



## Passione Trivulziana. Armonia evangelica volgarizzata in milanese antico. Edizione critica e commentata, analisi linguistica e glossario

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of a form of alterity that produces a different kind of knowledge, working through frenzy and uncontrolled speech and identified by Aristotle with pathos' (p. 73). Melancholy thus paves the way to a form of 'possessed speech' — ultimately poetry — that enables the subject to access self-knowledge in a way that is different from recorded history. As multiple instances in Leopardi's work confirm — from his autobiographical notes in *Alla vita abbozzata di Silvio Sarno* through the *Dialogo di Torquato Tasso e del suo genio familiare* to the *Passero solitario* and *Canto notturno* — this form of self-knowledge ultimately entails the substitution of the object for the recognition of its absence: the object is acknowledged as a mental image, hence a vacuum, a presence-absence inscribed in the subject himself and which reinstates the melancholic feeling underpinning his/her relationship with desire.

As personal memory takes over history, the feelings and emotions of youth and even infancy become the signifiers of a past that, as in the cases of the symptoms of hysteria for Freud's patients, may well originate from fears and fantasies rather than facts. In the last chapter of his book, the author tries to reconstruct the meaning of the first three *Zibaldone* entries by associating them with Leopardi's well-recorded childhood fears (of darkness, werewolves and dogs barking at night) whose uncanny emotions resurface in *Le ricordanze*. Ultimately Camilletti, who interprets this poem also in relation with the tradition of folkloric fairy tales and Freud's account of his patient 'The wolf-man', considers *Le ricordanze* as 'an intellectual endeavour to move within a twilight zone between rationality and "savage mind", mythos and logos, truth and illusion'.

It would be impossible to render justice to the myriads of enticing nuances in Camilletti's study which pervade his reflections. They include considerations upon the meaning of the adjective 'antico' in Leopardi and its ambiguous link with the connotation of the German prefix *Ur* as in *Urszene*; the intertextuality of Leopardi's texts with ancient philosophical and poetic sources; the relationship between *flânerie* as a form of modern distraction in Benjamin, and Leopardi's poetic practice as a form of consolation; the strange, and unexpected consonance between the figures of Leopardi's peasant girls in *Silvio Sarno* and the characters of Lucia and Gertrude in Manzoni's *Promessi sposi*. There are many more such fascinating suggestions and well-argued side paths in Fabio Camilletti's monograph. In his concluding reflections upon the *Dialogo di un venditore di almanacchi e di un passeggero*, he suggests that 'the poet of modern life', as Claudio Colaiacomo, an interpreter whose presence is perhaps not acknowledged enough in the book, calls Leopardi, shows a convincingly innovative side: as one who has successfully surfaced from the most destructive implications of his nihilism through 'an ironic benevolence that is an ultimate act of love for humanity' (p. 163).

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**Passione Trivulziana. Armonia evangelica volgarizzata in milanese antico. Edizione critica e commentata, analisi linguistica e glossario**, by Michele Colombo, Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, Berlin, Mouton de Gruyter, 2016, 406 pp., €99.95 (hardback), ISBN 978-3-11-047649-1

This book is the stuff of serious scholarship. Gospel harmonies – texts which combine the four Gospels in a single, chronological account, omitting repetitions and resolving contradictions – have received increasing attention in recent years. The manuscript on which this book is based, known to scholars as the *Passione Trivulziana* (hereafter, *Passione*), is so called after the library in Milan where it is held. Written in old Milanese prose and known to scholars since at least 1884 through Porro's catalogue, the

*Passione* had been published by Piazza (1975), but with numerous errors. Michele Colombo has provided the scholarly community with a corrected edition, accompanied by a full philological apparatus including commentary, dating of the manuscript, its provenance, a linguistic analysis and glossary.

Chapter 1 of the volume is dedicated to a lengthy discussion of the dating and provenance of the manuscript. Colombo is exacting in his investigation, pointing out that where previous scholars had dated the text to the fourteenth century, it is best dated to the first half of the fifteenth century. As evidence, we are provided with useful paleographical detail concerning the stem of the letter “d”, as well as the presence of word-initial capital letters “I” and “N”, written in a later, gothic script. The manuscript’s provenance can be traced back to Como via a variety of linguistic and metalinguistic clues. Colombo articulates a series of questions which allows him to provide a more complete picture of the text’s provenance: Did the *volgarizzamento* draw on a Latin text in which the sources (evangelical and not) had already been brought together in a single narration, or did it combine these sources together *ex novo*? Does the text coincide with the original, or is it a copy of an antigraph? Can we date the work’s composition by looking at linguistic elements? Colombo weaves his way seamlessly through various medieval texts which allow us to identify several probable sources for the *Passione*’s composition. In particularly impressive pages towards the end of this Chapter, the provenance of the manuscript is further refined by considering the presence (or absence) or certain linguistic phenomena in contemporary manuscripts. This methodology allows for a clearer articulation of the linguistic boundary between Milan and Como. Useful in this regard is the *Laudario comasco*, held in the Archivio della diocesi di Como. Colombo provides an exhaustive analysis of the subject clitic pronoun *a*’ with clitic subjects of the third person singular and plural pronouns in the *Laudario*, showing that their absence in the *Passione* allows him to exclude Como as a potential origin, and rather identify the *scripta* as being strictly old Milanese.

Chapter 2 places the *Passione* in its historical and philological context. Gospel harmonies have a long tradition. This history can be traced to the *Diatessaron*, dating back to Tatian the Syrian’s harmony of 170 CE. The process of combining all four Gospels into one account was widespread in the middle ages, but no more so than in Italy where at least thirty-three codices contain some version of a harmony text. This technique presented several advantages: not only would it allow for an ordered and simplified narrative, but it guaranteed the *illiterati* easier access to the life of Jesus. Making comparisons between the *Passione* and contemporary Gospel harmonies, Colombo finds striking similarities particularly between the *Passione* and the *Passione Mai*, held in Bergamo. Such a comparison leads to several conclusions, not least of which is that the language of the *Passione* was considered appropriate for popular consumption through oral recitation.


Chapter 3 provides the criteria used for the *Passione*’s edition and the edition itself. Here, the author has been meticulous in his judgements. Editorial intervention has been necessary to provide a clear exposition of the text, and all editorial decisions are clearly explained for the reader. All interventions help to correct the previous edition of the *Passione*, whose *scripta* shows a high degree of variation. One example to represent the whole: accents on perfects of the third person plural have been added, such that any one morpheme may be written *-àn / -àno, -ón, -én / -éno* or *-in / -ino*. What emerges is a highly readable transcription. Not only does the text appear free from a heavy editorial hand, its layout into separate paragraphs makes it easily digestible. The reader has been aided further by copious footnotes: these include explanations of the meanings of certain sentences from the *Passione*, translations of difficult passages into modern Italian, linguistic specifications, as well as cross-references to secondary literature, to similar passages from the Gospels and to contemporary texts. References to online databases, such as the *Tesoro della lingua italiana* and the *Corpus del Vocabolario italiano*, point to occurrences of lexemes in other texts and help to clarify their historical context.

Chapter 4 is devoted to an exhaustive linguistic analysis. All levels of language are given a full exposition, including graphemes, vowels, consonants, general phenomena such as apheresis, syncope, apocope etc., noun and verb morphology as well as syntax. In many cases, we are provided with a lengthy treatment of the often decades-long scholarship behind the interpretation of a linguistic phenomenon. For example, in his discussion of free subject pronouns, and after listing all the forms

present in the *Passione*, a footnote points us to a detailed discussion of the third person plural form *i*. Not only has Colombo consulted philological editions from the late nineteenth century by Mussafia, Keller and Salvioni to look for analogous forms, but further explanation is provided about its possible evolution. In this case, the solution is to consider it as an enclitic (*-i*) form rather than free, possibly deriving from *illi*. Attestations are provided from other Milanese texts, as well as from neighbouring Lombard vernaculars, allowing the reader to grasp something of a form's geographical extension and its development, as well as its sociolinguistic context.

Chapter 5 provides an extremely useful glossary for those unfamiliar with fifteenth century Milanese, containing clear explanations of the most difficult and obscure linguistic items. Again, full use is made of online databases. Oftentimes, the author has quoted the sentence where any one word appears in the transcription directly next to the listed item in the glossary. Such an exposition allows one to see the lexeme in its context immediately, without having to turn back to its occurrence in the edition. Useful grammatical information is provided next to each item's entry. We are told whether the word is a noun, verb, pronoun, etc., removing any ambiguity about the form's function that a reader might have.

This is an impressive volume. The bibliography is lengthy and modern. Scholars will find its layout and structure easy to use, and will be able to cross-check linguistic phenomena relatively quickly. Published in the series *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, the organisation of the book implies confident knowledge of all levels of analysis. Simply the sheer amount of work that has gone into the text's preparation is striking enough, and scholars of historical linguistics, dialectology, socio-historical linguistics and religious writing will find in this book a useful resource for future research. It makes a major contribution to the history of Milanese from a variety of perspectives, and will serve as a model for other dialect areas for years to come.

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**Italian Futurism and the First World War**, by Selena Daly, Toronto, Buffalo, London, University of Toronto Press, 2016, 265 pp., \$65 (hardback), ISBN 978-1442649064

This book is the first comprehensive study of the relationship between Italian Futurism and the Great War from the interventionist period (1914–1915) to the post-war years (1918–1920). Drawing from an impressive range of published and unpublished sources (including letters, diaries, journals, military documents, creative works, etc.), Daly portrays a detailed picture of the cultural, political, and military engagement of the movement with the war, showing how this very relationship represented a crucial step for the development and the survival of Futurism from the late 1910s onwards. Daly's overarching thesis is that the substantial transformations faced by Futurism during the conflict (which eventually led to the emergence of a so-called *secondo futurismo*) were not only a consequence of the turnover of the group's protagonists (Boccioni and Sant'Elia died, Severini, Carrà, Sironi, Palazzeschi and others left the movement) nor of the realisation of the original 1909 belligerent programme; rather, they were part of a carefully thought strategy adopted by Marinetti to revitalise a movement whose avant-garde provocations were becoming less effective. The Futurists' confrontation with the Great War provided them with the means to both rethink their cultural role and to act accordingly through a range of different strategies, including a resolute political turn and the exploration of more accessible artistic expressions.