at the Florentine Studio and as author of the Latin dialogues, the *De anima* (c. 1471) and the *Disputationes Camaldulenses* (c. 1472–74).<sup>1</sup> The extant literature has now been complemented by Paolo Procaccioli's critical edition (Landino 2001) of the *Comento*

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in four volumes, which, with its valuable introduction, bibliography, and indexes, including an *index auctorum*, will undoubtedly facilitate further study into what Roberto Cardini has described as “il capolavoro critico in volgare del Quattrocento” (1973, xxx).<sup>2</sup>

As is well known, Landino’s most significant contribution to Florentine culture in the second half of the quattrocento was his preoccupation with refining and promoting the vernacular as a literary and learned language, capable of dealing with subjects which had been previously reserved almost exclusively for Latin. Major components in what critics often term Landino’s vernacular humanism are his radical decision, circa 1467, to lecture on Petrarch’s vernacular poetry from his chair of rhetoric and poetry at the University of Florence, and his *volgarizzamento* of Pliny’s *Historia naturalis*, circa 1472–74.<sup>3</sup> Yet it is, above all, the *Commedia* that acts as the lightning conductor for Landino’s patriotic concern to establish the “fiorentina lingua” as the common language of Italy. And his militant program of “Florentinization” finds its fullest expression in the *Comento*, where Dante is read in a key that is both modernizing and classicizing: Landino presents Dante, the “primo splendore del nome fiorentino” (2001, 1: 221, 81–82), not only as cosmographer, astrologer, and Platonist, in line with the most recent innovations of Medici Florence, but also as the pivotal figure in forging the Italian language on the model of Latin and in close imitation of Virgil (see Gilson 2005, 170–72, 192–211, 226–29). Throughout the *Comento*, Landino nonetheless reaffirms the importance of Petrarch, not only in the *proemio*, where he is paired with Dante as resurrecting poetry after centuries of obsolescence (2001, 1: 236, 19–41; 1: 253–54, 217–36), but also—more significantly and originally—throughout the *chiose*, where both the *Canzoniere* and the *Trionfi* are repeatedly cited, often being treated as authoritative to the same degree as Latin and Greek authors.<sup>4</sup>

Critics have paid detailed attention to Landino’s interest in both Dante and Petrarch, but Boccaccio’s presence in the *Comento* has received very little commentary. Such an omission is somewhat surprising, given that Landino names Boccaccio on twelve occasions, and that it is possible to uncover an extensive set of unattributed references to the *certaldese* as Dante commentator, biographer, and learned Latin encyclopedist.<sup>5</sup> This article aims to assess Landino’s reuse, direct and indirect, of Boccaccio in the *Comento*, by examining the borrowings in relation both to earlier Dante commentary literature (upon which Landino often relies extensively) and to the broader background of Boccaccio’s reception in fifteenth-century Florence.<sup>6</sup> This kind of

approach is the only one which will allow us to judge what Landino takes from earlier writers, when he enters into critical dialogue with them, and where he makes his own contributions. While our primary objective is to examine the place of Boccaccio as an authority in the *Comento*, this study will also contribute to a closer understanding of his role in the trecento tradition of Dante commentary and his critical reception in quattrocento Florence. What is more, because the *Comento* was read by all educated Florentines and became the subject of sustained dialogue for sixteenth-century editors and commentators on Dante, the present article will also provide a point of reference for students of Boccaccio's *fortuna* in Italy in the late quattrocento and throughout the cinquecento.

Let us begin, then, with the *proemio*, which represents the most daring and ideologically marked section of the *Comento*. Here, Landino largely disregards the exegetical strictures of the academic prologue or *accessus ad auctores*: in fourteen chapters he fashions instead his own highly partisan vision of the cultural preeminence of Laurentian Florence. Landino first refers to Boccaccio by name in the opening chapter, when he offers a catalogue of previous Dante commentators that owes much to the list of names provided by the Novarese humanist Martino Paolo Nibia, or Nidobeato, in his 1478 Milanese edition of the *Commedia*. Nidobeato had mentioned "Iohannem Boccatum" as one of "octo graves et eruditos viros"<sup>7</sup> (cited in Rossi 1997, 1714), who had commented upon the *Commedia*, but Landino shows a stronger appreciation of the *certaldese's* exegetical work, drawing attention to his "Florentineness," and accurately noting both the unfinished state of his *Esposizioni* (which go no further than the opening lines of *Inferno* 17) and his strong preoccupation with allegorical modes of reading:

Principiò di comentarlo Ioanni nostro Boccaccio; ma non produxe l'opera più avanti che a mezo la prima cantica [. . .]. Comentollo finalmente Francesco da Buti in lingua pisana. Costui dopo el Boccaccio più che gl'altri si sforzò aprire, ma non in tutte le parti, l'allegorico senso. (2001, I: 220, 45–46, 48–50)

Two further direct references in the *proemio* offer a judgment concerning Boccaccio's qualities, not as a Dante commentator, but as a writer in the vernacular. On both occasions, Boccaccio receives a highly abbreviated comment. In chapter 4, which enumerates Florentines who excelled in eloquence, Landino celebrates the fact that poetry has been brought back to the light by

Dante and Petrarch, but he provides no more than the following annotation on Boccaccio: “Le vestigie di questi [sc., Dante and Petrarch] imitò Ioanni Bocchaccio” (2001, I: 236, 41–42). Similarly, in chapter 9, after eulogizing the literary prowess of Dante and Petrarch, he comments upon Boccaccio’s poetic abilities in the following terms: “Sequitò el Boccaccio molto inferiore a lui [sc., Petrarch], ma di poetico ingegno da natura instructo, et d’inventioni molto ornato” (2001, I: 254, 236–37). In these passages, Landino refers to Boccaccio as a writer of prose, as he had in his earlier opening lecture to his course on Petrarch’s vernacular poetry (Cardini 1974, I: 35), and earlier still in a Latin poem of 1444, where he offers a “triumph” of celebrated Florentine poets that includes the author of the *Decameron*: “Hic et Boccaci spectabilis nobile nomen, / qui pinxit varium doctus amoris opus” (Landino 1939, 112).<sup>8</sup> These are the only comments in the *proemio* that deal with Boccaccio as a vernacular writer, and they resolutely subordinate him to Dante and Petrarch; indeed, almost all the other writers mentioned in these chapters are treated at greater length. In this respect, Landino’s judgments have much in common with earlier Florentine humanist views regarding Boccaccio’s literary value, especially in comparison to Dante and Petrarch. Leonardo Bruni had led the way at the beginning of the fifteenth century by delivering an outspoken silencing of Boccaccio in the *Dialogi* (Bruni 1999, 257–58). Bruni was later to charge Boccaccio with levity as a biographer in his own *Vita di Dante* of 1436 (1996, 537–41), and to decline to write his life in the accompanying *Notizia del Boccaccio e parallelo dell’Alighieri e del Petrarca* (1996, 558–59).<sup>9</sup> A primary concern in Bruni’s critique was to distinguish between Boccaccio’s deficiencies in Latin and his comparative excellence in the vernacular; thus, in the *Notizia*, he wrote that “Apparò [sc., Boccaccio] la grammatica da grande, et per questa cagione non ebbe mai la lingua latina molto in sua ballia. Ma per quello che scrisse in vulgare, si vede che naturalmente egli era eloquentissimo et aveva ingegno oratorio” (1996, 558). Significantly, no such distinction is found in Landino, perhaps because he is so intent on stressing how knowledge and imitation of Latin letters are essential prerequisites for perfecting poetry in the vernacular. Yet Landino maintains several elements found earlier in Bruni: the subordinate position of Boccaccio; the lack of space given to his literary production; and the praise—more qualified than in Bruni—of his rhetorical skill and artistry in the vernacular. Nowhere in the *Comento*, though, does Landino uphold the charge that Boccaccio had devoted excessive attention to lascivious subject matter, a moralizing criticism made by some earlier Florentines, most notably by Matteo Palmieri in the *proemio* to

his *Vita civile* (c. 1434), and one that may well motivate, at least in part, Bruni's hostile attitude toward Boccaccio's preoccupation with amorous dalliance in the Dante biography of 1436.<sup>10</sup>

Prima facie, the *chiosa* reveals a stronger interest for Boccaccio as vernacular author. Landino makes three references to the *Decameron* and one further gloss calls attention to his linguistic practices as a prose writer. The relevant passages have received some comment from Cardini, who has noted that they illustrate Landino's vernacular humanism and show his concern to use the *Decameron* as a "fonte storica" (1974, 2: 113). This judgment requires considerable qualification upon closer examination of Landino's debts to the earlier tradition of Dante commentary. For, it can be demonstrated that two out of the three glosses in which Landino mentions the *Decameron* derive from glosses upon precisely the same Dantean passages in Benvenuto da Imola's earlier Dante commentary, the *Comentum super Dantis Aldigherij Comoediam* (c. 1378–87), a work which was well known to Landino (Barbi 1890, 162, 167–73; Vallone 1966; Procaccioli 1989, 169–75, 205–21, 227–38). The parallels, which allude to *Decameron* 10.2 and 5.4, are found in the commentaries on *Purgatorio* 6.13–15 and *Purgatorio* 14.97–99, respectively:

Questo Ghino è quello di chi Giovanni Boccaccio pone la novella, dove narra in che modo ghuari dello stomacho el troppo vezoso abate cluniacense. (Landino 2001, 3: 1132, 19–21)

questo fu messer Lucio da Valbona, huomo eccellente et pien di virtù, la cui figliuola Caterina, vincta da amore, di furto si congiunse con Ricciardo nobile giovane, et messer Lucio con sua prudentia glie ne fé sposare, chomo distesamente in una sua novella narra el nostro Boccaccio. (Landino 2001, 3: 1263, 28–32)

Et certe si iste nobilis Ghinus numquam fecisset aliud laudabile, nisi quod tam egregie medicavit abbatem Cluniacensem delicatissimum et ditissimum, et curavit optime a morbo stomacho [. . .] ut pulcerrime scribit vir placidissimus Boccatus de Certaldo, sermone materno, in libro suo, qui dicitur Decameron. (Benvenuto 1887, 3: 169)<sup>11</sup>

fuit bonus et prudens miles [. . .] dominus Licius de Valbona [. . .]. Nec minus eius prudentia enituit in filia sua Catherina pulcerrima; quam cum ipse senex reperisset coniunctam amorose cum Ricciardo nobili juvene [. . .] prudentissime fecit eam desponsari sine diminutione honoris, sicut jocunditer scribit Boccaccius de Certaldo. (Benvenuto 1887, 3: 389)<sup>12</sup>

Landino is more independent in his remarks on *Inferno* 6.52–54, where he mentions the novella in which Ciaccio appears (*Decameron* 9.8): “Di chostui [sc., Ciaccio] fa mentione Ioanni Boccaccio nella nona giornata et nella novella di Lauretta, et dimostra chome destramente et chon ingegno si vendicò del Biondello” (2001, 2: 474, 18–20). Benvenuto provides a detailed account of this tale (1887, 1: 284–87), but he does so in a different textual locus (*Inf.* 8.41–42), and, unlike Landino, he does not refer to Boccaccio by name.

Landino’s other reference in the *chiosa* to Boccaccio as prose writer is more original still, and in fact it has no precedent in earlier Dante commentaries. It forms part of a lengthy excursus on metaphorical expressions elicited by the topos of composition as a journey in *Purgatorio* 1.1–3. In his preamble to this gloss, Landino distinguishes between literal and metaphorical usages of words; and, with the first category in mind, he notes how certain phrases can become dated, by giving an example from Boccaccio’s prose:

Alchuna volta sono tanto antiche [sc., parole] che quasi rimangono fuori d’ogni consuetudine come “guari” et “sovente,” che l’una et l’altra è fiorentina ma non sono più in uso. Adunque dixè el nostro Iohanni Boccaccio “non guari di lontano” *i.* non molto di lungi, il che alhora era in consuetudine, hoggi non è. (2001, 3: 1038–39, 41–45)

This comment provides an accurate linguistic annotation—there are eight examples in the *Decameron* of *guari*, meaning *molto* in negative phrases when combined with the adverb of place *lontano*.<sup>13</sup> As such, the gloss not only offers a fine example of the close attention Landino pays to questions of language, a linguistic sensitivity that is one of the most notable features of his *chiose* (Cardini 1974, 2: 212–20; La Brasca 1986), but it may also help to set some precedent for the more extensive treatment of Boccaccio’s language in sixteenth-century Dante commentaries.<sup>14</sup>

In spite of the relatively marginal role Landino assigns to Boccaccio as a literary figure, there are nonetheless at least four important topics where Boccaccio’s works, though not named, leave their mark on sections of the *proemio*. In each case, what is significant about Landino’s reuse of Boccaccio is his attempt to draw upon his legacy, and to rewrite him in the light of contemporary interests. In several instances, Landino radically refashions Boccaccian writings, by excising or even overturning their original frames of reference. The first topic concerns Dante’s exile and his relationship with his homeland. In the first redaction of his life of Dante, now known as the

*Trattatello in laude di Dante Alighieri* (c. 1351–55), Boccaccio had repeatedly condemned the city for its harsh treatment of Dante. In the opening paragraphs (§§ 3–7), with much impassioned rhetoric, he criticizes Florentines for not erecting a monument to the poet's memory and for dishonestly exiling him, and he even goes so far as to call on God to punish the city for its iniquitous behavior toward him:

Oh scellerato pensiero, oh disonesta opera, oh miserabile esempio e di futura ruina manifesto argomento! In luogo di quegli, ingiusta e furiosa dannazione, perpetuo sbandimento, alienazione de' paterni beni, e, se fare si fosse potuto, maculazione della gloriosissima fama, con false colpe gli fur donate. Delle quali cose le recenti orme della sua fuga e l'ossa nelle altrui terre sepolte e la sparta prole per l'altrui case, alquante ancora ne fanno chiare. Se a tutte l'altre iniquità fiorentine fosse possibile il nascondersi agli occhi di Dio, che veggono tutto, non dovrebbe questa una bastare a provocare sopra se la sua ira? Certo sì. (1973, 438)

Later in the *Trattatello*, Boccaccio again fulminates against the Florentine Republic for its exile of Dante, accusing her of ingratitude, cruelty, blindness, dishonesty, and vainglory (1973, 454–55, 460–64). Following his account of Dante's death, he maintains the emphasis upon injustice and turns a lengthy invective against the city for being a cruel mother to the city's only poet. He remarks upon the vanity of her military victories, wealth, and civic beauties, the degradation of her artistic culture, and the avariciousness of her merchants; and he beseeches envious Florence to end its long and unjust persecution of the poet:

Oh ingrata patria, quale demenzia, quale trascutaggine ti teneva, quando tu il tuo carissimo cittadino, il tuo benefattore precipuo, il tuo unico poeta con crudeltà disusata mettesti in fuga, e poscia tenuta t'ha? [. . .] Parti egli essere gloriosa di tanti titoli e di tali, che tu quello uno del quale non hai vicino città che di simile si possa esaltare, tu abbi voluto da te cacciare? Deh! dimmi: di qua' vittorie, di qua' triunfi, di quali eccellenzie, di quali valorosi cittadini se' tu splendente? Le tue ricchezze, cosa mobile e incerta [. . .]. Deh! glorieràti tu de' tuoi mercatanti e de' molti artisti, donde tu se' piena? Scioccamente farai [. . .]. Morto è il tuo Dante Alighieri in quello esilio che tu ingiustamente, del suo valore invidiosa, gli desti [. . .]. Ora per la morte di lui vivi ne' tuoi difetti sicura, e puoi alle tue lunghe e ingiuste persecuzioni porre fine. (1973, 460–62)



In the course of his invective, Boccaccio also notes that, in contrast to the Florentine state's ingratitude and unnatural animosity, Dante behaves like a reverent, loving "figliuolo," who never denies his own Florentine identity, even in the depths of his long exile:

In verità, quantunque tu [sc., Florence] a lui ingrata e proterva fossi, egli sempre come figliuolo ebbe in te reverenza, né mai di quello onore che per le sue opere seguire ti dovea, volle privarti, come tu lui della tua cittadinanza privasti. Sempre fiorentino, quantunque l'esilio fosse lungo, si nominò e volle essere nominato, sempre ad ogni altra ti prepose, sempre t'amò. (1973, 460–61)

Boccaccio's vituperative attack on the Florentine state was undoubtedly a source of consternation in Laurentian Florence of the 1460s and 1470s, when various initiatives, from the *Raccolta Aragonese* to Ficino's *volgarizzamento* of the *Monarchia* and onto Landino's own activities at the Studio, were being made to emphasize the vitality of Dante and to stress the organic connections between the poet and his native city. What is more, the *Trattatello*, especially the first redaction, circulated widely in manuscript, and it gained an even wider readership following the first printing of Boccaccio's life in Vindelino da Spira's 1474 Venetian edition of the *Commedia* (Dionisotti 1965, 368–71). It is, at least in part, against this context that Landino shows a strong preoccupation with reconciling Dante and Florence. Like Boccaccio, he stresses Dante's lack of animosity toward his home city, but, in marked contrast to the *Trattatello*, he also maintains the nonculpability of the city as a whole for his exile. As early as chapter 1, Landino subtly associates Dante's exile with the editorial maltreatment his poem has suffered at the hands of non-Florentine commentators. He affirms his own innovation, as editor of Dante, in freeing the poet from the barbarity of foreign idioms to such an extent that, with Landino's edition, the poet has been brought back from exile to his homeland:

Questo solo affermo, havere liberato el nostro cittadino [sc., Dante] dalla barbarie di molti esterni idiomi, ne' quali da' comentatori era stato corrotto; et al presente chosì puro et semplice è paruto mio officio apresentarlo ad voi illustrissimi signor nostri, accioché per le mani di quel magistrato, el quale è sommo nella fiorentina rep., sia dopo lungo exilio restituito nella sua patria. (2001, 1: 221, 64–69)

This notion of Dante's symbolic return from exile is developed further in chapter 13, which includes a Latin letter by Marsilio Ficino (with accompanying vernacular translation) that also celebrates—in characteristically mythographic language—Landino's edition as reuniting Dante with his city. However, it is most especially chapter 2, which offers a lengthy defense of the anti-Florentine invectives in the *Commedia*, and of Florence itself for its exile of the poet, that seems most motivated by the need to placate strategically Boccaccio's earlier zeal against the city in the passages I have quoted above. Landino states that his reason for deferring his life of Dante is the need to free Florence from calumny, since the anti-Florentine invectives in the *Commedia* appear to disgrace the city and sit ill with the poet, thereby obscuring the fame of his homeland that he should praise like a "figliuolo":

Leggono molti in varii luoghi di questa Comedia acerrime invective contro a' Fiorentini, che in quegli tempi reggevano, et riprensioni acerbissime di varii et scelestissimi loro vitii. Il che non solamente pare che sia vituperio della città, ma ancora non sia senza biasimo del poeta, obscurando la fama della patria sua, la quale chome officioso anzi piatoso figliuolo doverrebbe lodare. (2001, I: 222, 6–11)

This is, of course, the exact opposite of Boccaccio's formulation of the "problem" of Dante's exile: Florence, in Boccaccio's view, obscures Dante's fame and divests herself of his glory; Dante is ever the respectful "figliuolo."

Landino's strategy for dealing with the *Commedia's* invectives is, first, to note that Dante openly glorified in being called Florentine, a motif that, as we have seen, was notably developed by Boccaccio toward the close of his own diatribe against the city: "Era di sì generoso animo el nostro poeta, che si sarebbe sdegnato farsi apertamente fiorentino, se havessi giudicato quella essere patria infame. Ma lui in molti luoghi dell'opera pare che si glori d'essere fiorentino" (2001, I: 222, 16–19). Landino then quotes several examples from the *Commedia* in order to argue—now completely reversing Boccaccio's condemnations and his emphasis upon her degeneration and injustice—that Florence is without infamy and that there is no lack of justice in her: "Che infamia adunque si può dare? Anzi che laude detrarre a quel popolo, che sia giusto?" (2001, I: 223, 37–39). Although he recognizes that some Dantean passages do indeed condemn Florentines, he restricts Dante's condemnations to a specific group of corrupt rulers. Having condemned a select few and not the entire city, Landino can now move on to consider

Dante's unjust exile. Yet even here, while his use of a term such as "ingiustamente" strongly evokes Boccaccio's language in the *Trattatello*, Landino's general argument runs counter to this biography. Whereas Boccaccio had used the theme of exile to accuse Florence, Landino mentions it only as a means to excuse Dante for exceeding the bounds of decorum, and he immediately returns to praising the city and its Roman origins:<sup>15</sup>

[. . .] vitupera quegli Fiorentini, e quali per ambitione, et factione, erano divenuti ingiusti, rapaci, crudeli, et avari. [. . .] Vitupera adunque gli scelerati governatori, o più tosto raptori del suo popolo Danthe [. . .]. Arrogì anchora che facto ingiustamente exule et rebelle da lloro della sua patria, merita scusa se alquanto per giusto sdegno excede el modo; et questo basti in difensione del poeta. Hora in laude della rep. nostra questo tra le prime cose ardirò affermare, quella non essere mai in forma da' suoi auctori degenerata, che non habbia sempre dimostro essere di romani cittadini vera colonia [. . .]. (2001, I: 223–24, 46–47, 52–53, 59–64)

As these contrastive parallels illustrate, it is difficult not to read the entire first section of chapter 2 against Boccaccio's repeated insistence on the infamy, injustice, and degeneration of the Florentine state, and to see Landino's justification as having an almost palinodic function in relation to the *Trattatello*. From this work, Landino takes the celebration of Dante's patriotism, but he completely reverses all its charges against Florence, and he subtly rewrites the notion of Dante as "figliuolo" and the meaning of his exile. It may even be that the need to redress Boccaccio's excesses has some role in shaping Landino's celebration, throughout the remainder of the *proemio*, of the good government of the city, its military victories, its artistic and mercantile culture, and its wealth—these are, after all, the very features that Boccaccio had targeted in his own outburst against the city.<sup>16</sup>

A second area in which Boccaccio's biography informs Landino's general approach to Dante in the *proemio* is Landino's own life of the poet in chapter 9. Landino finds space to repeat numerous "facts" and legends from the *Trattatello*, including the Roman origins of Dante's family, the dream of his pregnant mother, his relationship with Beatrice, his marriage to Gemma Donati, his studies and political career, his exile and peregrinations, a physiognomical description, the legend of the ladies of Verona, and several other anecdotes relating to the composition of the *Commedia*. Although at one point Landino directly recalls Boccaccio's biography,<sup>17</sup> almost all the

Boccaccian material is in fact mediated through Gianozzo Manetti's earlier Latin life, the *Vita Dantis* of the early 1440s (Manetti 2003, 8–61), which had itself relied heavily on the first redaction of the *Trattatello*. Unlike Bruni, Manetti had also included a life of Boccaccio in his *Trium illustrium poetarum Florentinorum vita* (2003, 86–105). Thompson (1970) and Cardini (1974, 2: 170–206) have studied Landino's borrowings from Manetti in some detail, and their analyses show that Landino is selective in his use of earlier biographies, that he sometimes updates this material, and that he enters into critical dialogue with Bruni's own *Vita di Dante*—a biography which, as we have already noted, had been especially severe toward Boccaccio. The best example of how Landino presents a modified Boccaccian version of Dante's life is found in his treatment of Dante's love for Beatrice. Bruni had eliminated all trace of Dante's youthful affair with Beatrice from his own biography, and repeatedly upbraided Boccaccio for being overly preoccupied with such matters; the opening section of the *Vita di Dante* had stated:

[. . .] mi parve che il nostro Boccaccio, dolcissimo et suavissimo huomo, così scrivesse la vita et i costumi di tanto sublime poeta come se a scrivere avessi il *Philocolo*, o il *Philostrato* o la *Fiammetta*. Però che tutta d'amore et di sospiri et di cocenti lagrime è piena, come se l'huomo nascesse in questo mondo solamente per ritrovarsi in quelle dieci giornate amorse, nelle quali da donne innamorate et da giovani leggiadri raccontate furono le *Cento Novelle*. Et tanto s'infiamma in queste parti d'amore, che le gravi et substanzievoli parti della vita di Dante lassa indietro et trapassa con silentio, ricordando le cose leggiere et tacendo le gravi. (1996, 537–38)

However, rather than merely reinstating Dante's love for Beatrice, as Manetti had done (2003, 14–16), Landino interprets Dante's youthful infatuation with Beatrice through the lens of the latest Florentine innovation, the recovery of Plato and his writings, using ideas drawn from Ficino's highly original commentary on the *Symposium*, the *De amore* (1469), a text which was well known to Landino (Gilson 2003a, 27):

[. . .] ardentissimamente fussi preso dall'amore d'una fanciulletta figliuola di Folco Portinari decta Bice, la quale lui dipoi sempre chiamò con più degno nome Beatrice. Era questa chome lui ne' suoi versi dimostra nell'octavo anno, et lui non era uscito del suo nono; el quale tanto s'infixe nelle midolle, che non solamente insino che lei vixè l'amò, ma dipoi morta nel XXIII.

anno della sua età acerbissimamente lungo tempo la pianse. El quale amore benché degeneri da quel furore descritto da Platone et vero amore divino, nientedimeno qua giù in terra è questo amore della corporea bellezza una effigie et imagine di quello. (2001, I: 248–49, 46–55)<sup>18</sup>

In this section of his life, Landino then adds a detail first noted by Bruni—Dante’s participation at the Battle of Campaldino—but which had also been incorporated by Manetti (2003, 16). For Bruni, Dante’s military activity formed an important part of his critique of Boccaccio, since he immediately juxtaposes his account of the incident with a swingeing criticism of the *Trattatello*:

[. . .] dico che Dante virtuosamente si trovò a combattere per la patria in questa battaglia; et vorrei che ’l Boccaccio nostro di questa virtù [sc., Dante’s military valor at Campaldino] più che dello amore di nove anni avesse fatto mentione et di simili leggerezze, che per lui si raccontano di tanto huomo. Ma che giova a dire? La lingua pur va dove il dente duole, et a chi piace il bere, sempre ragiona di vini. (1996, 541)

It thus seems significant that, after Landino mentions how Dante fought for the honor of himself and the benefit of the city (perhaps with a hint of Cicero’s “*utilitas ad rei publicae*”) at Campaldino, he immediately returns to the poet’s love for Beatrice, quoting one of Horace’s odes on the overpowering effect of love. The juxtaposition between soldier and lover, which is far less marked in Manetti (2003, 18), is thus cast in an eminently classicizing form and strongly suggests Landino’s dissent both from Bruni’s life and implicitly from his critique of Boccaccio:

[. . .] et nella pericolosissima battaglia di Campaldino, chome lui in una sua pistola scrive, virilmente combattendo honore ad sé et utile alla patria partorí. Ma torno al suo amore, nel quale possiamo di questo poeta riferire e versi oratiani: “pone me, pigris ubi nulla campis Arbor estiva recreatur aura Quod latus mundi nebule, malusque Iuppiter urget; Pone sub curru nimium propinqui, Solis in terra domibus negata, Dulce ridentem Lalagen amabo, Dulce loquentem” (2001, I: 249, 67–73).<sup>19</sup>

A similar approach, one that involves a carefully crafted updating of Boccaccio’s legacy as biographer, informs Landino’s response to the status of

the vernacular and its relationship to classical languages. In the first redaction of the *Trattatello*, Boccaccio had remarked upon Dante's familiarity with, and imitation of, classical poets (1973, 443); and, more significantly still, he had lauded Dante's linguistic abilities, establishing what was to become a standard parallel between the *Commedia's* attempt to forge the vernacular and the efforts of Virgil and Homer in fashioning their own classical languages:

la quale [sc., lingua volgare], secondo il mio giudicio, egli [sc., Dante] primo non altramenti fra noi Italici esaltò e recò in pregio, che la sua Omero tra' Greci o Virgilio tra' Latini, come che per poco spazio d'anni si creda che innanzi trovata fosse, niuno fu che ardire o sentimento avesse, dal numero delle sillabe e dalla consonanza delle parti estreme in fuori, di farla essere strumento d'alcuna artificiosa materia; anzi solamente in leggerissime cose d'amore con essa s'esercitavano. Costui mostrò con effetto con essa ogni altra materia potersi trattare, e glorioso sopra ogni altro fece il volgare nostro. (1973, 457–58)

And yet, as Carlo Paolazzi (1989, 131–221) in particular has shown, Boccaccio never fully reconciled himself to the idea that the lowly maternal vernacular could match up to Latin, the language of literature and culture par excellence. Such tensions remain salient in the *Esposizioni*, where he continues to stress the superiority of Latin, tells how Dante originally began the *Commedia* in Latin hexameters, and even comments on how the poem's vernacular cover has prevented learned men from penetrating its wisdom (1965, 5, 17–18, 685). Landino, by contrast, played a key role, from the late 1460s, in displacing such hierarchies of value, stressing the perfectibility of the vernacular and the need to employ *trasferimento*, or “transference,” to bring, that is, the riches of the Latin lexicon into the vernacular. One can gain some sense of this fundamental change of emphasis by comparing Boccaccio's Dante-Homer-Virgil parallel with Landino's own in chapter 9 of the *proemio*. The outlines of the Boccaccian analogy remain, but Landino introduces several new emphases, which confer upon his version a more classicizing patina, and he insists upon Dante's absolute innovation in forging the vernacular, his close reliance on Latin models, and the comparability between Latin and vernacular:

fu [sc., Dante] el primo che la lingua nostra patria insino a' suoi tempi roza inexercitata, et di copia et d'elegantia molto nobilitò, et fecela culta et ornata. Trovò Homero la lingua greca molto già abundante et exulta da

Orpheo, et da Museo, et da altri poeti più vetusti di lui. Trovò la latina Virgilio già elimata et exornata, et da Ennio, et da Lucretio, da Plauto, et da Terentio, et altri poeti vetusti amplificata. Ma innanzi a Danthe in lingua toscana nessuno havea trovato alchuna leggiadria, né indocto elegantia o lume alchuno; et excepto le rime, benché anchora quelle sieno inepte e roze, niente hanno gl'antichi in che si vegga un minimo vestigio di poeta. Danthe fu il primo che conosciuto ne gli scriptori latini gl'ornamenti e quali sono comuni all'oratore et al poeta, et inteso quanto acuto ingegno è necessario nella inventione poetica, quanto giudicio nella dispositione, quanto varii colori et lumi nella elocutione, *preterea* di quanti figmenti debba essere velato el poema, et di quanta et quanto varia doctrina referto, tentò con felice auspicio indurre tutte queste chose nella nostra lingua. (2001, I: 253, 198–212)<sup>20</sup>

Finally, with reference to the life of Dante, we should also note that Landino is active in rewriting the biographies of Boccaccio and Manetti in the way he excludes certain details that are prominent in his “source” material. For example, Thompson and Cardini do not mention the fact that Landino excises their invectives against Florence, as well as their comments on Dante’s lustfulness and haughtiness, and the view that he started the poem in Latin hexameters.

One final area in the *proemio* that illustrates Landino’s “revisionist” approach to Boccaccio is the account of poetic fury, the poet-theologian, and the origins and antiquity of poetry in chapters 10–13 (see Tigerstedt 1968; Trinkaus 1970, 2: 712–21; Cardini 1974, 2: 204–10; Greenfield 1981, 214–29; Gentile 1983; Di Cesare 1985; Coppini 1998, 134–44; McNair 1999). Boccaccio had earlier developed the concept of the poet-theologian in relation to Dante in a number of works. In the *Trattatello* he observed how Dante “nelle profondità altissime della teologia con acuto ingegno si mise” (1973, 443), while in the *Genealogie deorum gentilium*, he had asked, “Quis tam sui inscius nostrum Danthem sacre theologie implicitos persepe nexus mira demonstratione solventem, non sentiat eum non solum phylosophum, sed theologum insignem fuisse?” (1951, 2: 710).<sup>21</sup> In these works, as well as in the *Esposizioni*, he develops ideas about poetry, its religious origins, etymology, links with theology, and capacity to reveal the divine; and, in the *Genealogie* (1951, 2: 699), he had also defined poetry as a sort of fervor entering into the mind of the poet from God, a notion that he found in Cicero’s *Pro Archia*.

By contrast, in his *Vita di Dante* Brunetti had excised any reading of Dante as being supernally inspired (1996, 548–49), resolutely judging him to be a

poet of learning and mental application. In responding to Bruni, Landino again reopens dialogue with Boccaccio, who, like Landino, had discussed the poet-theologian and poetic inspiration immediately after his life of Dante (1973, 468–77). As Cardini has noted (1974, 2: 209), Landino even reworks one passage from the *Genealogie* at the opening of chapter 12, where he celebrates the religious origins of poetry. Again, however, it is important to take account of a fundamental change in context, tone, and emphasis between Landino's defense of poetry and Boccaccio's earlier apology. In Florence, at the beginning of the 1480s, the reading of poetry, especially classical poetry, no longer requires defending against ecclesiastical detractors as it had in the 1360s and 1370s. What is more, Landino places greater emphasis upon the divinity of the poet, and uses a variety of new sources, including Plato's *Ion* and Ficino's Latin epistle the *De divino furore*, to structure his account. In this way, Neoplatonic doctrine seems to have encouraged Landino to reelaborate the themes of poetic fury and of the poet as viaticum between man and God, and to apply these to Dante with far greater emphasis than one finds earlier in Boccaccio.

Let us now examine Landino's remaining references to Boccaccio in the *chiose*, by comparing the relevant glosses with the earlier tradition of Dante commentary in order to establish where he is merely dependent on earlier sources and those loci in which he inserts original comments. In the *proemio*, as we have seen, Boccaccio is commended for his unfinished Dante commentary and his interest in allegory. It is, then, rather surprising that, when Landino names Boccaccio as a commentator in the *chiose*, he never does so for matters of allegorical exegesis. Landino's references are taken instead from areas in the *Esposizioni* that relate Boccaccio's personal researches and reportage into Dante's life and contemporary Florentine history. The first example comes from a gloss on the word *lonza* in *Inferno* 1.32, in which Landino refers to Boccaccio in the following terms: "Vaglia anchora in questo l'auctorità di Giovanni Boccaccio, el quale scrive che e fiorentini fanciulli vedendo el pardo gridavano 'vedi la lonza'" (2001, 1: 298, 47–49).<sup>22</sup> This is not, however, a straightforward example of borrowing from the *Esposizioni*, since no such observation is recorded in Boccaccio's commentary. Landino's source is, in fact, Benvenuto da Imola, who tells us that he attended Boccaccio's readings of Dante and reports this and other oral teachings in his *Comentum*.<sup>23</sup> In his own gloss on the *lonza*, Benvenuto notes that "dum semel portaretur quidam pardus per Florentiam, pueri concurrentes clamabant: vide lonciam, ut mihi narrabat suavissimus Boccadius de Certaldo" (1887, 1: 35).<sup>24</sup> One further Boccaccian reference in the *Comento*—Landino's



observations on the lineage of the dissolute Cianghella in *Paradiso* 15.128—derives from Benvenuto’s commentary *ad locum* (1887, 5: 150–51). In this case Landino recognizes, at least implicitly, that Benvenuto is a follower of Boccaccio when he notes that “secondo che riferisce un discepolo di Giovanni Boccaccio fu [sc., Cianghella] di quegli della Tosa, famiglia molto nobile [. . .]” (2001, 4: 1785, 6–11). This judgment echoes the occasions when Benvenuto refers to Boccaccio as “venerabilis praeceptor meus” (1887, 1: 79; 5: 145, 164, 301),<sup>25</sup> and it further demonstrates Landino’s close familiarity with the *Comentum*.

Despite such derivative glosses, Landino makes five other explicit mentions of Boccaccio’s work as commentator that are not found in any earlier Dante commentary. In the gloss to *Inferno* 8.1–6, for example, Landino stresses how Boccaccio is trustworthy, not only because of his learning and good habits, but also because of his proximity to Dante’s time, and he goes on to relate at great length Boccaccio’s views, as set out in the *Esposizioni* (1965, 446–50), on the recovery of the first seven cantos of the *Inferno*:

Ma Giovanni Boccaccio, huomo et per doctrina, et per costumi, et per esser propinquo a’ tempi di Danthe, degno di fede, riferisce havere udito da Andrea figliuolo di Lion Poggi et d’una sorella di Danthe, che poi che Danthe insieme chon messer Vieri de’ Cerchi fu facto rebelle della patria, la moglie sua, chiamata Gemma, innanzi che el tumulto popolare gli corressi a chasa, trafugò in luogho salvo le più pretiose chose, et con quelle le scripture di Danthe. (2001, 2: 520, 10–16)

In line with Boccaccio’s account, this gloss goes on to tell how, five years later or more, Andrea helped to discover the hidden writings, including a “quader-netto” which contained the first seven cantos of the poem. The booklet was duly handed back to Dante who began to compose the poem again: “Et ripigliando la materia decte questo principio all’octavo canto, *Io dico, sequitando*, l’opera già innanzi al mio exilio incominciata. Questo dixè el Boccaccio havere udito da Andrea.” (2001, 2: 521, 29–32)

Similarly, in Landino’s account of Filippo Argenti shoeing his horses with silver (2001, 2: 531, 25–30) and the story of the planned construction of a castle near the village of St. Benedict of the Alps (2001, 2: 712, 48–52), it is Boccaccio’s oral testimony, his reports of meetings with contemporaries or near contemporaries of Dante, that marks him out as being especially reliable. These three passages are important for two reasons. First, given that Benvenuto did not know the *Esposizioni*, and that Francesco da Buti, the

Anonimo Fiorentino, Filippo Villani, Giovanni da Serravalle, and Guiniforte Barzizza, do not cite this work directly, these glosses seem to represent the first openly acknowledged use of Boccaccio's commentary. Second, while one might question Landino's notion that oral testimony is reliable because of its antiquity, one should note how the attention he pays to Boccaccio's "researches" anticipates the work of some contemporary *dantisti* who have recently reevaluated the importance of his biography in reconstructing data relating to the composition of the *Commedia* and its early reception (Barański 1993, 502, 504–7; Padoan 1993, 25–56).

Without being named, Boccaccio's *Esposizioni* also operate at a number of other levels in the *chiose*, as the *index auctorum* to Procaccioli's edition (2001, 4: 2049–50) and scattered comments in some earlier studies indicate. Landino's allegorical gloss, which unlike Boccaccio's is not separated from the literal commentary, is mainly derived from Francesco da Buti (Procaccioli 1989, 149–52), although Boccaccio mediates some interpretations (Barbi 1890, 173–74). Landino also draws on Boccaccio for some historical information, especially concerning Florentine municipal politics and some figures from Roman history such as Brutus, Tarquin, and Lucretia, as well as Brunetto Latini. Similarly, Landino follows the *Esposizioni* in his treatment of certain mythological figures such as Phlegyas (*Inf.* 8.19) and the Minotaur (*Inf.* 12.10–15) (Guerra 1926, 54). What is more, earlier studies have not noted that at least 17 etymologies in the *chiose* are taken from the *Esposizioni*, which despite their unfinished state, have a rich lexical commentary that identifies regionalisms, loan words, and specifically Florentine terms. However, there is here, too, an element of updating in the light of a more sophisticated appreciation of the Latin and Greek languages, and a much stronger desire than one finds in either Boccaccio or any earlier Dante commentator to stress the analogies and affinities between Latin and Dante's use of the vernacular.<sup>26</sup>

The final area of unattributed reuse of Boccaccio is more extensive still, and it concerns Landino's borrowings from the Latin encyclopedia, the *Genealogie deorum gentilium*. His use of the *Genealogie* again points to a line of continuity between Landino and earlier humanists, such as Bruni, who, despite his strong reservations regarding Boccaccio's abilities as a Latinist, had lavished praise upon the erudition found in his Latin works (Bruni 1999, 273; 1996, 319).<sup>27</sup> Like Bruni in the *Dialogi* and the *Notizia*, moreover, Landino is not averse to mentioning the work directly on one occasion in his gloss on Turnus, the killer of Pallantes, at *Inferno* 1.108:

Riferisce Giovanni Boccaccio nel libro delle *Genealogie* che al tempo d'Arrigo terzo imperadore el corpo di Pallante fu disocterrato non lontano da Roma, el quale anchora era intero et sì grande che ricto avanzava le mura romane. (2001, 1: 323, 136–39; cf. Boccaccio 1951, 1: 620)

There is also some precedent for Landino's interest in the *Genealogie* in the earlier tradition of Dante commentary: Benvenuto da Imola (Toynbee 1899–1900, 17n24), Francesco da Buti (1858–62, 3: 621), the Anonimo Fiorentino (Rocco 1979, 406), and Filippo Villani (1989, 32, 147, 157) had all made use of the Latin encyclopedia.<sup>28</sup> However, a comparison of the passages used by Landino and those employed by earlier commentators shows that Landino is almost always independent in his use of the *Genealogie* (see the Appendix).

The *index auctorum* in Procaccioli's critical edition is again helpful in identifying glosses that rely to some degree on the *Genealogie*, since it lists, in addition to the one direct use, some 42 other *loci paralleli*. On closer inspection, though, one finds that some of these passages are merely suggestions of commonplaces, and a good number cannot incontrovertibly be shown to be dependent on Boccaccio because they are found in other sources known to Landino such as Fulgentius and Coluccio Salutati. There are, nonetheless, some twenty passages where especially strong similarities exist between Landino's glosses and the phrasing, argumentation, and *auctores* found in the *Genealogie*. I have also identified five further passages that are not listed by Procaccioli (the *chiose* to *Inf.* 29.58–66, *Inf.* 32.10–12, *Par.* 4.103–5, *Par.* 10.28–36, and *Par.* 33.91–93) but that are derived from the *Genealogie*. Taken as a whole, the majority of these passages deal with mythological figures, but they also include information on Greek etymologies, quotations from Homer, citations of *auctores* as varied as Pliny, Augustine, Eusebius, Theodotus, and Solinus, and even some medical and astrological lore. Of particular note is the way Landino's glosses on all four of the mythological giants mentioned by Dante in *Inferno* 31 are guided by the *Genealogie*. Thus, for Ephialtes, Landino reports his genealogy and Homer's opinion of his height; and for Briareus, he notes how Homer has him as a friend of Jupiter and relates how he helped to uncover a plot by Neptune and Pallas. Landino describes Antaeus's death at the hands of Hercules and culls a variety of details about him from Pomponius Mela, Theodotus, Augustine, and Eusebius. Finally, for Tityos, he reports the view of Leontius Pilatus that this giant was the prince of Boeotia and attempted to take the Delphic oracle from Apollo. In all these glosses, Landino's close dependence on the *Genealogie* is shown by the fact that

he follows, often almost verbatim, the genealogies, stories, Homeric references, and even the unusual authorities such as Leontius and Pilatus that are found in Boccaccio's encyclopedia (see Appendix).<sup>29</sup>

Let us now summarize the findings of this study. We have seen that, in his comments on Boccaccio, Landino is at times close to the earlier estimates of Florentine humanists such as Bruni, and dependent upon earlier Dante commentators, especially Benvenuto da Imola. He borrows five of his twelve direct references to Boccaccio from Benvenuto's *Comentum*, a fact that, as with the transmission of the *Trattatello* via Manetti's Latin life, demonstrates how vernacular material related to Boccaccio is mediated in complex forms in the *Comento*, often passing through secondary Latin sources. Comparison with Benvenuto, however, reveals Landino's relative lack of enthusiasm for the *certaldese*. Benvenuto refers more frequently to Boccaccio, both as author of the *Decameron* and Latin encyclopedist, and he is more fulsome in his praise; he even addresses a full-scale encomium to Boccaccio's learning and eloquence in his gloss on Dante's reference—a damning one—to Certaldo in *Paradiso* 16.50 that has no counterpart in the *Comento*.<sup>30</sup> It is also important to reiterate the gulf that separates the attention Landino pays to Boccaccio the vernacular writer from that which he bestows upon Petrarch's vernacular output. In the *Comento*, Petrarch's vernacular works are cited directly sixty-two times: thirty-two for the *Canzoniere* and thirty for the *Trionfi*. These passages—none of which are found in earlier Dante commentators—illustrate Dante's use of language, figures of speech, moral allegory, literary topoi, and mythology. Landino even refers to Petrarch as an *auctor* alongside Latin and Greek writers in at least thirteen glosses, a form of citation that is never practiced in his references to Boccaccio's vernacular works and never openly employed in the material taken from the *Genealogie*.<sup>31</sup>

These findings add weight to the originality of Lorenzo de' Medici, who, in his *Comento de' miei sonetti* (c. 1482–84), places Boccaccio after Petrarch and Dante, but nonetheless praises the *Decameron* as a prime example of what can be achieved by the Tuscan language, because of the work's unique stylistic attainments (“singulare e sola al mondo non solamente la invenzione, ma la copia e eloquenzia”) and its universal treatment of human subjects and passions (“la diversità della materia, ora grave, ora mediocre e ora bassa [. . .] avendo a sprimere tutte le nature e passioni degli uomini che si trovano al mondo”) (1992, 1: 368–69). Lorenzo's passage is clearly in emulative dialogue with the earlier Florentine tradition, and perhaps especially with Landino, for whom it is Dante, and only Dante, who surpasses all others by “varietà di

doctrina, et per elegantia, et copia” (2001, 1: 219, 11).<sup>32</sup> And yet, it would be wrong to view Landino’s use of Boccaccio as simply being reflective of earlier humanistic judgments and passive with regard to the earlier tradition of Dante commentary. For, as we have seen, in the *proemio*, Landino often rewrites Boccaccio, both in what he includes and what he omits. Landino is at his most active in treating “Boccaccian” themes such as Dante’s relationship with Florence, his biography, the reasons for his choice and use of the vernacular, and his own account of the nature of poetry and the status of the poet. We have also seen that, despite some points of continuity with earlier commentators, Landino shows independence from that tradition in the use he makes of the *Esposizioni*, in his comments on “guari,” and, above all, in his extensive deployment of the *Genealogie*.

#### APPENDIX: UNATTRIBUTED REFERENCES TO BOCCACCIO’S *GENEALOGIE DEORUM GENTILIUM*

This list is indebted to the apparatus provided by Paolo Procaccioli in his critical edition (4: 2050). However, each reference has been checked against the text of the *Genealogie* and the earlier tradition of Dante commentary with all parallels being noted; some passages suggested by Procaccioli have been excluded where the *loci paralleli* are merely illustrative or not sufficiently strong to indicate direct borrowing.

1. *Inf.* 1.73–75 (1: 313, 40–44). Dardanus’s genealogy, cf. *Geneal.* 6.2–6, ed. Romano, 1: 291–94. But see also “Ottimo Commento,” ad loc.; Buti 1858–62, 1: 132.
2. *Inf.* 2.10–36 (1: 339, 39–58). Aeneas’s genealogy and reference to Eusebius = *Geneal.* 6.1–6, ed. Romano, 1: 290–94.
3. *nf.* 26.85–111 (2: 897, 79). Penelope as daughter of Icarus = *Geneal.* 5.44, ed. Romano, 1: 281: “koyre Ikarioio.”
4. *Inf.* 26.112–42 (2: 902–3, 60–69). Callistus’s transformation and etymology of Greek *arctos* = *Geneal.* 4.67, ed. Romano, 1: 222.
5. *Inf.* 29.58–66 (2: 944, 11–24). Aeacus as son of Aegina and etymology of Greek *myrmix* = *Geneal.* 12.45, ed. Romano, 2: 604. This passage is not noted in Procaccioli, who cites Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7.475–660.
6. *Inf.* 30.97–99 (2: 964, 64–68). Autolycus as son of Mercury and Sinon his progeny = *Geneal.* 2.14–15, ed. Romano, 1: 83–84, which itself takes material from *Odyssey* 19.392–404.

7. *Inf.* 31.91–96 (1: 978, 7–13). Epialtes' genealogy and height according to Homer = *Geneal.* 10.47, ed. Romano, 2: 518.
8. *Inf.* 31.97–102 (1: 979, 9–15). Briareus's kinship with Jupiter as related in Homer = *Geneal.* 4.18, ed. Romano, 1: 177–78.
9. *Inf.* 31.118–20 (1: 981, 14–25). Antaeus and the collated views of Pomponius Mela, Theodontius, Augustine, and Eusebius = *Geneal.* 1.13, ed. Romano, 1: 42–43. This is the only reference in the *Comento* to Mela and Theodontius.
10. *Inf.* 31.124–26 (1: 981–82, 30–37). Tityos as son of Jupiter and Hederia and the testimony of Leontius = *Geneal.* 5.24, ed. Romano, 1: 261–62. This is the only reference in the *Comento* to Leontius.
11. *Inf.* 32.10–12 (2: 986, 8–10). Amphion son of Antiope and Jupiter with reference to Homer = *Geneal.* 5.30, ed. Romano, 1: 274. This passage is not noted in Procaccioli.
12. *Purg.* 4.61–63 (3: 1107–8, 27–43). Castor and Pollux = *Geneal.* 11.7, ed. Romano, 2: 546–47, but Landino enriches the account with material taken from Pliny and Horace.
13. *Purg.* 9.1–3 (3: 1178, 6–17). Tithonus and Aurora with reference to Solinus = *Geneal.* 6.10–11, ed. Romano, 1: 295–96.
14. *Purg.* 9.13–15 (3: 1181, 9–34). Procne and Philomela = *Geneal.* 9.8, ed. Romano, 2: 456–57.
15. *Purg.* 12.28–30 (3: 1231, 15–20). Briareus including reference to Homer = *Geneal.* 4.18, ed. Romano, 1: 177–78. Here Landino reuses material from *Inf.* 31.97–102.
16. *Purg.* 12.37–39 (3: 1232, 1–6). Niobe's genealogy = *Geneal.* 12.2, ed. Romano, 2: 50.
17. *Purg.* 13.31–33 (3: 1245–46, 32–54). Orestes' remains with reference to Solinus = *Geneal.* 12.20, ed. Romano, 2: 591–92.
18. *Purg.* 19.19–21 (3: 1337–38, 8–21). Sirens including reference to Homer and etymology of Greek = *Geneal.* 7.20, ed. Romano, 1: 354–57.
19. *Purg.* 26.82–84 (3: 1431–32, 31–43). Hermaphrodite, especially medical doctrine at lines 40–43 = *Geneal.* 3.21, ed. Romano, 1: 1414.
20. *Par.* 4.103–5 (4: 1623, 28–32). Amphiaraus as son of Oicles in Homer and inventor of pyromancy according to Pliny = *Geneal.* 13.45, ed. Romano, 2: 661–62. This passage is not noted in Procaccioli.
21. *Par.* 5.85–87 (4: 1636–37, 2–7). Astrological lore related to Mercury = *Geneal.* 2.7, ed. Romano, 1: 77–79. Landino's account is greatly enriched with other astrological material.
22. *Par.* 8.1–12 (4: 1680–82, 1–71). Astrological lore related to Venus and Greek etymology of *aphros* = *Geneal.* 3.22, ed. Romano, 1: 142–52, esp. 149. Landino's account is greatly enriched with other astrological material.

23. *Par.* 10.28–36 (4: 1712–13, 9–51). Astrological lore related to Sun, including references to Ovid, Cicero, and Plato = *Geneal.* 4.3, ed. Romano, 1: 158–61. This passage is not noted in Procaccioli, although Landino’s account—a paeon to the sun’s powers—adds further details to Boccaccio’s treatment.
24. *Par.* 33.91–93 (4: 2023, 44–48). On Belo and the first ship = *Geneal.* 2.22, ed. Romano, 1: 87–88. This passage is not noted in Procaccioli.

## NOTES

1. On Landino’s Latin dialogues, see also Di Cesare (1984); Kallendorf (1989); McNair (1991). On his teaching at the Studio, see Field (1978, 1981, 1986); La Brasca (1989).
2. All subsequent references to and quotations from Landino’s *Comento* are to volume, page, and line(s) in this edition.
3. The opening lecture is in Cardini (1974, 1: 33–40). On its importance, see Cardini (1973, 144–49), (1974, 2: 40–51); Tanturli (1992b). The *volgarizzamento* of Pliny’s *Historia naturalis* was printed by Nicolas Jenson (Venice 1476); see Cardini (1974, 1: 8–92) (*proemio* only); for further discussion, see Camillo (1991, 126–32); Cardini (1974, 2: 155–86); Tavoni (1992, 70–79).
4. For an anthology of the relevant passages in the *Comento*, see Cardini (1974, 2: 190–203); see also 1: 131, and 2: 137. For commentary, see Cardini (1973, 144–50); La Brasca (1986, 27–28). For Petrarch’s presence in earlier Dante commentary, see Rossi (1996), with some commentary on Landino, at 473. More generally on Petrarch’s reception, see Dionisotti (1974); Porcelli (2005). See also note 31.
5. For interest in Dante and Petrarch, see the studies listed in the Works Cited (especially those by Cardini and La Brasca) and the previous note. For Boccaccio, the main contributions are: Cardini (1973, 125–29; 1974, 2: 135, 170–206, 209); Procaccioli (1989, 172, 176–80, 182–84, 186, 188, 198–201, 203–5, 252); Thompson (1970).
6. In what seems an almost obsequious gesture to Leonardo Bruni, relatively little critical attention has been paid Boccaccio’s reception in fifteenth-century Florence. And yet, despite being cast, especially among Florentine humanists, as the least glittering of the three Florentine crowns, the least gifted vernacular poet, and the worst Latin stylist, Boccaccio looms large at a number of levels. It may be helpful to distinguish at least five gradations: (1) as an author of vernacular texts (the *Decameron* but also other romance works) owned, copied, borrowed, annotated, and imitated; (2) as a learned commentator on matters of classical mythology, geography, and biography (the *Genealogie deorum gentilium*; the *De montibus, silvis, fontibus et de nominibus maris liber*; the *De casibus virorum illustrium*; and the *De mulieribus claris*); (3) as a *dantista*, in his guises as copyist (especially of Dante’s *canzoni*), biographer (*Trattatello in laude di Dante*), and commentator (*Esposizioni sopra la Comedia*); (4) as a visual type in frescoes of famous Florentine citizens; (5) as a model, both in verse and prose, for literary imitation and emulation in the vernacular. These gradations

require careful contextualization in relation to wider cultural themes and specific critical debates; the main framework is, however, characterized by: (1) a critical humanist response (Bruni, Poggio Bracciolini, Niccolò Niccoli) that is counterbalanced by enthusiastic celebration and use of his literary works among proponents of Tuscan vernacular culture (Giovanni Gherardi da Prato, Cino Rinuccini, certain poets at the Certame coronario); (2) humanist use of the Latin works throughout the quattrocento; and (3) from the 1470s, a revitalized humanist interest in the vernacular and its revalorization as a language of literature and learning able to deal with humanist themes and topics. On Boccaccio's reception in Italy the most valuable general study is still Chiari (1949). For more recent studies of Boccaccio's *fortuna* in the late trecento and quattrocento, see (humanist response) Albanese (1992–93); Marsh (1980); (mercantile readership) Bec (1975–76); Daniels (2003); (influence on Dante commentators) La Favia (1975); Rocco (1979); Uberti (1980); (presence in/influence on the visual arts) Donato (1988); Meltzoff (1987, 14, 176–81, 184–87, 194–95, 203–4, 211–12). On the reuse of the *Genealogie* by humanists (a topic that merits more detailed investigation both in Italy and outside), see Dionisotti (1974, 68); Pade (1995); Tomè Marcassa (2001). For Florentine vernacular imitations of the minor works, see Orvieto (1978, 1979); Picone (1993); Martelli (1996, 114, 119–22, 127, 129, 131, 139–40, 150–51, 268, 310–11). On Boccaccian intertexts in Poliziano's *Stanze per la giostra*, see Bessi (1979, 313, 316–19, 321, 327–28, 335), Branca (1993, 46–54; *Filostrato, Teseida, Ninfale fiesolano*); De Robertis (1967, 151; *Decameron*).

7. “[. . .] eight serious and learned men.” This and all subsequent translations from the Latin are mine.
8. “And here you will gaze on the noble name of Boccaccio / who painted a learned work containing diverse love stories.”
9. In Niccoli's “retraction,” however, Bruni praises the Latin works, especially the *Genealogie*, see Bruni (1999, 273). For other evidence of the early Florentine humanist polemic against Boccaccio instigated by Niccolò Niccoli, see Rinuccini (1968, 309). Note, too, that Bruni made a Latin rendering of *Decameron* 4.1 in 1436 (this Latin novella often circulated in manuscripts with the *Vita di Dante*); see Marsh (1980).
10. Palmieri (1982, 6–7): “Terzo è poi il Boccaccio, assai di lungi da' primi [sc., Dante and Petrarch], pel numero dell'opere da-lui composte meritamente lodato; volesse Idio che i suoi libri volgari non fussino ripieni di tanta lascivia et dissoluti exempli d'amore.” See also Villani (1997, 376); Manetti (2003, 98). On Bruni's ideologized critique of Boccaccio, see most recently Gilson (2005, 112–24 [with earlier bibliography]); see also Bartoli (2003).
11. “And certainly this noble Ghino never did anything praiseworthy, other than when he treated so excellently the most delicate and wealthy abbot of Cluny, and cured his stomach illness most singularly well [. . .] as it is elegantly written by that most gentle of men, Boccaccio of Certaldo, in his mother tongue, in his book which is called the Decameron.”



12. "Lord Lucio da Valbona was a fine and prudent soldier. His prudence shone no less brightly in his beautiful daughter Caterina; for, when this old man found her amorously coupled with the young and noble Ricciardo, he wisely married her off to him without losing any honor, as it is written in a jocose manner by Boccaccio of Certaldo."
13. For "non guari di lontano" in Boccaccio, see *Decameron* 2.6.19; 4.4.16; 3.10.8; 7.introd.10; 7.4.8; 8.7.61; 9.7.5; 10.3.12. See also Bembo (1966, 96 and 282).
14. Sixteenth-century interest in Boccaccio's language (revived by Bembo's reformulation of Boccaccio's value as a prose writer) is marked in the commentaries by Trifon Gabriele (see Pertile 1985), Alessandro Vellutello, Bernardino Daniello, Lodovico Castelvetro, and especially in the *lezioni* on Dante by members of the Accademia Fiorentina. Note also that these commentators often upbraid Landino for errors in his treatment of Dante's language.
15. For explicit criticism of Dante's harsh attitude to Florence in the *chiose*, see Landino (2001, 2: 692, 22–29; 3: 1225, 24–27).
16. Of course, as is well known, Landino's primary model, especially in chapters 3–8, is Filippo Villani's *De origine civitatis Florentie et de eiusdem famosis civibus* (1997 [c. 1381–88]), a work whose popularity in Laurentian Florence is attested to by a *volgarizzamento* c. 1478; see (Tanturli, 1992a, 3, 9–10).
17. Landino (2001, 1: 248, 25): "Tal sogno distesamente interpreta el Boccaccio."
18. More generally on Beatrice in the *Comento* (often with close dependence on Buti's commentary), see Porcelli (1994).
19. Quotation from Horace, *Carmen*, 1.22.17–24 (1947, 64): "Place me on the lifeless plains where no tree is revived by the summer breeze, an area of the world oppressed by mists and mirky skies; set me beneath the chariot of the Sun where it comes too near to the Earth, in a land which forbids dwellings. I will still love my sweetly laughing, sweetly talking Lalage."
20. For the rhetorical categories of *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elocutio* applied here to Dante, see Cicero, *De inventione* 1.7.9 (1949, 18–19).
21. "Is anyone so insensible not to perceive that Dante was a great theologian as well as a philosopher when he often unties with amazingly skilful demonstration the hard knots of theology?"
22. More generally on the *lonza* in Dante, see Allaire (1997).
23. See Benvenuto (1887, 5: 145), referring to "ecclesia [. . .] sanctus Stefanus [the church of Santo Stefano]," where he heard "meum Boccacium de Certaldo legentem istum nobilem poetam in dicta ecclesia [my Boccaccio of Certaldo reading this noble poet in the aforementioned church]." For other oral reports, see (1887, 1: 227; 1: 401; 3: 171). On the Benvenuto-Boccaccio relationship, see esp. La Favia (1975); Uberti (1980). See also Barański (2001, 99–116), for an important account of the emulative rewriting of Boccaccio's *Trattatello* in the prologue to Benvenuto's *Comentum*.
24. "As the most eloquent Boccaccio of Certaldo told me, when a certain panther was

- once brought through the streets of Florence, young boys ran up to it and shouted out: look at the 'lonza.'"
25. "[. . .] my honored teacher."
  26. The following etymologies in Landino are based upon lexical comments in the *Esposizioni*: *bizzarro*, *broda*, *buffa*, *burli*, *calle*, *ceraste*, *chilos*, *cherici*, *cionco*, *Clio*, *Cocito*, *cola*, *Euterpe*, *gora*, *himno*, *hyror*, *poza*. For an example of updating with Latin and Greek etymologies that are not found in Boccaccio, see *cuna* (*Inf.* 14.100–102)
  27. The *Genealogie* is also praised by Villani (1997, 375–76) and Manetti (2003, 98). For its later use by Poliziano, see Branca (1993, 321). See also the studies by Pade (1995) and Tomè Marcassa (2001). Landino makes use of this work in all his exegetical works, from the *Disputationes Camaldulenses*, to the printed commentaries on Horace (1482) and Virgil (1488).
  28. Benvenuto makes particularly extensive use of the *Genealogie*; see Toynbee (1899–1900, 17).
  29. On Theodontius, see Pade (1997).
  30. Benvenuto (1887, 5: 164): "Sed hic nota quod licet praedictus sua temeritate cedat ad infamiam Certaldi, tamen temporibus modernis floruit Boccacius de Certaldo, qui sua suavitate sapientiae et eloquentiae reddidit ipsum locum celeberrimum et famosum. Hic siquidem Iohannes Boccacius, verius bucca aurea, venerabilis praeceptor meus, diligentissimus cultor et familiarissimus nostri auctoris, ibi pulchra opera edidit; praecipue edidit unum librum magnum et utilem ad intelligentiam poetarum *de Genealogiis Deorum*; librum magnum et utilem *de casibus virorum illustrium*; libellum *de mulieribus claris*; librum *de fluminibus*; et librum *Bucolicorum*, etc [But here it should be known that, though the aforementioned person by her rashness brought infamy upon Certaldo, in modern times there flourished Boccaccio of Certaldo, who gave back fame and celebrity to this place due to the pleasantness of his wisdom and of his eloquence. This Giovanni Boccaccio, truly a golden-gilded mouth, my honored teacher, was a most sedulous man of culture and one most familiar with our Latin authors. In this place, he published fine works, and in particular he published a great and useful book for understanding matters pertaining to poetry, *The Genealogy of the Gods*, a great and useful book, *On the Cases of Famous Men*, a small book *On Famous Women*, a work *On Rivers*, a book of *Eclogues*, etc.]" Benvenuto refers to Boccaccio over twenty times in the *Comentum*; he makes nine references to Boccaccian novellas, and mentions the *De montibus et silvis* as well as the *De casibus*; see Toynbee (1899–1900, 17).
  31. The relevant passages are reproduced by Cardini; see note 4; see also Landino (2001, 4: 2062–63). For quotations of the vernacular Petrarch alongside Latin and Greek authorities, see Landino on *Inf.* 1.82–84; 3.22–23; 4.108; 4.130–32; 5.127–29; 12.106–8; *Purg.* 1.13–15; 6.124–26; 25.112–14; 31.55–57; *Par.* 6.46–48; 8.1–12; 27.91–93. Landino's one reference to a Latin work by Petrarch (*De remediis* at 3: 1231, 5–8) is dependent upon Benvenuto (1887, 3: 326).
  32. For the Landino-Lorenzo relationship, see Cardini (1993).

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