This book represents a significant advance in our understanding of Chaucer's encounters with Italian literature. It does so by asking a simple question: What did that literature look like? The question leads to early manuscript copies of works by Boccaccio, but also to Petrarch and to Filippo Ceffi's vernacular translation of Ovid's *Heroides*, here—building on the neglected work of Sanford B. Meech—given a new lease of life as an important source of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women* and of his attitude towards translation.

Italian literature could look messy, on account of the glosses made by enthusiastic translators, readers, and authors. It is this topic, the paratext, that is the focus of K. P. Clarke's study. For the paratext shows how Boccaccio and other authors were read. It also alerts us to the kind of text Chaucer would have encountered: one already mediated by copyists and readers using the margins of their manuscripts as creative spaces in which to engage with the writer's work. Chaucer's access to Statius, as evidenced in the Knight's Tale, was probably affected by references to that author in the commentary by Boccaccio on his *Teseida*, Chaucer's main source. Chaucer read Italian literature through lenses provided by glossators.

This is nowhere more evident than in some of the early copies of the *Decameron*, of the kind Chaucer could have seen during his visit to Florence in 1373. Circulating in fragmentary form, and copied out by mercantile aficionados of their fellow-citizen's work, they included marginal comments that have much to reveal about the reception of Boccaccio. Of particular interest to Clarke is the codex of Boccaccio's works created in 1384 by Francesco Mannelli, in which a commentary on the *Decameron* brings into play references to Dante and to Boccaccio's *Teseida* and *Filostrato*, among other works. When he reads Boccaccio's tale of Griselda (*Decameron*, x, 10), so indignant is Mannelli at the treatment the heroine receives at the hands of her husband that he provides her with a voice. The argument becomes more tenuous when Clarke turns his attention to the glosses that exist in the Hengwrt and Ellesmere manuscripts of the *Canterbury Tales*. There, too, Griselde's voice is given more room than Walter's. If, as some have argued, the manuscripts were produced in Chaucer's lifetime and supervised by him, then the glosses could be his own work. That would also help to explain why the thirty or so glosses on the Clerk's Tale derive from Petrarch's Latin version of the narrative, which Chaucer used in his own translation. Thus Clarke's book ends with intriguing speculations that venture beyond plausible hypothesis but it is no less valuable for that. The appendices, listing Mannelli's glosses on *Decameron*, x, 10, and the Hengwrt and Ellesmere glosses to the Clerk's Tale and Wife of Bath's Prologue, will be especially useful.

There are points of interpretation that give occasional pause for thought. Some exploration of melancholy and its astrological sources, especially as it affects Arcite in the Knight's Tale, would have enhanced Clarke's analysis of *amor herois* (pp. 85–93). And Clarke conflates the Wife of Bath's apprentice,
Janekyn, and Jankyn her fifth husband, the ‘clerk of Oxenford’ who lives with her gossip (p. 146). But these are minor quibbles about a book which, with scholarly panache, provides a fundamental rethink of Chaucer’s relationship with Italian literature.

Rutherford College
University of Kent

PETER BROWN


In this wide-ranging and thought-provoking study, Jamie C. Fumo sets out to show that Chaucer took on, reshaped, and bequeathed a model of poetic authority in which the god Apollo played a significant part as ‘a mythographic icon of the classicizing poet’s self-image’ (p. 11). Thanks to his reading of Ovid above all, but also traditions deriving from Virgil, medieval mythography, and Christian allegory and polemic, Chaucer was heir to an ambivalent portrayal of Apollo as conqueror of Python, oracle, poet, healer, and artistic authority. In turn, Fumo argues, Chaucer’s successors appropriated his Apolline poetics for their own purposes.

Fumo’s interests are broad, and in practice the first half of the book is only tangentially concerned with Chaucer. Two lengthy chapters explore Apollo’s roles in Ovid and Ovidian tradition, and in medieval hermeneutics: Ovid’s ‘cynical recasting’ of Apolline myth repeatedly undermines the credibility of ‘a god who straddles precariously, rather than confidently mediates, the divine and human realms’ (pp. 33, 38). Fumo argues that this negative view is picked up by medieval English writers far more than their counterparts on the Continent. By contrast, chapter 2 delves into some mythographic writings more friendly to Apollo – including Christian allegorizations – alongside anti-pagan polemic. If somewhat unsystematic, and at times loosely tethered to the Chaucerian chapters that follow, this enterprising tour of mythography from Hyginus to the Middle English *Assembly of Gods* has an impressive scholarly range.

Three shorter chapters then cover Chaucer’s *Troilus* and the Squire’s, Franklin’s, and Manciple’s Tales, with some attention to *The House of Fame*. Fumo’s reading of *Troilus* as a ‘prequel’ to, and Augustinian critique of, Virgil’s *Aeneid* belongs to the tradition of interpretations heavily conditioned by the closing Christian polemic against ‘payens corsed olde rites’: the Apollo who is implicated in the destruction of the city as well as its original building must eventually be replaced by Christ. A particularly valuable section explores the connections between *Troilus* and Joseph of Exeter’s *Ylias*, locating some suggestive verbal connections between *Troilus* ‘double sorwe’ and the ‘geminos … dolores’ of the twice-sacked Troy, as well as broader literary correspondences between the two: this strand seems ripe for further development. Chapter 4 offers an intricate account