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Donna Mancusi-Ungaro's *Dante and the Empire*

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leading one to believe that he envisions an audience of relatively less experienced students. Unfortunately, it is precisely those students who will have difficulty deciphering Vitti's book. This is due to the non-use or misuse of normal punctuation marks, relative pronouns and other grammatical niceties; for instance, "Vengono, quindi, esclusi gli anni tra le due guerre e i così detti 'Anni Trenta,' perché la 'quarta generazione' o la generazione di mezzo, come spesso vengono chiamati gli artisti che si formarono culturalmente prima della guerra, dovettero saggiare la propria lezione culturale con una drammatica serie di eventi: la guerra e la Resistenza che influenzarono e trasformarono la proprio esistenza [sic]" (p. 1); and "Egli si fa continuatore dei valori acquisiti nel dopoguerra sviluppandoli con molte contraddizioni e spunti originali, senza di essi si arriva ad una nuova preistoria" (p. 22). This book would have been greatly helped by an editor, who might have been able to correct the ambiguities. It also would have been greatly improved by a proofreader, who would have been able to make a coherent sentence out of "Lo stato fascista che organizzò la cultura e l'intellettuali non aveva più un rapporto diretto con la massa, ma con gli istituti di cultura" (p. 3). A proofreader would have decided once and for all if *Ragazzi di vita* has eight or nine chapters, whether the character's name is spelled Riccetto or Ricetto, and would have saved time for all those readers who will search their dictionaries in vain for "scamparire," "traditione," "pagini" and "coicidere," and who will comb the library for *Alì*.

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DONNA MANCUSI-UNGARO *Dante and the Empire*, Peter Lang Publishing, 1987, pp. 201.

Dante and the Empire by Donna Mancusi-Ungaro is a well-researched attempt to reconcile the tension that Italian scholars have long felt between Dante's formal treatise on political theory, the *Monarchy*, and his other better-known works, particularly the *Divine Comedy*.

Mancuso would like us to pay more attention to the *Monarchy* and see it "as the complement in prose to the poem, a complement in praise of politics to the ethics in poetry." Any examination of Dante's political ideology requires an in-depth look not only at the turn of events that shaped his life and exile but also an interpretation of his philosophical influences: Avveroes, St. Thomas, Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, (and interestingly according to Mancuso) Plato and Socrates. Mancuso has made a heroic effort to cover all of this ground.

The problem facing any scholar of the *Monarchy* is that this work has been generally disregarded because Dante's political ideology, his desire for a *humana civilitas* was conservative even in his own day. Mancuso recognizes the difficulty inherent in comparing Dante's poems to his philosophical work and this short book gives the reader insight into the richness of Dante's philosophical influences as well as the complexity of his ideals.

C. C.