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Ronald L. Martinez

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Calandrino and the Powers of the Stone: Rhetoric, Belief, and the Progress of *Ingegno* in *Decameron* VIII.3

Boccaccio's heliotrope appears in the first of his Calandrino tales, the third of the antepenultimate, eighth day of storytelling by the *brigata*. That there are four tales featuring Calandrino (the Florentine painter Nozzo di Perino, appearing in VIII.3, VIII.6, IX.3, IX.5) as the collection nears its end is highly significant within the economy of the collection.[1] Finding a group of tales sharing the same character or characters — unprecedented in the *Decameron* — suggests a modification, in the last group of days (each group marked by a weekend break: tales I–II, III–VII, VIII–X) of Boccaccio's rules for ordering his tale-telling, a kind of anomaly potentially more disruptive than the privilege of Dioneo. Although suggestive recent studies have postulated distinct groupings for the tales based on Boccaccio's inclusion of other Trecento artists,[2] Calandrino's exploits with his fellow painters Bruno and Buffalmacco and with other Florentine wits such as Maso del Saggio, and with the Bologna-trained doctor Maestro Simone,[3] may also suggest a cluster of Florentine types (artisans, wags, frauds clever, pompous, or failed) whose concatenated adventures herald the return of the *brigata* itself to the complex social order of the city after the recreative excursus of storytelling.[4] In fact there is a Florentine preponderance in the last two days of storytelling which frame the Calandrino-related offerings (the "magnificent" Tenth day is an exception for more than one reason): not only a preponderance of tales in the Florentine *contado*, but also a perceptible tilt toward the artisanal and middle classes: lesser *popolani* and *artigiani*, working people, one might say, like Calandrino and his fellows (a trend that begins in day VII, contrasting with the more aristocratic days IV–VI, and of course X, in this respect). Whereas Day VII has three tales set in Florence, Days VIII and IX each have six within the *contado* (including Pistoia, Camerata, Varlungo, Mugnone); each has a Sienese tale as well, this way bringing in a Republic that was a near and constant rival. The *brigata* itself begins its "return" to society by anomalously attending mass at a parish church during the prologue to Day VIII (2), an event that echoes their original meeting in Santa Maria Novella and now heralds their return there. The same idea of return is signaled by the free subject of Day IX, which reverts to the unstructured theme of Day I (again, leaving aside the "transcendental" Day X). Even the fact that several speakers find the subject of Calandrino irresistible (for Filostrato, telling VIII.5 of Maso del Saggio displaces his offering on Calandrino, postponing it until the next day and IX.3, but involves a character that is part of the same crowd) is an indication that the narrative desire of the *brigata* is now tending towards tales both pleasurable and Florentine in setting. In sum, the cluster of tales including Calandrino & friends begins to present itself, though still within the frame of the *Decameron*, as the germ or core of a new collection of tales centered in the city.[5]

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Before the return is achieved, however, there are some scores to settle. In proposing the day's subject, Lauretta explicitly avoids calling for a round of answers to the feminist vendettas in Day VII, suggesting instead a more general subject of tit-for-tat reciprocal *beffe* eschewing both gender asymmetry and animal vindictiveness.[6] In a sense Dioneo's story about Tingoccio and Meuccio, concluding Day VII, begins this tempering effect by discounting sexual peccadilloes from the reckoning of sins in Purgatory, suggesting instead a more indulgent regime (though a perceptibly misogynist one) starkly in contrast with the ideologically strident ninth tale: in which Lidia hoodwinks and symbolically castrates her husband, the patriarch Nicostrato, to the point of making him disbelieve the evidence of his own eyes.[7] In the tales of Day VIII, both the question of judgment and retaliation and the ideological manipulation of the visible, and their common denominator of faith and belief, return in force.

Indeed, the fact that Day VIII is also a Sunday provides the opportunity for a collection of stories about retaliation to become more searching meditations on the problems and complexities of doling out justice. That is, if the Sunday of Day III is the day of the "resurrezione della carne" in the cheerfully obscene sense, Day VIII proffers Sunday as the typological eighth day, associated with the end of time and the final judgment, although, in the case of the *Decameron* as a "human comedy" the nature of the reckonings is more often short of final. The solar-astronomical and eschatological resonances of the day that is at once Sunday, *Dies solis*, the Day of the Lord, *dies dominica*, and the Day of Judgment, *dies iudicii*, and the implications of these for the theme of retaliatory justice, have already been noted and exploited in important readings of tales within the day's compass.[8] But day VIII also, as we will see, brings to a head problems first raised in Day VI, with the tales of Giotto and Forese and of Frate Cipolla, problems that might be characterized as endemic to verbal and visual representation, seduction, and deception.[9]

That Boccaccio's wished to especially emphasize his Sundays seems clear, moreover, as *domenica* is the only day ever *named* in the incipits to the days, each of which includes an elaborate description of the sunrise (*martedì* and *mercoledì* are mentioned in the Introduction of the first day, but far from the incipit; other days are mentioned, in the text and rubrics, of course, but not in the day-incipits, and in fact very rarely).[10] One effect of this, of course, is to closely associate the divine and astronomical senses of the eighth day, *dies dominica* and *dies solis* (or *lucis*).[11] In the case of Day VIII, the idea of an apocalypse in the literal sense, a putting aside of veils, is especially notable:

> Day III, Introduction, 2: L'aurora già di vermiglia cominciava, appressandosi il *sole*, a divenir rancia, quando la *domenica*, la reina levata…
>
> Day VIII, Introduction, 2: Già nella sommità de' più alti monti apparivano, la *domenica* mattina, i raggi della surgente *luce*, e, ogni ombra partitosi, manifestamente le cose si conosceano…

Sunday also appears by name to place the time in individual tales of the Day. The priest of Varlungo admires Belcolore when he preaches in church on Sundays (VIII.2.10); while Maestro Scimmione was, according to Bruno, "born on a Sunday" (VIII.9.64) to indicate his lack of wit, as salt could not be sold on a Sunday. Boccaccio also considers how the sun's movements mark the seasons, and thus the first Calandrino story takes place when the sun is high in the sky at noon (thus, in summer; see VIII.3.34); while the second, VIII.6, takes place in December, when the sun is low in the sky (VIII.6.4, "di dicembre"). Both solar ex-

tremes of the year are then assembled for the tale of the scholar Rinieri and the widow Elena, which chiefly takes place both in December, after Christmas, when the sun is at its weakest (VIII.7.16), and in July, when the sun is in Leo, and thus at its strongest and hottest (VIII.7.60); as Durling has shown, these astronomical issues are replicated in the plot and imagery of the tale, and in its very marked juxtaposition of human retaliation with images that also suggest divine judgment.[12]

Decameron VIII.3 itself has enjoyed a rich tradition of comment by Mario Baratto, Millicent Marcus, and Giuseppe Mazzotta, to name but a few.[13] These accounts have articulated how the *novella* stages a number of closely related negotiations: between things material and visible (painting and sculpture, social appearance) and those psychological and invisible (intention and deception, credulity and faith); between sophisticated schemers representing hardheaded Florentine *ingegno* (Maso, Bruno, Buffalmacco) and the incurably provincial *grossa pasta* of the too-credulous Calandrino; indeed, at the limit, between a mundane and comic *beffa* among working Florentine painters and moments that verge on the deeply melancholic, if not the tragic: these last often rendered conspicuous by citations of Dante's *Commedia*, which brings to the *novella*, as it does to the closely related VIII.9, an embedded pattern of moralizing eschatology.

My own approach here to a reading of this complex *novella* will be through the lore and implications — the encyclopedia of cultural reference — suggested by the heliotrope (in vernacular, *elitropia*, *aritropia*, *ritropia*) itself. Although Bruno and Buffalmacco's tricking of Calandrino depends on the fact that the magical heliotrope does not in fact exist, its existence in the tale is assured through its suggestive name and through the seductive appeal of the power it would confer: that of rendering its bearer invisible. These two parts of the stone — its name, *nome*, and its power, its *virtù* — which would be logically distinct if the stone existed, become, in light of its nonexistence, the power of the name alone. That is, the power of Maso del Saggio's heliotrope is entirely linguistic, poetic, rhetorical: it is the power of suggestion, of trope and metaphor, of aroused desire.[14] In its action, the heliotrope forcefully embodies Isidore's account of etymology itself: the power, the *vis* or *virtù* of a word disclosed in its meaning.[15] The distinction of name and *virtù* is made explicitly in the tale; after Maso has identified the stone early on, in attracting Calandrino's attention (3.20: "l'altro sì è una pietra, la quale noi altri lapidarii appelliamo elitropia, pietra di troppo gran vertù"). But in relating his discovery of these facts to his friends Bruno and Buffalmacco, Calandrino forgets the name; but no matter: "A Calandrino, che era di grossa pasta, era già il nome uscito di mente; per che egli rispose: 'Che abbiam noi a far del nome poi che noi sappiamo la vertù?'" (3.31).[16]

What are the attributes of the heliotrope, impudently fictional though they may be? The encyclopedic and lexicographic tradition for the stone goes back to Pliny, Papias, and Isidore of Seville, whose views were transmitted both to lapidaries such as that of Marbod of Rennes and to lexicons like that of Uguccione da Pisa; for Boccaccio's purposes, the tradition probably culminates with Albert of Cologne's "scientific" account in his *De mineralibus*.[17] The ever-popular Isidore bishop of Seville describes both the heliotrope stone and heliotrope plant, both of which are named after their effects. Taking up Pliny's account, Isidore writes: "The cause of the name is from the effect of the stone. For plunged into a brazen vessel it changes the rays of the sun with blood-colored reflections").[18] The plant, on the other hand, "Receives the name of heliotrope first because it flowers at the summer solstice, or because it

turns its leaves around by the motions of the sun; so that it is called 'sun-follower' by the Latins."[19] It might appear that the stone acts upon sunlight (by reddening it) while the plant is acted upon; but in some accounts the stone, too is passible to the sun, darkening and lightening under the sun's rays.[20] Drawing on the Greek lexicographer Papias, Giovanni da Genova explains the Greek name of the plant: "From *helyos* which means sun, and *tropos* which means turn, this plant is called the heliotrope."[21] Thus the name of both stone and plant are closely linked to the name of the sun, to its variations in light, and to its annual and daily motions. Moreover, in the learned sources both plant and stone are important, not only because they share the same name (both, in Latin, *heliotropium*), but because they must be joined together, in the presence of a suitable charm or incantation, for the invisibility effect to be produced. As the versified lapidary of Marbod of Rennes puts it, "if it is joined to the plant of the same name, and blessed with the prescribed charm, with a powerful word, it will withdraw whoever holds it from human sight."[22] These complications are retained in some vernacular versions (e.g. the *Intelligenza*, "cela chi l'ha con l'erba eliotropia") but are more frequently discarded, and the possession of the stone itself becomes sufficient for disappearing, as in the first tale of the *Novellino* (after the proem) or indeed in the case of Boccaccio's tale of Calandrino.[23]

For Boccaccio's vernacular predecessors, the stone, though certainly "sì vertudiosa" is more intriguing for its expressive value as a symbol of what is impossible or unattainable, as if a tangible fetish of rhetorical *adynaton*.[24] In the *Fiore*, any woman whose love can be secured with gifts must be carrying the heliotrope, "si porta l'aritropia," and is thus not to be seen, doesn't exist. Cino da Pistoia's ser Mula thinks himself so wise his wits are holding the heliotrope, but this has led him to acquire what all men share, the common property of poverty, that is, nothing; *ritropia* rhymes with "donna *inopia*."[25] But the richest vein that Boccaccio was to mine regards the potential applications of the stone's invisibility effect as an instrument for social transgression, for theft and amorous escapade, for flights of the criminal imagination, the mischief of unbounded possibility. Cecco d'Ascoli in the *Acerba* observes that whoever has the stone can easily be a thief, while the *Mare amoroso* constructs a lover's fantasy of how he might come secretly to his lady love by possessing the stone and walking stealthily "with the gait of a thief" to the place of rendezvous:

> … e io tenessi in mano l'aritropia, / che fa ciascun sì che non fia veduto,
> che io faria andatura di paone / che va come ladrone a imbolare…
> e sì verrei a voi celatamente / di notte, per paura de la gente…

The fourth line quoted above may well be remembered in *Decameron* VIII.9.13, when Bruno describes to Maestro Simone the *corso* that allows him and Buffalmacco to embellish their otherwise impoverished existence: "Ne voglio per ciò che voi crediate che noi andiamo a imbolare, ma noi andiamo in corso, e di questo ogni cosa che a noi e di diletto o di bisogno senza alcun danno d'altrui tutto traiamo…" That the last line quoted echoes Nicodemus' coming to Christ secretly at night, in John's Gospel (3.2), is also highly suggestive,[26] and foreshadows complications concerning the heliotrope, from the *Novellino* to Sacchetti, that I will take up below.

One more instance requires mention here. I refer to Cino's sonnet in which he sardonically offers to his interlocutor three valuable stones, including the heliotrope — and not just any heliotrope, but the one that belonged to Prester John:

> E sì sappiate ched ella fu propia / primeramente del presto Giovanni (13–14)

Cino mentions Prester John, the semi-legendary Christian ruler of India, because in the widely disseminated "Letter of Prester John," one of the more successful literary and cultural hoaxes of the middle ages, the heliotrope (though not named) is one of the marvels found in his kingdom:

> Lapis iste legitimo carmine consecratus hominem invisibile reddit.
>
> [When consecrated with a valid charm, this stone makes a man invisible.][27]

More to the point, Cino's poem, in which each stone (ruby, carbuncle, heliotrope) is coordinated with a realm (the empire, Sicily, and, implicitly Prester John's own kingdom) shows that Cino knew the similar tale that begins the pre-Boccaccian collection of tales known as the *Novellino*, where the Emperor Frederick is challenged to descry the value of three precious stones sent to him by Prester John. We can deduce from this that the offer of precious stones that patently do not exist, intended as a kind of challenge or trap for the unwary, was a well-established and recognizable literary gambit well before Boccaccio set down his tale of Calandrino. This precedent is important, and I will return to it.

It is quite possibly the formulation of the *Mare amoroso*, at once a poem and an archive, database and *exemplum* all in one, in which the heliotrope "…fa ciascun che non sia veduto" which has most immediately informed Maso del Saggio's formulation of the power of the heliotrope:

> … una pietra, la quale noi altri lapidari appelliamo elitropia, pietra di troppo gran vertù, per ciò che qualunque persona la porta sopra di sé, mentre la tiene, non è da alcuna altra persona veduto dove non è. (20)

Twice repeated, with variations, in the text,[28] Maso's formulation comes after a lengthy discussion of the virtues of various stones, including the millstones quarried from Settignano and Montisci, that is, common building stone for industrial purposes, and a vivid travel account of the imaginary lands of the Basques, including Berlinzone and Bengodi, versions of the traditional *paese di Cuccagna* of inexhaustible abundance, where the vines are trained with sausages, and versions as well of the mythical land of Prester John, known source of heliotropes.[29] Like the equally hypnotic geographical equivocations of Frate Cipolla, which Maso mentions (VI.10.37–42), and those of Bruno in the subsequent befuddling of Maestro Simone (VIII.9.17–30), mentioning Presto Giovanni, Maso's patter may be taken to be the hocus-pocus suitable for the gulling of Calandrino. In its rhyming silliness (15: "più de millanta, che tutta notte canta") and deceptive use of the double negative it is the rhetorical equivalent of the *legitimum carmen* and *verbum potens* necessary to activate the power of the heliotrope. The power to create and dissolve appearances has been noted by a number of the *novella*'s readers as peculiarly appropriate to a group of painters;[30] and though Bruno and Buffalmacco do no painting in VIII.3, it is clear that their skill in feigning appearances is clearly marked in the text: if the heliotrope was credited with effecting invisibility, the rhetorical and histrionic arts of Maso and his henchmen Bruno and Buffalmacco are related to that power by creating the appearance of invisibility, like Shakespeare's notorious stage-direction "enter Ariel, invisible."

One form of this art is the evident nonchalance of Maso's that attracts Calandrino's interest in the first place. Boccaccio's phraseology confirms that Maso speaks "by the book," but with a clear nod to the *rhetorical* rather than magical efficacy of his speech:

> … insieme s'accostarono là dove Calandrino solo si sedeva, e *faccendo vista di non vederlo* insieme cominciarono a ragionare delle virtù di diverse pietre, delle quali Maso così efficacemente parlava come se stato fosse un solenne e gran lapidario. A' quali ragionamenti Calandrino posta orecchie…" (7–8; emphasis mine).

"Faccendo vista di non veder" is clearly a permutation of Maso's mischievous, self-negating description of the heliotrope's power, "non è da alcuna altra persona veduto dove non è," with the significant difference that it gives action and agency to a formula that noncommittally describes the effect of the stone in passive terms. The agency in question is the collective pretense by Maso and his interlocutors not to see Calandrino. With this gesture, the heliotrope springs into life, for Calandrino immediately becomes socially invisible. That this, with other permutations,[31] constitutes Boccaccio's verbal formula for the invisibility-effect is confirmed by the frequent recurrence of the phrase or its equivalents. Calandrino, the "aspirante furbo" now miming the trick just played on him (25: "fatto sembianti di avere altro da fare") departs San Giovanni to seek out Bruno and Buffalmacco and share his news. Hearing it, the two painters "guatando l'un verso l'altro fecer sembianti di maravigliarsi forte e lodarono il consiglio di Calandrino," begin, with a glance, their own deception of Calandrino by entering into a tacit social contract he does not share. Later the same phrase will mark the expansion of this contract by describing the complicity of the sentinels guarding the gates (49: "le quali, prima da loro informate, faccendo vista di non vedere lasciarono andar Calandrino con le maggior risa del mondo…"). The effect only crumbles when Calandrino, returning home laden with stones, is seen by his wife Monna Tessa, and is seen to be seen by Calandrino himself in a literal double-take that shakes him out of his self-deception: "Il che udendo Calandrino e veggendo che veduto era…" (52). Bruno and Buffalmacco conclude the series with their just-in-time arrival to witness the scene of domestic violence between Calandrino and Tessa ("faccendo vista di giugnere pure allora…"), a spatio-temporal calculation that again emphasizes their control of the serialized events, which is to say the narrative, of the *beffa* itself. The centrality of the effect is restated, in retrospect, when Calandrino summarizes for his friends what, as the rubric of the tale points out, they know better than he ("sanno meglio di lui"): "Quando voi presso a men di diece braccia e veggendo che voi ve ne venavate e non mi vedavate v'entrai innanzi e continuamente poco innanzi a voi me ne son venuto" (58). The passage, which captures with its pummeling alliteration both Calandrino's breathless relation of events and his abiding confusion of mind, underlines the terms that articulate the charm of the heliotrope as an obfuscating rhetoric that produces self-deception: "veggendo che voi… non mi vedavate." Indeed, the fact that none of Calandrino's various *compari e amici* salute him on his way home (60: "né alcun fu che parola mi dicesse ne mezza, sì come quegli che non mi vedeano") argues that he had, in fact, *become* socially invisible — perhaps because girdled with a gown all full of stones. In fact the insistence on *vedere* and related terms (*guardare*, *guatare*, etc.) is conspicuous throughout the tale, furnishing in excess of thirty instances; this too is the *vertù* of the heliotrope as a deceptive rhetoric.[32]

From the more scientific of the lapidaries, we saw that the invisibility effect of the heliotrope was sometimes explained as a local eclipse of the sun; if the light that makes all things

visible is blocked, a limited area of invisibility is a plausible result. In any case the heliotrope is itself strictly attached to the sun by its name (by its *vertù*): and not only to the sun, but to the action and motions of the sun in the sky. In this respect too Boccaccio derives narrative suggestions for the *beffa* that Bruno and Buffalmacco construct. The very syntax of the *beffa* depends on modifying Calandrino's proposed search for the stone to a Sunday. For if, as Calandrino reports, the stones are black (33: "tutte son quasi nere") then, as Buffalmacco points out, the sun, already high when Calandrino brings his news, will have dried them all out and whitened them, making them hard to distinguish. What is more, there are too many people about, people who might see and guess their intentions: "e oltre a ciò molta gente per diverse cagione è oggi, che è dì da lavorare, per lo Mugnone, li quali vedendoci si potrebbono indovinare quello che noi andassomo faccendo e forse farlo essi altressì…" (35). The conclusion is that the stone will be sought on a holiday morning, and the three painters thus agree to postpone the quest to the following Sunday, when, with another allusion to the rhetorical effect of the heliotrope, they will not be seen: "non vi sarà persona che ci vegga" (36). Of course, Bruno and Buffalmacco can only pretend that Calandrino is invisible if they are alone in the Mugnone, and that the shift to Sunday is critical becomes evident at the conclusion of the joke, when, although Bruno and Buffalmacco have alerted the sentinels at the city gates, it is only by sheer luck, and the fact that the streets are semi-deserted because of the Sunday luncheon hour, that Calandrino meets no one who greets him as he returns home, an eventuality that would have destroyed the illusion before the fateful meeting with Tessa's gaze: "e in tanto fu la fortuna piacevole alla beffa, che, mentre Calandrino per lo fiume ne venne e poi per la città, niuna persona gli fece motto, come che poche ne scontrasse per ciò che quasi a desinare era ciascuno" (50). A level of complicity that transcends the efforts of the skilful Bruno and Buffalmacco can, in a fictional tale, reside only in one place: that of the author himself. To what extent Boccaccio identifies his own narrative art with the various arts of his tricky artisans will be taken up in a moment.

But the sun, too, also seems — in an implicit, supervisory way — to collaborate in articulating the morning in the Mugnone. Calandrino himself rises early, with the sun (39: "in sul far del dì si levò") and the progress of the practical joke orchestrated by Bruno and Buffalmacco is coordinated to the time of day; as the searchers descend the Mugnone from the Porta San Gallo toward the Porta Faenza (thus, in 1315, from East to West, in the sun's track, "di retro al sol," we might say);[33] more or less at noon, just before lunchtime (41: "veggendo Bruno e Buffalmacco che Calandrino era carico e l'ora del mangiare s'avicinava" after they have been looking, says Bruno, "tutta mattina"). Calandrino's invisibility is decreed, one may imagine, at about the time that black stones become white, and thus fade into invisibility. If the morning has been an easy descent of the Mugnone as the sun rises in the sky, while Calandrino, taking sprightly leaps here and there, filled the hems of his garments with stones, the return trip is up the stream bed, and much more arduous, with a heavily burdened Calandrino systematically stoned by his companions, feigning outrage and imagined vengeance for his having abandoned them — which was, of course, precisely his intention. This time, "volti i passi indietro," the group movies from West to East, "contra 'l corso del ciel," (as Dante put it of Constantine's removal to Byzantium, *Par*. 6.1–3), and on a journey decidedly less pleasant for Calandrino.

It is of course Dante who, in the case of numerous of his characters — Ulysses, Constantine, St. Francis — best exemplified for Boccaccio how one might moralize the

movements of the sun itself: Francis is a metaphorical sun who warms and comforts the world in his rising from Assisi (*Ascesi*, *Par*. 11.53); Ulysses' journey "di retro al sol," away from the rising sun, is a "folle volo" (*Inf*. 26.125) to destruction in uncharted seas; while Constantine's transfer from Rome to Byzantium is cosmically erroneous, against the tide of the heaven's daily movement. Such moralized uses are part of a figurative and allegorical discourse congenial to late Gothic sensibility, and as Dante's most attentive if not always most faithful disciple, Boccaccio can and does moralize on the movements of the sun and on the magic of the heliotrope. Despite that generations of readers have been taught that the comedy of the *Decameron* is a human one, at the level of *verba* rather than *res* the terms of this moralizing remain very close to Dante's.

For if the sun helps to articulate Calandrino's journey down and up the Mugnone, no less can be said for a series of reference to Dante. Beginning with Calandrino's imaginary disappearance within a dry streambed — a ditch — and Bruno's question, "Calandrino dove è?" (41) we are invited to recall Dante's group of five Florentine thieves in the *bolgia* of the serpents in the *Inferno*, and Agnolo Brunelleschi's anxious question "Cianfa dove fia rimaso?" (*Inf*. 25.43) just before he is struck by the serpent which Cianfa has become. The *bolgia* of the thieves is of course almost an obligatory reference for Boccaccio's tale: for it is there that, as the Florentine thieves change and change again in the serpent-filled ditch, they must not hope to hold the heliotrope and escape God's judicial gaze (24.93: "sanza sperar pertugio o elitropia"). Calandrino in turn, fictionally invisible, and filled with the thievish desires he hopes to fulfill when invisible (cf. VIII.29), tries to steal away from Bruno and Buffalmacco in the Mugnone, only to be tricked by his more astute companions, who impose on him a literal *contrapasso*, with real stones taking the place of the fictional one they pretended to seek. With exact allegorizing aim, they strike him repeatedly on heel and flank (47, 48: "nella calcagna… nelle reni"), places on the body traditionally associated with vulnerability to sin and vice.[34] With the imposition of punishment we again find Dantesque spectacle, as Calandrino has to lift his heels: "levò alto il piè e cominciò a soffiare" (47) as Dante's panders do when whipped by the devils in the first *bolgia* (*Inf*. 18.37: "facean lor levar le berze"). Nor is a reference to the *bolgia* of the panders and seducers out of place, as in the final Calandrino story (IX.5) he will — egged on of course by Bruno and Buffalmacco — attempt the seduction of Niccolosa with the aid of magical arts. Stoning, or lapidation (48: "il vennero lapidando") in Boccaccio's phrasing of it, appears as the logical consequence of Calandrino's seduction by that great "lapidary," Maso del Saggio, the revenge, or rather the *contrapasso* of the stone after Calandrino's romancing of it.

The intertextual presence of Dante's scenarios of divinely sanctioned retaliation thus help to mark the comeuppance of Calandrino. But this too is of course in one sense an effect of the day of the sun, also the day of the Lord, *dies dominica*. We saw how, as the Eighth day, Sunday prefigures the time when all souls will come under the scrutiny of the high judge.[35] Indeed, Calandrino's movements in the tale are circumscribed by images and spaces connected to the Church and its culturally inscribed moral authority, that in Boccaccio's case is also frequently overlapped by Dante's text and its authority. The tale begins in San Giovanni, a church surely specially important to Calandrino, whose real name was Nozzo (Giovanozzo) di Pierino, but that was also Dante's "bel San Giovanni," where he hoped to be crowned with the poet's laurel (*Par*. 25.1–12). The Baptistery was also the site of an impressive and influential mosaic of the Last Judgment, complete with a gigantic Satan devouring sinners. The

mosaic Satan left its iconographic imprint on Dante's Lucifer devouring Judas and the traitors to Caesar (*Inferno* 34), as it did on Giotto's Lucifer in the Scrovegni chapel of Padua; and these precedents helped shape the image of the devil devouring sinners painted on the external wall of the San Gallo hospital, to which Bruno refers in VIII.9 (15) by way of describing the fate awaits him should he reveal his secrets to Maestro Simone: "da farmi mettere in bocca del Lucifero da San Gallo."[36] San Gallo functions as a looming presence in VIII.3 as well, for it is the San Gallo gate through which Calandrino and his fellows emerge and return for their day in the Mugnone (39, 48), a feature that makes the threshold of the expedition the imaginary threshold of Hell.[37] Although religious subjects for painting are of course the rule for the mid-Trecento, it is nevertheless clear that the Florentine painted environment that is the background to the tale emphasizes the inflexibility of the moral law and the constant threat of a pending judgment.[38]

The theme of judgment and the pattern of reference to Dante are also rhetorically and poetically routed through the various troping of the heliotrope in the *novella*, troping that the *virtù* of the stone itself — its name — virtually compels. The troping begins in the opening speech of Maso del Saggio, where a relation of proportional exchange (a kind of "distributive" justice) is constructed between two kinds of stones possessing *virtù* (19: "due maniere di pietre ci si truovano di grandissima virtù"): the small, precious heliotropes and the massive millstones made cut from local quarries of *macigno*. To the magic performed by the heliotrope can be counterbalanced the practical usefulness of the millstones, which mill grain into flour ("se ne fa la farina"). The millstones of *macigno*, in their anticipation of the burden of stone Calandrino later carries, echo on the one hand their use in Scripture as instruments of punishment when hanged around the neck,[39] and the *macigno* itself Dante's famous excoriation, through the mouth of Brunetto Latini, of the rustic Fiesolans who make up the less tractable elements in the Florentine character.[40] Maso's lesson in the economics of the lapidary trade has a double edge: on the one hand it suggests the "grossa pasta" of Calandrino is something like the intractable *macigno* of Brunetto's Fiesolans; but on the other hand it holds up the practical utility of millstones against the illusory promises of the heliotrope.

Millstones are also traditional tropes for the motion of the sun, both in Ristoro d'Arezzo's vernacular astronomy primer *Composizione del Mondo* and in Dante's *Convivio*, where the turning millstone is used to describe certain complexities of solar motion.[41] The same image returns in the heaven of the sun in the *Paradiso*, where the wheeling clusters of theologians are compared to rotating millstones (*Par*. 12.3: "la santa mola"). Since they are stones that imitate solar motion, their relation to the heliotrope is readily apparent. So many millstones might seem excessive, but Boccaccio's text insists on the connection: we recall that Calandrino's Sunday outing takes place in a riverbed named as a millrace (*mugnone*, from *mugnaio*, miller). Before the construction of the *terza cerchia* of walls the Mugnone had run into the city along the Via San Gallo, directly adjacent to where Calandrino lives, so that to commemorate the stream's former course, a millstone was embedded in the wall of Calandrino's street, whence its name *Canto alla macina* (VIII.3.50).[42] The millstone thus dogs Calandrino relentlessly in Boccaccio's text, like the suspended threat of judgment.

Still, when Calandrino is pummeled by Bruno and Buffalmacco in the Mugnone as they return to Calandrino's house and the confrontation with Tessa, it is not with millstones, but with pebbles, the pebbles that are the primary candidates for status as heliotropes. Using the same optative subjunctive that expresses desire for the heliotrope in the vernacular tradition

("tenissi in mano l'aritropia…"), Bruno and Buffalmacco cast pebbles at Calandrino while voicing the desire that they might find and pay him back for his leaving them in the lurch: "Deh vedi bel codolo: così giugnesse egli testé nelle reni a Calandrino" (47). Here the perfect realization of the vindictive wish requires not the power of magic, but the careful construction of the *beffa*: once again, it is the ingenuity, perception, and narrative skill of Bruno and Buffalmacco that usurp the powers of the stone and result in a marvelous simultaneity of word, desire, and action: "e il dir le parole e l'aprirsi e 'l dar del ciotto nel calcagno a Calandrino fu tutto uno" (48). This troping of the stone as the perfect instrument for the vindictive purpose in hand lays the groundwork for Sacchetti's most fully realized adaptation of the Calandrino material in the *Trecentonovelle*. Echoing the tradition of three virtuous stones we know from the *Novellino* and Cino's poem, Sacchetti's tale factors in as well Boccaccio's troping logic that can prefer a millstone to a heliotrope (67.5: "la più preziosa pietra che sia e la macina del grano").[43] But the most useful stone of all proves to be the one that is handy when Messer Valore needs to knock a fig-thief out of his tree: "Questo non avrebbe fatto quanti rubini e quanti balasci furono mai" (67.7). The specific phrasing of Bruno's retaliation, moreover, expressed as a wish, in the imperfect subjunctive, also calls up the verbal memory of one of Dante's most vengeful lyrics, "Così nel mio parlar voglio esser aspro,"[44] and introduces a rich new context for *novella* and precious stone alike.

For the lapidation of Calandrino, the *contrapasso* inflicted on him by his bosom companions, leads to the scene of Calandrino's catastrophic exposure by his wife, Monna Tessa. Her withering sight of him, marked with a proverbial malediction (51: "mai, frate, il diavol ti ci reca") destroys the illusion of invisibility and, as Calandrino empties out the hem of his garment, fills his house with stones. In this scene citation of Dante's vengeful lyrics, the *rime petrose*, is brought together with echoes of the pilgrim's journey in the *Commedia* and recall of Boccaccio's own experiments with Dante's vengeful poetics in the *Decameron*, notably the tale of Nastagio V.8 (which occurs on successive Fridays, but which has a "happy ending" with a Sunday wedding) and the tale of the scholar and the widow (VIII.7), also narrated during the Eighth Day: the sum is a reconsideration of Boccaccio's long experience not only with the themes and language of the *petrose*, but with the retaliatory impulse in Dante more generally. Indeed, so rich is the Nastagio tale in evoking the text of Dante, set as it is near Ravenna, the city where Dante died, that it serves as a totalizing (and problematizing) consideration of Dante's legacy.[45] Regarding Rinieri and Elena, on the other hand, Durling has demonstrated how the winter landscapes and Rinieri's harsh rhetoric denouncing Elena echo the wintry scenes and *parlar aspro* of the *rime petrose* as well as the landscapes and language found in the lowest regions of Hell (*Inferno* 32 and 33).[46] But VIII.7 is also a thing of darkness that Boccaccio acknowledges as peculiarly his own, in that he expands and transforms it in the *Corbaccio* into at least a pseudo-autobiographical account, one that deploys with ferocious intensity a misogynist scheme of "intellectualized" retaliation that bears a distinctly Dantean stamp.[47]

In the case of Calandrino's beating of Tessa, both his beating of her and tearing at her hair (52: "presala per le trecce"), and his repudiation of her pleas for mercy ("niuna cosa valendole il chieder merce"), find exact parallels in "Così nel mio parlar" (37–38: "Amore, a cui io grido / merzé chiamando"; 66: "s'io avesse le belle trecce prese").[48] In the presence of such parallels it is impossible not to imagine that Boccaccio thought of Calandrino's rubble-strewn house as an etymologically exact *petrose* scenario.

But the beating inflicted on Tessa is not the last word; and Tessa herself emerges as central to the ultimate and most profound humiliation of Calandrino. Boccaccio praises Tessa unreservedly in the text (VIII.3.51: "bella e valente donna"; also IX.3.22: "assai onesta"), and while kept in the background she is at all times fully aware of the trickery that her husband cannot perceive (IX.3.33: "monna Tessa, avvedendosene…"). The pig that Calandrino dresses and then loses to Bruno and Buffalmacco is in fact Tessa's, as the property derives from her dowry (VIII.6.4: "in dote avea avuto dalla moglie"); and the secrets of the marriage bed revealed in IX.3.21 show that Tessa is a "woman on top," with the elevation of her sexual posture confirming that she is the real head of the household with the power of chasing Calandrino out of the house (VIII.6.7). It is then fully logical that when, in IX.5, Calandrino attempts to act out his sexual fantasies with the appealing Niccolosa, Tessa finally can stand no more and, alerted and encouraged by Bruno — who recalls to her the beating by her husband (IX.5.51) — rushes to interrupt the assignation and gives Calandrino a thrashing. Once again recreating the scenario of the *petrose* Tessa bestrides Calandrino, and in symmetrical inversion of the fantasized rape of the *donna petra* at the end of "Così nel mio parlar," scratches and beats him: "corse con l'unghie nel viso a Calandrino… e tutto gliele graffiò; e presolo per li capelli…" (IX.5.63). Thus he is left "tristo e cattivo, tutto pelato e tutto graffiato" (IX.5.67), echoing how Tessa had been earlier left (VIII.3.54) "scapigliata, stracciata, tutta livida e rotta nel viso." Beating up Calandrino — the final and inauspicious act of the entire sequence of tales — Tessa also avenges, within the comic and realistic context of a *beffa* involving working-class Florentines, the sophisticated psychological violence Nastagio degli Onesti employs to persuade his beloved to yield to him as suitor, not to mention the violence of the Friday spectacle itself. Tessa also avenges the arguably justifiable, but still excessive retaliation of Rinieri against Elena, whose body also serves as the site of the scholar's vindictiveness (VIII.7.120). But Tessa also obtains revenge on behalf of the collectivity, as Bruno implies when he urges her on to her vendetta, and retaliates for what Calandrino has supposedly inflicted on Bruno and Buffalmacco, leading them the merry chase in the Mugnone (twice recalled: VIII.6.54 and IX.5.51): she is thus in a sense delegated as the official judge and executioner of punishment on her wayward spouse.[49]

With such a role, Tessa emerges as a figure of considerable power, whose eruption at the finale represents the outpouring of longstanding resentment. In her harsh reception of Calandrino in VIII.3, when she gazes down on him ("dal sommo dalla scala") and curses him, and especially when she confronts him with his shortcomings (IX.5.64: "Non ti conosci tu, tristo? Non ti conosci tu, dolente?") she recalls, however implausibly, Dante's Beatrice meeting the pilgrim at the top of the Purgatorial stair and chastising his presumption with a similarly repeating phraseology (*Purg*. 30.73: "guardaci gen, ben son, ben son Beatrice"). But the destructiveness of her gaze turned on Calandrino, rendering his lap-full of stones useless and inert, and her mockery of his sexual inadequacy suggests Tessa's deeper role as a Medusa, wielding a sexual mastery that may be already implicit in her name.[50] This too brings us to the *rime petrose*, where in "Così nel mio parlar" the *donna pietra* is characterized as having an equally penetrating gaze: (14–15) "non trovo scudo ch'ella non mi spezzi, né loco che dal suo viso m'asconda." When Bruno and Buffalmacco reprove Calandrino for failing to prevent Tessa from appearing before him (64), they are perfectly aware that he cannot do so: he cannot hide from her knowing gaze. Boccaccio's inclusion of allusions to the deepest point of Hell in the *petrose*-inspired scenes of Calandrino's discomfiture (VIII.3, 9.5) tends to suggest

that his dustups with Tessa are the veritable low point of his existence. Boccaccio's genius seizes on Dante's cosmic nadir, as the pilgrim faces Lucifer in Hell, and recast it as the dark and melancholy pit of domestic infelicity into which Calandrino finds himself cast down: "Lasciandol malinconoso con la casa piena di pietre, si partirono"(65).[51] Despite the great amusement Calandrino affords as a character, such a conclusion requires consideration of a darker aspect to Calandrino's self-delusions. For a moment, Calandrino's life appears squalid, despoiled of illusions, abandoned to a marriage that is a rock-strewn misery.[52] And for a moment it seems as if Lauretta's attempt to avoid symmetrical retaliation in the tales of the eighth day has been unsuccessful. But it may be that there is a pattern of more equitable justice at work.

Calandrino's final catastrophic visibility to his wife is the key to showing that the *beffa* merely illustrates the consensus regarding Calandrino: that he is, if in a comic register, a summa of bourgeois vices: gluttonous and bibulous, a tightwad, furtive, lecherous, perfidious and when crossed, capable of domestic violence; most of all, of course, profoundly self-deceived.[53] The story line can be parsed with Calandrino's vices: hearing of the "paese di Cuccagna" and its mountains of macaroni, his shrewd thought is to ask after the capons used for the broth: are they left over? As he anticipates finding the stone, he imagines despoiling the money-changers, as the tradition of owning the heliotrope suggests; thinking that he has found the stone, he leaves his cronies in the lurch; fearing he has lost the stone, he savagely beats up his wife. It is thus the mere thought of the transgressions the heliotrope might enable that brings Calandrino's weaknesses to the surface like fish rising to the bait: in this sense, the real *virtù* of the *elitropia* is troped as the revelatory pattern of the *beffa* itself.

For many readers, the repeated gulling of Calandrino by his fellows merely indicates that they are cleverer tricksters than he is; but this is to miss the fact that Calandrino has desires and aspirations, as well as vices, that his fellow artists do not share and that make him a legitimate target; indeed, we know from VIII.9.7–11 that they live hand-to-mouth, but want for nothing, and are perpetually cheerful ("così lietamente vivevano"). To Maestro Simone this is inexplicable. Calandrino however is a property-owner, thanks to Monna Tessa's dowry, and when he inherits a pittance from an aunt he dreams of acquiring land (enough, given his resources, to do no more than "far pallottole," according to Bruno and Buffalmacco, IX.3.5). When his associates find him with a house full of stones they suggest he is preparing some capital improvements ("tu vuoi murare?" 55). In addition to this preference for acquiring by using other's capital, Calandrino's fantasy, upon hearing about the heliotrope, is that of being able to use the stone to steal and thus avoid work; his language suggests a real distaste for his profession ("schiccherare le mura a modo che fa la lumaca" 29). The relation of Calandrino's utopian desire for leisure and the social and divine injunction to work is carefully drawn in the *novella*, where it forms part of Maso's lapidary discourse: compared to the miraculous heliotrope and the *smeraldi* are the mill-stones quarried at Settignano, whose function is to mill the wheat and make the bread that Adam will eat with its traditional seasoning of sweat ("in sudore vultus tui vesceris pane" Gen. 3:19). When added to his reluctance to ever spend on his friends (IX.3.5), but great willingness to have others stand drinks for him (VIII.6.14), we come up with a decidedly antisocial figure, disloyal to his class and the social spirit of his guild (the guild of painters just established in 1319, the year of Calandrino's death), for all that he and his colleagues address each other as *sozio* (IX.5.13, 32, 50). For what Calandrino does to provoke exposure by his friends is — if in a small way — pursue the fantasy of in-

visibility, and thus of impunity, of transgressive action unseen and unsupervised by authority or by community — the desire of Gyges in Plato's *Republic* who, when equipped with a ring that made him invisible, was able to steal unobserved into the chamber of the king and lie with the Queen, and thus displace and kill King Candaules himself: thus to utterly subvert the social order and the state; or, in an alternative reading, to overcome the panoptic power of one tyranny and become a tyrant himself.[54] This may seem to overstate the case; but it is clear that Boccaccio sees the stratagems of Bruno and Buffalmacco not as a simple exploitation of Calandrino's gullibility, but as attempts to circumvent his avarice ("con ingegni schernire l'avarizia di Calandrino" IX.3.33). Carlo Muscetta observed that Calandrino's rage for facile acquisition marks him as a member of the "gente nova" with an appetite for "subiti guadagni" (*Inferno* 16.73) which once again brings us around to a benchmark of Dante's invective as an origin for the attack on Calandrino.[55]

In some sense the art of the heliotrope is thus, as anticipated above, the moral art of satire. When Bruno and Buffalmacco prepare their ruse for depriving Calandrino of the pig he has slaughtered and dressed, they prepare their campaign with an opportune and nearly verbatim citation from the first of Dante's cantos treating artistic mastery: "Qui si vuole usare un poco d'arte" (VIII.6.13), as if to enroll their art of the *beffa* among the masters such as Giotto and Cimabue (and the two poets, Guinizelli and Cavalcanti) that Dante recalls on the terrace of the proud (*Purg*. 10–12).[56]

We have however one more troping of the stone to consider before making a final assessment of Calandrino's character The planetary sun that makes all things visible was traditionally the image of the all-seeing eye of God, "which searches the reins and the heart," although for Boccaccio the all-seeing eye of divine judgment is troped as the authoritative moral force of Dante's text and the scrutiny of the social Other, whether wife or *sozio*. In this respect the heliotrope, which refers to the movement of the planetary sun and its *conversiones* at the solstices, as well as the momentary occultation of the sun by the magic of the stone, refers to the passage from the visible to the invisible, from sensibles to intelligibles, from the material to the psychological, and from the palpable to the mystical. Mazzotta (194) points out that the onset of the quest, and first deception of Calandrino, occurs in front of what were Lippo de' Benivieni's tabernacle paintings in San Giovanni, a site that points to the relation of visible and invisible worlds, as the tabernacle is "the place where the invisible Godhead is given a sacramental visibility." In the case of the tabernacle in San Giovanni in 1315–18, whose general configuration is known, the references are closely calibrated to the narratives of the five Calandrino tales.[57] Situated beneath the mosaic *Agnusdei* in the apse, the redeemer of the world as prophesied and introduced by the "Ecce Agnus Dei" of John 1:36, the images on the lost tabernacle might have depicted the prophetic activity, the baptism of Christ, and perhaps the martyrdom of the Baptist.[58] In this context, Calandrino's presence in San Giovanni links his facile belief in *mirabilia* with religious faith, for he is one who places, in Maso's words "quanta fede come a qualunque cosa la più manifesta" (VIII.3.18). As Dante had written, professing his pilgrim's faith in with the words of the Epistle to the Hebrews (11:1) in the heavens of the *Paradiso*, faith is the "substance of things not seen, the argument of that which does not appear" (*Par*. 24.65: "argomento de le non parventi"). This resonates suggestively both with Boccaccio's account of Giotto's ability to create visual illusions of reality that compel assent, as Paul F. Watson has observed, and with Aquinas' account of faith: "fides est habitus mentis qua inchoatur vita aeterna in nobis, faciens intellectum assentire

non apparentibus," which is not too far from Bruno and Buffalmacco's intentions for Calandrino, "fargli credere alcuna nuova cosa" (VIII.3.5)[59]

So it is that Calandrino, standing before the tabernacle, where the consecrated host was reserved, might plausibly in the years 1315–18 have been thinking of the Corpus Christi itself, since that feast, first instituted Urban IV in 1264 but slow to be diffused after his death, had been revived by Clement V at the council of Vienne in 1311. And by this logic the account of Calandrino's own contrived disappearance — "imaginò che quella pietra alle mani gli fosse venuta e che per la vertù d'essa coloro, ancor che loro fosse presente, nol vedessero" — seems to parallel the invisible real presence of the body of Christ in the visible species of the host, what Aquinas, who wrote the liturgy for Corpus Christi, referred to as the "latens veritas" of God. This in fact appears to be how Sacchetti, who refers several times to Calandrino in the *Trecentonovelle*, read Boccaccio's tale. When he turned in his *Sposizione di Vangeli* to gloss the real presence of Christ in the host, he compares it to the effect of the heliotrope, which makes substances invisible:

> Sono le pietre preziose, e fra l'altre n'è una chiamata elitropia, la quale chi la porta non è veduto e vede altrui; e Cristo, che gli dié la virtù, non dée maggiormente essere in quella ostia invisibile a noi? (OVI).

Sacchetti's gloss follows his original rhetorical question: "Chi puose la virtù ne le parole, ne le pietre e ne l'erbe?" which suggests he was already thinking of the heliotrope, which requires stone, plant, and efficacious words — like those that transform the species into the blood of Christ in the Eucharist — in order to make people vanish into an invisible world.

If we follow this thread, we might reflect that Calandrino's torment by his fellows as he returns to the city is not unlike a *via crucis*, a characterization Baratto used to describe the entirety of Calandrino's ordeals. In fact Calandrino's lapidation in the Mugnone closely reenacts the stoning of Stephen protomartyr, driving him back to the city where Stephen's tormentors drove him out of it;[60] while the subsequent relation of his adventures to Bruno and Buffalmacco incorporates the solemn terms of Christ's explanation of the prophecies concerning himself on the road to Emmaus. Following his explanation, Calandrino shows his wounds on flank and ankle to the doubting, in this case knowing, Thomases: "e cominciandosi dall'un dei capi infin la fine raccontò loro ciò che essi fatto e detto aveano e mostro loro il dosso e la calcagna come i ciotti conci gliel'avessero…" (59). Compare Luke 24.27: "Et incipiens a Moyse, et omnibus prophetis interpretabatur illis in omnibus scripturas quae de ipso erant." And at 24.40: "et com hoc dixisset, ostendit eis manus et pedes."

Calandrino's kinship to the real presence in the host points bids fair to make him another parodic *figura Christi*, a status readers have long postulated of Boccaccio's Griselda.[61] Remembering the social functions of the *beffa*, however, we can trope Calandrino's Christological role as that of the social scapegoat, who comes to take away — in the sense of bear upon his back, or carry as the dead weight of stones from the Mugnone — the sins of his fellow painters by virtue of the repeated exposure of his own frailties. One implication of his name refers to the *calandra*, or *charadrius*, a bird found in the bestiaries that alights near the very ill and, gazing at them, submits them to triage: those likely to live have their malady carried off by the bird, but if the bird turns away the case is hopeless.[62] In the moralizing of the bestiaries, the malady is sinfulness; in Boccaccio's *novella*, let us read the malady instead as Calandrino's social vices. This puts Calandrino more in the tradition of Ciappelletto and Guccio

Imbratta, as a type who sums up the vices of the generic Adam.[63] Though he should be in a positive relation to the sun as painter, thus a bringer of color, light, and esthetic pleasure,[64] Calandrino's avoidance of labor brings him into a negative relation to the sun, which for post-lapsarian man, condemned to eat bread *in sudore vultus*, imposes the inescapable necessity of labor. Nor does he finally escape it, appearing at the end exhausted, sweaty, irredeemably corporeal, after his pasting of Tessa: "tutto sudato, rosso, e affanato" (53).

We have seen how, as in the tales featuring Ciappelletto and Frate Cipolla, Calandrino's delusional belief in the magic heliotrope stone is tales closely associated with the power of language and rhetoric to enchant, mystify, delude, and illude, for both good and ill.[65] In the case of Calandrino's heliotrope the association of the heliotrope with rhetorical power is the more evident because of the allusion in Boccaccio's tale to the use of precious stones as metaphors for the moral virtues, but also for the *virtù* of storytelling itself, in the collection of *novelle* that circulated in Tuscany in the generation before Boccaccio, called the *Libro di bel parlar gentile*, or *Novellino*.[66]

In the first pair of stories in the *Ur-novellino,* the Emperor Frederick is challenged to recognize the virtue and worth of certain Eastern stones placed in his keeping by the emissaries of the mysterious Christian Lord of India, Prester John.[67] The Emperor fails the test, as he does not inquire as to their hidden virtues; so Prester John has them repossessed, judging that though the Emperor speaks well, he does not act well (168: "savio in parola, ma no in fatti"). One of the stones, the last one seized, makes Prester John's messenger and *lapidario* invisible: it is therefore the heliotrope, just as described in the Letter of Prester John. What the three stones signify is not specified, but the terms of the story and its action suggest the stones themselves stand for *virtues*, virtues the Emperor fails to acknowledge and thus possess. Prester John's judgment on the Emperor suggests he is a hearer, not a doer, of the Word. And given Prester John's status as a Christian paragon, and the abysmally low estimation of Frederick in late Duecento Guelph-dominated Italy, it might be inferred that the virtues are theological ones, including *fides*, faith, which Frederick, for Guelph circles (and even for Dante) a noted heretic, failed to possess: faith, the substance of things not seen, the argument of that which does not appear, and in troped form the kingdom of God, the pearl of great price for which the poor man sold all he had. Prester John's challenge to the greatest sovereign of the West thus embodies a powerful cultural critique, challenging the decay of Christian orthodoxy and the corruption of Christendom in general.[68]

On another level, the first story in the *Novellino* is a parable: it is the reader herself who is challenged to understand the stories that will follow, winnow from them correct distinctions and judgments, and act on these. The stones may be thought of as the embedded virtues implicit in the tales themselves. Readers sufficiently alert can acquire these virtues by a careful perusal of the book and mastery of its contents, by putting them, so to speak, in their purses or their pockets: the stones thus represent the effective value of the tales, their *virtù* Such a way of conceiving of the value of a text was by no means new. Dante, in his confession of faith to St. Peter in the *Paradiso*, adopts the metaphor of the coin for the faith he professes ("esta moneta") and thus the first Pope asks the pilgrim if he actually has the faith he has defined so well, if he has it in his pocket: "ma dimmi se tu l'hai ne la tua borsa" (*Par*. 24.85). More systematically, Brunetto Latini established exchange values between precious gems and metals and the contents of his *Trésor*: the natural philosophy and history of the first book are like ordinary currency, necessary for all further transactions; the cardinal virtues described in

the second book, on ethics, are precious stones, and the civic rhetoric of the third book is fine gold, the standard of eloquent speech and right-thinking political action. [69] To read with understanding the *Trésor*, or indeed the *Novellino*, is to acquire a wealth of understanding, virtue, and skills.

We can in turn apply this reading protocol, and Prester John's challenge in the *Novellino*, to the use of heliotrope lore in the *novella* of Calandrino. Maso, the "solenne e gran lapidaro" recalls the envoy sent by Prester John (Conte 169: "lo lapidario era molto savio"), to retrieve the stones that are languishing because not understood and not used ("avevano perduto le loro vertude"). Calandrino's attempts to pretend expertise with the stones leads him to exclaim, "Gran virtù son queste…" aping Maso's phraseology for precious stones (VIII.3.19–20: "di grandissima virtù… pietra di troppo gran vertù"), echoing the evaluations made of Frederick's stones by Prester John's lapidary (169: "Lo maestro le lodoe, non di grandi vertude"). Calandrino too fails the test, not, like Frederick, in refusing to take an interest in the stone, but because he believes in Maso's tall tales and betrays his passion for facile acquisition. Response to the *pietre di gran vertù*, or, making again the metatextual leap, to any narrative, is thus a kind of Rorschach test that makes visible the inner self, in its contours of desire, will, and character.[70] If Boccaccio does rely on the Letter for Maso's discourse, it is a facetious borrowing indeed, as one of the most characteristic features of Prester John's kingdom is that it is entirely free of thieves, robbers, and liars. Indeed it seems to exclude the entire list of Calandrino's vices, and for that matter, the ruses of Maso and the painters as well:

> Fur autem vel predo, non habet locum apud nos neque adulter neque avaritia. Quare nullus inter nos mentiri potest scienter… (Wagner 353).

In the case of the *Novellino*, the book as a treasury of *virtù* offers itself as a talisman for a world where the Logos no longer dwells among us (Conte 165: "quando il Nostro Singniore Gesù Cristo parlava umanamente con noi…" the first line of the text), so that despite the fractious history of the Duecento and the perils of heresy the continuity of traditional values can be maintained. In Boccaccio's terms, however, the book is not so much an archive of positive virtues as an armory of powerful rhetorical instruments whose effects cannot easily be circumscribed or predicted, like Forese Rabatta's "armario di ragione civile" (6.5.4) Although the tales of the verbal ruses of Ciappelletto or Frate Cipolla are comical in the extreme, they also suggest the dangerous ambiguity of the rhetorical arts (including the stage-management of the *beffa*), not to say of *ingegno* in general, including the arts wielded by painters. Nevertheless, in the virtuosic manipulations of Calandrino we can discern Boccaccio staking his own claim to a supreme narrative *virtù*, to being a master of the *beffa*.

In the final analysis, Calandrino's credulity and flashes of viciousness mark him not merely as *grossa pasta* but as narratively manipulable prime matter that friends and neighbors can mold at will with the sheer power of language and social consensus. So malleable is Calandrino that he can be made enamored, even pregnant, by social suggestion. For of course the instantaneous impregnation of Calandrino is the effect not of Monna Tessa's appetites, but of the words and gestures of Calandrino's *sozi*:

> E Nello disse a lui: 'Haiti tu sentita stanotte cosa niuna? Tu non mi par desso.' Calandrino incontanente cominciò a dubitare… (IX.3.8–9).

With the apparently casual "non mi par desso" Nello denies Calandrino's resemblance to himself, and opens him up for the astonishing metamorphosis his associates will inflict on him. But the apparent casualness should not prevent us from hearing the reference here to another artist who epitomizes that supreme mastery of an art, a mastery to which Boccaccio himself is here implicitly laying claim:

> e l'altro, il cui nome fu Giotto, ebbe uno ingegno di tanta eccellenzia che niuna cosa da la natura, madre di tutte le cose e operatrice col continuo girar de' cieli, che egli con lo stile e con la penna o col pennello non dipignesse sì simile a quella, che non simile, *anzi più tosto dessa paresse*, in tanto che molte volte nelle cose da lui fatte si truova che il visivo senso degli uomini vi prese errore, quello credendo esser vero che era dipinto (6.5.5).

Indeed, Boccaccio is setting up a *paragone*, rivaling Giotto in not only depicting the historical Calandrino "to the life," but making him dissimilar to himself, transforming him at will through the narrative *ingegno* of the beffa.

In making a subtle claim for his own virtuosity, Boccaccio continues the systematic pairing of visual and rhetorical arts he begins with the Forese-Giotto exchange during the sixth *giornata*, in a tale which argues the rising status of the artist by placing Giotto on the same plane as a university-trained lawyer. In the author's conclusion of the *Decameron* Boccaccio defends his choices of diction by appealing to the freedom enjoyed by painters, and later in the final books of the *Genealogie* will make the same argument in defense of poetry, in passages where Giotto (*noster Ioctus*) is mentioned by name.[71] Although Petrarch, for example, was grudging in his concession of status to artists, Boccaccio appears much more willing to hitch his own wagon to the rising status of the plastic arts in early Trecento Florence, a status often seen as documented in Andrea Pisano's Campanile bas-reliefs, which give a prestigious place to the mechanical arts, including *pictura*, *sculptura*, and *theatrica* (under which we might classify the art of the *beffa*). Indeed, returning to Florence from Naples in about 1340, just when Andrea became master of the works of the Opera del Duomo (Andrea's contribution ceased in 1343, with his departure from Florence, but the work was continued by others), Boccaccio might well have followed the development of the project closely and considered the works to be inspirational.[72]

Of course, the humorous juxtaposition of the rustic, the idiot or *cafona* with the broader and often ambiguously valued sophistication of the cosmopolite was scarcely a new phenomenon among the thematics of literature (Boccaccio could have found it, for example, in his much-used Apuleius). Nevertheless, the Calandrino story was destined to serve as a model for two archetypically Florentine Renaissance literary fictions: the *novella del Grasso legnaiuolo* (in its many redactions) and the comedy *Calandra*, by Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena. This alerts us to the resonance of these tales within the Florentine context, where the comic opposition of the *furbo* and the *fesso* (and the *cafona*) was to remain a fixture of social life available to comedy and *novellistica*.[73] On the level of Florentine municipal culture, the juxtaposition, in the first tale of Calandrino, of naïve belief in the miraculous and the marvelous with the savvy technologies of the *beffa* — a *techne* that includes rhetoric, painting and dramatic dissimulation — paved the way for the Quattrocento cult of the man of genius, of Brunelleschi above all, whose skill was great enough not only to construct the cupola of Santa Maria del

Fiore, but to socially re-engineer the identity and professional career of a craftsman *di grossa pasta* such as the *Grasso legnaiuolo*. Thus when Vasari turned to write the life of Brunelleschi, he began his account by recalling Boccaccio's account of the ugliness of Giotto and Forese Rabatta, for Filippo was "sparuto de la persona non meno che Messer Forese da Rabatta e Giotto; ma di ingeno tanto elevato che ben si può dire che e' ci fu donato dal cielo per dar nuova forma alla architettura, già per centinaia d'anni smarrita…" But the analogy of Giotto, Calandrino's tormentors and Brunelleschi went much deeper than that, for in the version of the *Grasso legnaiuolo* written by Antonio Manetti, Brunelleschi's biographer, he remembered precisely the phrase that Nello had used to begin Calandrino's transformation, and that would serve as well to begin the mutations to which the *Grasso* would be subject: thus when the *Grasso* is arrested for the unpaid debts of somebody else, he protests that there has been a case of mistaken identity; but his creditor retorts: "menatelo via; questa volta ti converrà pagare, innanzi che tu te ne sbrighi: vedrénola *se tu sarai desso* o no." This passage occurs a page after the Grasso' first experience with being mistaken for another, when he is addressed by Donatello, Brunelleschi's co-conspirator, as Matteo, and he wonders: "Ohimmè! Sarei io mai Calandrino, ch'io sia sì tosto diventato un altro sanza essermene avveduto?"[74] In Quattrocento Florence, there were no doubts about who first came up with the notion that the self was a social construct manipulable by language and by art.

RONALD L. MARTINEZ BROWN UNIVERSITY

NOTES

[1] For biographical information on Giovannozzo di Pierino, or Calandrino, see the notes to Branca's edition of the *Decameron* (Milan: Mondadori, 1976): 1410–11, and Luciano Bellosi, *Buffalmacco e il Trionfo della Morte* (Turin: Einaudi, 1974): 68–73, 98–99, 124–30.

[2] See Paul F. Watson, "The Cement of Fiction: Giovanni Boccaccio and the Painters of Florence," *MLN* 99 (1984): 43–64 (an essay to which I am much indebted), who for excellent reasons includes the tale of Giotto and Forese Rabatta (*Decameron* VI.5) in the group dominated by Bruno and Buffalmacco. See also Creighton Gilbert, "La devozione di Giovanni Boccaccio per gli artisti e l'arte," in Vittore Branca, ed., *Boccaccio Visualizzato* 3 vols. (Turin: Einaudi, 1999): I, 145–63, which complements Watson's essay.

[3] Maestro Simone, though "a Bologna nato e cresciuto," has origins in Tuscany; see VIII.9.3–5. Like the painters, he appears to be historical (Simone da Villa; see Branca's note, 1445).

[4] Franco Betti, "Calandrino, eroe sfortunato (aspetti del realismo boccacciano)," *Italica* 54 (1977): 512–20, refers to Calandrino as an "aspirante furbo" (514).

[5] Gilbert 151 conceives of the four Calandrino tales as arranged nearly-symmetrically around VIII.9, the longest of the tales (thus: VIII.3, 5, 9, IX.3, IX.5; if the third Calandrino story were IX.2 the pattern would be regular). The absence of Calandrino in IX.3 is compensated by the San Gallo fresco mentioned there (a metonymy of a thing painted for a painter). Alternatively, the Calandrino tales might be thought of as the germ of the *Decameron* itself, in a manner analogous to how the small sheaf of sonnets Dante is asked to put together by female readers ("due donne gentili") at *Vita nuova* 40.1 might be considered the germ of the *libello*.

[6] See VII, conclusion 3: … "se non fosse che io non voglio mostrare d'essere di schiatta di can botolo che incontanente si vuol vendicare, io direi che domane si dovesse ragionare delle beffe che gli uomini fanno alle lor mogli. Ma lasciando star questo…" As Branca points out, the expression recalls the "botoli… ringhiosi" of *Purgatorio* 14.46–47, which Dante uses to characterize the fractious inhabitants of the Valdarno in Guido del Duca's allegory of political violence; the quarrelsome dogs are usually identified with the Aretines, who had a dog baring its teeth on their escutcheon; Lauretta is probably also decrying the rusticity and harsh ways attributed to hill-people (like the Fiesolans in Dante, *Inferno* 15.62–63; see note below). Thomas Greene, "Forms of Accommodation in the *Decameron*," *Italica* 45 (1968): 297–313, sees the *beffe* of days VI.1–IX.10 exhibiting a downward trend, "symbolized by the robust fun of the first story in contrast to the literal bestiality [?] of the last" (307).

[7] For a searching study of the gender politics in VII.9, see Albert Russell Ascoli, "Pyrrhus' Rules: Playing with Power from Boccaccio to Machiavelli," *MLN* 114 (1999): 14–57.

[8] See Victoria Kirkham, "Painters at Play on the Judgment Day," now in *The Sign of Reason in Boccaccio's Fiction* (Florence: Olschki, 1993): 215–36, esp. 220–24, and Robert M. Durling, "A Long Day in the Sun: *Decameron* 8.7," in *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic:" Renaissance Essays in Honor of C.L. Barber*, ed. By Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (Newark: University of Delaware Press; London: Associated University Presses, 1985): 269–75.

[9] Both Watson 43–45, 51–53, and 56–60 and Gilbert 150–52 link the novella of Giotto and Forese to the account of Calandrino and his fellow painters, under the rubric of art so persuasive it can deceive the eye; they cite *Decameron* VI.5.5 (cited below in the text).

[10] Of the twenty uses of *domenica* in the *Decameron*, six are in Day VIII; six are in Days II–III, coordinated with the switch from the first group of Days to the second (so II *Conclusione* 6, 8, 16; III *Introduzione* 2), and also furnishing another instance of the action of a *novella* taking place on the same day as the narration of it; see III.4.21–23 (Frate Puccio begins his *penitenza* on Sunday). The other eight uses are as follows: I.1.58 and 60 (Ciappelletto's disrespect for Sunday and Easter Sunday, the day that "risuscitò da morte a vita il nostro signore"); II.5.3 Andreuccio arrives in Naples ("una domenica sera in sul vespro"), II.10.9 (days when

Ricciardo da Chinzica abstains from conjugal duties); IV.2.15, Frate Alberto's sight of Lisetta; IV.7.11, Pasquino and Simona and the "perdonanze di San Gallo di domenica"; VI.8.44, the wedding of Nastagio; VI.10.8, Frate Cipolla's first sermon.

[11] Robert Hollander has studied these incipits with a view to their reliance on Dante's text, in "*Decameron*: The Sun Rises in Dante," *Studi sul Boccaccio* 14 (1983–84): 241–55.

[12] See Durling, "Long Day" 269–73. Other tales in Day VIII with subjects that suggest the juridical as well as the merely retaliatory are the fifth, whose protagonist is an unworthy judge humiliated by — Maso del Saggio; the first, where revenge is routed through economics and Guasparolo tells Gulfardo he will "settle his score" ("acconcerò bene la vostra ragione", VIII.1.17); and the sixth, where there is a judicial ordeal to determine who has stolen Calandrino's pig. See Kirkham 233–35. Further study of the pattern is needed.

[13] Mario Baratto, *Realtà e stile nel Decameron* (Venice: Neri Pozza, 1970): 309–18; Millicent Joy Marcus, *An Allegory of Form: Literary Self-Consciousness in the 'Decameron'* (Saratoga, Calif.: Anma Libri, 1979): 79–92; Giuseppe Mazzotta, "Games of Laughter in the *Decameron*," *Romanic Review* 49 (1978): 115–31, now in *The World at Play in Boccaccio's Decameron* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1986): 186–212, esp. 192–206.

[14] For Pliny, whose account of the heliotrope was to influence later discussions, belief in the magical power of the stone is an impudence of magicians: "Magorum impudentiae vel manifestissimum in hoc quoque exemplum est, quoniam admixta herba heliotropio, quibusdam additus precationibus, gerentem conspici negent." (*Natural History*, 37.60). This idea of the stone's powers as obviously false was to be important for Boccaccio and his contemporaries.

[15] "Etymologia est origo vocabulorum, cum vis verbi vel nominis per interpretationem colligitur. Hanc Aristoteles σύμβολον, Cicero Notationem nominavit, quia nomina et verba rerum nota facit, ut puta *flumen,* quia fluendo crevit, a *fluendo* dictum… Cujus cognitio saepe usum necessarium habet in interpretatione sua. Nam cum videris unde ortum est nomen, citius vim ejus intelligis" (*Etymologiae* I, 29; PL 82.105B).

[16] Branca's note (1414) here recalls Cicero, *Topica* 8.31: "cum intelligitur quid significetur, minus laborandum est de nomine." Calandrino, typically, labors for the name not at all.

[17] A thorough discussion of the lapidaries in relation to Dante and early Italian literature is in H.D. Austin, "Dante and the Mineral Kingdom," *Romance Philology* 4 (1951–52): 79–153; see also Vincenzo Cioffari, "A Dante Note: Heliotropium," *Romanic Review* 27–28 (1936–37): 59–62.

[18] "Causa nominis de effectu lapidis est. Nam dejecta in labris aeneis radios solis mutat sanguineo repercussu" (*Etym*. XVI.7.12, PL 82.572).

[19] "Heliotropium nomen accepit primo quod aestivo solstitio floreat, vel quod solis motibus folia circumacta convertat. Unde a Latinis solsequia nuncupatur" (*Etym*. XVII.9.37, cited in Cioffari, 60; trans. mine).

[20] See Uguccione da Pisa's entry: "quedam gemma valde dura et perspicua, que colores mutat secundum variationem colorum in sole, unde rubea apparet in mane et in vespere…" Quoted in Paget Toynbee, "Dante's Latin Dictionary," in *Dante Studies and Researches* (London: Methuen, 1902): 112.

[21] "Ab helyos quod est sol et tropos quod est conversio dicitur hoc heliotropium," quoted in Cioffari, 60 (trans. mine).

[22] "Nam si iungatur eiusdem nominis herba, / Carmine legitimo, verbo sacrata potenti, / Subtrahit humanis oculis quemcunque gerentem" (Marbod, *Liber de Gemmis*, PL 171.758A). Marbod, followed by Albertus Magnus, also furnishes the "scientific" account for the effect of the heliotrope as resulting from the creation of a sudden mist that obscures, indeed eclipses, the sun. For Albertus' account, see Austin 109.

[23] As claimed by Austin 110.

[24] Giacomo da Lentini describes the heliotrope as "sì vertudiosa" and groups it with the ruby and the carbuncle. Vernacular instances of *aritropia*, *ritropia* and *elitropia* are drawn from the OVI database except where noted.

[25] It is probably also implicit that in holding the heliotrope, Ser Mula's wits vanish. Neither Zaccagnini (*Le rime di Cino da Pistoia* [Geneva: Olschki, 1925]: 103–04) nor Mario Marti (*Poeti del Dolce Stil Nuovo* [Florence: Le Monnier, 1969]: 828–29) make much sense of the poem, which remains obscure, though it touches on themes both of invisibility and the language of sexual license, topics that tend to adhere to the heliotrope.

[26] "Erat autem homo ex phariseis, Nicodemus nomine, princeps Iudaerorum. Hic venit ad Iesum nocte…" Traditional exegesis linked this passage with the secret resurrection appearances, when the disciples where hiding "for fear of the Jews" (20.19, "propter metum Iudaeorum"), which accounts for both hemistichs of the *Mare amoroso* verse.

[27] For the text of the Letter, I have used the monumental edition of the tradition and reception by Bettina Wagner, *Die 'Epistola presbiteri Johannis' lateinisch und deutsch: Überlieferung, Textgeschichte, Rezeption und Übertragungen im Mittelalter; Mit bisher unedierten Texten* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer 2000). I have relied on the redaction she denominates *Langfassung* I (350–56), which is attested in an early 14th-century Italian ms. though based on older traditions (see 48–49). An early tradition of Old French translations also existed, and the text was widely known; see Kurt Lewent, "'Lo vers de la terra de Preste Johan,' by Cerverí de Girona," *Romance Philology* 2 (1948–49): 1–32.

[28] VIII.3.28: "si truova una pietra la qual chi la porta sopra non e veduto da niuna altra persona"; 45: "per la vertù d'essa coloro, ancor che loro fosse presente, nol vedessero."

[29] For Prester John's India as an (atypical) version of Cockaygne, see Istvan Bejczy, *La lettre du Prêtre Jean une utopie médievale* (Paris: Imago, 2001): 58–59, 77.

[30] Marcus 87–90; Watson 50–51; Gilbert 150–151. Gilbert claims that Bruno and Buffalmacco do not use art to deceive, but this would impose an excessively narrow view of the paintings mentioned in 8.9 (the *Agnus-dei*, the *Quaresima*, the *kattomachia*), which are satirical of Maestro Simone; since they are unrecognized as such by him and painted at his expense, they are deceptive. For the meaning of these paintings, see Watson 52–55 and Kirkham 226–30.

[31] Branca notes (1413) the false-affirmation language game of Maso's "vi sono stato così una volta come mille"(VIII.3.13); at par. 47 Bruno says, preparing to stone Calandrino, "se io gli fossi presso come sono stato tutta la mattina," which might be construed as a consistent-with-fact conditional clause.

[32] Boccaccio's variations on the topic of vision include contrasting the plotters, who are "avveduti e sagaci" (4) and Maso, who is "astuto e avvenevole" (5) to Calandrino, who in failing to forbid his wife to gaze on him on the fatal Sunday showed that God had deprived him of its wits ("tolto li avea lo avvedimento," 64).

[33] In 1315 the Mugnone ran from East to West, having been diverted to accommodate the third circle of walls (begun toward the end of the Duecento). See the maps in Paget Toynbee, *A Dictionary of Proper Names and Other Notable Matters in the Works of Dante*, revised by C.S. Singleton (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968): 721

[34] Satan, the serpent, was charged with striking the children of Adam in the heel ("tu insidiaberis calcaneo eius," Gen. 3:15); for the kidneys or reins as a somatic location of lechery, see *Inferno* 20.13; 24.95, 25.57 (of the thieves pierced by serpents), *Purgatorio* 19.39.

[35] For this aspect, see Kirkham 233–34, with quotation from Augustine's *Enarratio in psalmo* 36.91: "veniet octavus dies, qui meritis tribuens quod debetur, jam non ad opera temporalia, sed ad vitam aeternam sanctos transferet, impios vero damnabit in aeternum."

[36] The San Gallo hospital has Dantean resonances too, if the exchange of sonnets between Dante and Forese is genuine). See K. Foster and P. Boyde, *Dante's Lyric Poetry* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967): II, 250 ("Rivesti San Gal…").

[37] The "perdonanza di San Gallo" also figures in the tragic tale of Simona and Pasquino, IV.7.10.

[38] This silent context of paintings emphasizing judgment is the more encompassing if Luciano Bellosi's attribution of the Pisa Camposanto frescoes of the Last Judgment to Buffalmacco is accepted. Most students accept the attribution, but see the reservations of Carlo Brandi in *Studi sul Boccaccio* 8 (1974): 336–38. The frescoes include a devil devouring sinners; for the Judgment theme as expressed in them, see Kirkham 231–32. The program of frescoes is the basis for a totalizing interpretation of the *Decameron* by Lucia Battaglia Ricci, *Ragionare nel giardino. Boccaccio e i cicli pittorici del 'Trionfo della Morte'* (Rome: Salerno, 1987).

[39] See the "mola asinaria" of Christ's warning against those who bring scandal (Mat. 18:6) and Apoc. 18:21–22 ("lapidem quasi molarem magnum").

[40] *Inferno* 15.53: "tiene ancor del monte e del macigno"; cf. the rhythm and alliteration of Maso's "da Montisci le macine" (VIII.3.19). The mountain of Purgatory is also made of "duro macigno" (*Purg*. 19.48). Writing in the *Esposizioni* on this passage, Boccaccio comments: "del monte, in quanto rustico e salvatico, e del macigno, in quanto duro e non pieghevole ad alcuno liberale e civil costume" (DDP).

[41] The image of the millstone's rotation for the solar orbit as seen from the poles was common in medieval scientific treatises, such as that of Alfraganus' *Liber de aggregationibus stellarum* ("est revolutio orbis sicut revolutio molae"), quoted in Dante, *Convivio*, ed. C. Vasoli and D. de Robertis (Milan-Naples: Ricciardi, 1988): 353. See Restoro d'Arezzo, *La composizione del mondo*, I.23.20–21 ("en modo de macina"); Dante, *Convivio* III.5.14 ("come una mola").

[42] See Branca's note, 1410.

[43] See *novella* 67 in Franco Sacchetti, *Trecentonovelle*, ed. Antonio Lanza (Milan: Sansoni 1993): 130–32.

[44] These are studied in Robert M. Durling and Ronald L. Martinez, *Time and the Crystal: Studies in Dante's 'Rime petrose'* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: Univ. of California Press 1990). Boccaccio copied Dante's lyrics several times; in his collections of fifteen *canzoni* by Dante "Così nel mio parlar" is always first, and the three other poems now considered *petrose* are in the 7th, 8th and 9th places (in the middle, in other words). Boccaccio was noticeably influenced by the *petrose* in his own lyrics; see *Rime*, ed. V. Branca (Milan: Mondadori, 1992), esp. XXXVII, LIV, 11, 15, 17, 34, 35, 36, and Branca's notes.

[45] The pointed echoes of the *rime petrose* range from the insistent use of terms such as *crudele* and *crudeltà* and *dura* of Nastagio's lady (11 instances) and a similar high count in the *petrose* (seven) to the focused scene of violence in Dante's "Così nel mio parlar," where the lady is imagined struck through the heart (53–54: "fender per mezzo / lo core"), and the climax of Nastagio's Friday spectacle, when old Anastagi cuts his lady through the heart (V.8.10: "e a quella con tutta sua forza diede per mezzo il petto").

[46] Durling, "Long Day," 270–71.

[47] For Dante's presence in the *Corbaccio*, see at least R. Hollander, *Boccaccio's Last Fiction: The 'Corbaccio'* (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1988): 59–71; and now Guyda Armstrong, "Boccaccio and the Infernal Body: The Widow as Wilderness," forthcoming in, *Feminist Criticism of the Decameron,* ed. R. Psaki and T. Stillinger.

[48] And Tessa's injuries (VIII.3.54: "scapigliata, stracciata, tutta livida e rotta nel viso") also echo those of old Anastagi's victim in V.8.15: "ignuda, scapigliata e tutta graffiata."

[49] See Greene 307, who comments on the retaliatory pattern: "a kind of plot which appears increasingly in the stories of the eighth and ninth days, a plot which one might borrow from Shakespeare to call "measure for measure…" and which B. himself calls "l'arte... dall'arte schernita."

[50] Contessa is a name that according to Branca (1361, 1413) reflects the popularity of the 12th-cent. Contessa Matilda of Tuscany, who endowed the patrimony of St. Peter with her vast holdings; but as Branca reports, the name may have sexual suggestions as well. Both noble and vulgar aspects of Tessa's onomastic pedigree are authorized by Dante, who sends his *canzone* "Doglia mi reca" to "Bianca, Giovanna, Contessa" (v. 153), but who also places Cunizza da Romano (cf. Provencal *Conitza*) in his heaven of Venus, with clear equivocal

meaning attaching to her name (see M. Picone, "*Paradiso* IX: Dante, Folchetto, e la diaspora trobadorica, *Medioevo romanzo* 8 (1983): 47–89). Cunizza's instance probably meets the objection in Branca's view that if Tessa is a "brava moglie" she cannot have a sexually suggestive name (1361).

[51] See *Inferno* 34.25, "Io non morì e non rimasi vivo," and *Inf.* 34.83, "ansando com'uom lasso," and compare with *Dec*. VIII.3.54, Calandrino "ansando a guisa d'uom lasso" and IX.5.65, "non rimase né morto né vivo"; a similar expression is found in the lyrics, ed. Branca 113 no. 34.12: "Io non muoio, e non vivo, anzi fo stento."

[52] See Betti, 519: "il comico volge al tragico."

[53] Calandrino's passions are a longstanding theme of criticism; see Betti 514; and G. Petronio, *Il Decameron: saggio critico* (Bari, 1935): 64: "questa medesima torbida sensualità… è in Calandrino, rosso, sudato, ansimante dal caldo e dalla corsa"; see also Mazzotta 197.

[54] Plato, *Republic* II (359b–360d); Gyges' story is invoked of this passage by Stavros Deligiorgis, *Narrative Intellection in the Decameron* (Iowa City: Univ. of Iowa Press): 179, though via Herodotus, not Plato.

[55] See Carlo Muscetta, "Boccaccio e la commedia dei *cafoni*," in *Letteratura militante* (Florence: Parenti, 1953): 163–67. The utterance against Florence at *Inf.* 16.73 is the first such outburst in the poem from the narrator (rather than from a soul in Hell).

[56] *Purg*. 10.10, exactly: "qui si conviene usar un poco d'arte."

[57] See Péleo Bacci, "Gli affreschi di Buffalmacco scoperti nella chiesa di Badia in Firenze," *Bollettino d'Arte* (1911): 13–14; and W.R. Valentiner, "Tino di Camaino in Florence," *Art Quarterly* 17 (1954): 119.

[58] For the import, both satirical and apocalyptic, of the *Agnusdei* in 8.9, see Watson 53–55 and Kirkham, "Painters at Play," 226–27.

[59] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II. IIae Art. 4, 1. Watson 51 cites Boccaccio's text at VI.5.5; see note 9.

[60] See Acts 7.58: "et eiicientes eum extra civitatem lapidabant," vs. "su per lo Mugnone infino alla porta a San Gallo il vennero lapidando" (*Dec*. VIII.3.48).

[61] See Margo Cottino-Jones, "'Fabula' vs. 'Figura': Another Interpretation of Boccaccio's Griselda Story," *Italica* 50 (1973): 38–52 and Kirkham, "The Last Tale in the *Decameron*," in *Sign of Reason* 249–65, where Griselda is convincingly presented as a type of Humility.

[62] Honorius of Autun, *Gemma animae*, PL 172.557.

[63] The view, though using different terms, of Ciro Trabalza, *Studi sul Boccaccio* (Citta di Castello: Lapi, 1906): 244.

[64] Bacci 13–14 quotes from Milanesi the document that assigned the Baptistery tabernacle to Lippo di Benivieni: "qui presentialiter pingit figuras et picturas tabernaculi ponendi in ecclesia sancti Johannis, que multum alluminant et delectant corda et oculos civium et singularum personarum aspicientum eas."

[65] Especially brought out by Marcus 90, where she observes that painters can be "manipulators of illusion at the possible expense of their public"; see also Mazzotta 192: "the merchants are the true tricksters who manipulate events and are in full possession of rationality."

[66] I have relied on the recent edition by Alberto Conte, *Il Novellino* (Roma: Salerno 2001): 5–9; 165–70 (*Ur-Novellino* version); 301–03 (*Fonti*). The possible influence of the *Novellino* on Boccaccio is well known; see M. Picone, "Madonna Oretta e le novelle 'in itinere' (*Dec*. VI.1)," in *Favole parabole istorie. Le forme della scrittura novellistica dal Medioevo al Rinascimento*. Atti del Convegno di Pisa, 26–28 Novembre 1998, ed. G. Albanese et al (Rome: Salerno 2000): 67–83; further bibliography in Conte, xxx–xxxii.

[67] Whether the first or second Frederick of Hohenstaufen is meant is disputed, but has only a small effect on the outcome; see Reinhold Koehler, "La nouvelle italienne du Pretre Jean et de l'empereur Frederic et un recit islandais, *Romania* 5 (1876): 76–81.

[68] In the tradition of redactions of the letter, the addressee varies: early versions were a challenge to the Byzantine emperor, since 1054 "heretical" from the point of view of Rome. A recent study of the tale and its relation to the Letter of Prester John suggests broader dimensions to this critique; see Michael Uebe, "Imperial Fetishism: Prester John Among the Natives," in *The Postcolonial Middle Ages* (New York: St. Martin's, 2000): 261–82, although the terms used would not have been unfamiliar to Dante, for example: "by failing to discover or even investigate the stones' esoteric powers, the Western rulers display their fascination with the outward signs of material wealth and with the sheer act of accumulation itself…" (265).

[69] See Brunetto Latini, *Li livre dou Tresor*, ed. F.J. Carmody (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1948), I.i.2–4: 17–18, esp. I.i.3: "La seconde partie ki traite des vices et des viertus est de precieuses pieres, ki donent a home delit et vertu…"

[70] Maso's embroideries on the *paese di Bengodi* and the fabulous source of heliotropes and millstones evoke Prester John's account, in his letter, of his remarkable kindgoms in the East, near the Earthly Paradise, which the *Novellino* story digests into a single line (see Koehler 80); the *Letter* itself is in any case a lapidary, with 20 of the 64 paragraphs of *Langfassung* I describing precious stones. In the case of VIII.9.24, where Boccaccio mentions Prester John ("la schinchimurra del Presto Giovanni") there is the strong likelihood that the following description of the bedroom where our painters claim to enjoy their royal concubines (VIII.9.25: "quelle camere paiono un paradiso a vedere") refers to the *Letter* (Wagner 355: "camera in qua requiescit nostra sublimitas, mille modis mirabili opere ex auro et omne genere lapidum est exornata"), a reference the more outrageous of course, given the nearly absolute chastity of women in Prester John's kingdom (355: "speciocissimas mulieres habemus, sed non accedunt ad nos nis quarter in anno"). These suggestive parallels will repay further study.

[71] For Boccaccio's yoking of himself with Giotto, see Watson *passim* and esp. 61–65 for the defense in the *Conclusione d'autore* 5–6 with the important reference to the "aequa potestas audendi," of Horace's *Ars poetica*, naming the equal liberty afforded to painters and poets; and Gilbert 150–52, for the reference to the *Genealogie* XIV.6, 18.

[72] See Marvin Trachtenberg, *The Campanile of Florence Cathedral, Giotto's Tower* (New York, 1971): esp. 89–93 and Diana Norman, "The Art of Knowledge: Two Artistic Schemes in Florence," in *Siena, Florence, and Padua: Art Society and Religion 1280–1400* 2 vols. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995): I, 217–41; see also Watson 47, 60, and the remarks about the status of artists in John Larner, *Culture and Society in Italy 1290–1420* (London: Batsford, 1971): 264–84. Gilbert 147 reproduces the page from the *Zibaldone Magliabechiano* where Boccaccio lists *uomini illustri*, grouping poets, doctors, painters, a sculptor, a historian, a mathematician, and a statesman.

[73] The dyad of *furbo* and *fesso* was immortalized also by, of course, Machiavelli's Ligurio and Nicia in *Mandragola*; for the dyad from the point to view of gender, see Hannah Fenichel Pitkin, *Fortune is a Woman: Gender and Politics in the Thought of Niccolò Machiavelli* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1984).

[74] See *La novella del Grasso legnaiuolo*, "Redazione Manetti," ed. Paolo Procaccioli (Milan: Garzanti, 1998): 14, 12.