

manico. Per Régis Boyer (Parigi), che ha presentato *Sigurðr Fáfnisbani, un anti-héros?*, la contraddizione del personaggio si spiega assumendo che questi rappresenta la fedeltà all'idea tribale germanica cui resterà legato nonostante che le situazioni storiche si siano modificate. Nella relazione di Maria Elena Ruggerini (Roma), *L'eroe germanico contro avversari mostruosi: un'analisi diacronica*, si perviene a uno schema tipologico sotteso a ogni narrazione interessata a questo tema, che sia valido per esaminare le peculiarità delle singole versioni letterarie, sino a comprendere le aberrazioni nella raffigurazione iconica. Per *The limited world of the medieval man* di Anatoly Liberman (University of Minnesota), ogni approccio alla letteratura medievale deve tenere nel debito conto l'orientamento che la configura, nel formularismo espressivo, nell'assenza di prospettiva, nell'unità di forma e contenuto. Il *Profilo dell'antieroe* di Teresa Pàroli (Roma) ha aiutato all'identificazione di questo ruolo sulla base di parametri di comportamento che, pur totalmente sovvertiti dal messaggio cristiano, ancora funzionano per denotare il maligno. Infine, *The hero in Christian reception* di Jocelyn Wogan-Browne (Liverpool) ha presentato il problema delle interferenze dei paradigmi etnici sulla visione, elaborata da Ælfric, di una *militia* cristiana.

Si è detto che il risultato più vistoso di questa iniziativa culturale è di aver segnalato nella dialettica risultante dall'insieme di limiti le condizioni per proporre una serie di paradigmi che costituiscono il sistema articolato cui riferire i tratti caratterizzanti l'eroismo germanico. E' stato, dunque, nelle coppie quali umano / divino, umano / mostruoso, maschile / femminile, etnico / cristiano, indoeuropeo / non indoeuropeo, germanico comune / germanico specifico, banchetto eroico / banchetto cristiano, saldezza / non saldezza, ecc., - dove si avrà un'articolazione sufficientemente ampia da contenere variazioni diacroniche, diastratiche e diatopiche - che sono stati individuati i contenuti di rapporti oppositivi

da cui finalmente emergerà, quale messaggio veramente più originale di questa iniziativa culturale, un modo etno-filologico di accostarsi al problema.



A MEDIEVAL SEPTEMBER AT SAN MINIATO

by Teresa Pàroli, University of Roma "La Sapienza"

The town of San Miniato, between Florence and Pisa, spreads out across three hilltops and offers a wonderful view of the plain of the Arno, closed off on the horizon by the Apennine Chain. The central part is the oldest, dominated as it is by the tower built by Frederick II around 1220, and bounded on the Eastern side by the imposing complex of the Monastery of St Francis, the construction of which began in 1276 on the site of a church erected by Lombards in the eighth century to the martyr St Miniato. The town takes its name from the Saint. Tradition has it that St Francis himself visited San Miniato in 1211. In any case, a marvelous monastic complex built around two cloisters arose beside the church dedicated to St Miniato between 1500 and 1700. A large portion of the monastery has been adapted for visitors with a large hall for meetings and supplied with all the necessary equipment, without any modification of its original appearance. In these surroundings so rich in historical associations, where modern facilities do not prevent one from working in an ancient atmosphere of serenity, the Seventh Seminar was held from 6 to 11 September, 1993. It was entitled "Fonti per la storia della civiltà del Tardo Medioevo: le fonti letterarie" ("Sources for Late Medieval Historical Studies: the Literary Sources"), organised by the "Centro di Studi sulla Civiltà del Tardo Medioevo" ("Centre for the Study of Late Medieval Civilisation"), located in San Miniato (mailing address: Loggiati di S. Do-

menico 1, 56027 San Miniato, Pisa).

The last decade has seen a plethora of congresses, conventions and meetings of all sorts on cultural subjects, whose programmes pile up on our desks. If a scholar wished to attend, not all, but most of them, he or she would become a sort of travelling salesman struggling with air and rail timetables, anxious to coordinate the end of a congress in Turku with the beginning of another in Agrigento, perhaps spending a couple of days at one in Barcelona, with the regret of not having been able to include a meeting on the Easter Island because of unfavourable flight schedules. There is the danger of turning into travellers instead of being scholars, since one soon finds oneself without cultural 'merchandise' to peddle, for lack of time in which to develop it with the necessary serenity and seriousness.

It is worth taking a closer look at the San Miniato initiative because it is inspired by a highly original 'philosophy' of culture, in that its purpose is to obtain concrete, solid, and extremely useful results a situation particularly to my liking, and I hope I am not the only one to feel this way. The San Miniato "Centre" was founded in 1985 (after a long period of preparation) and is managed by a scientific Committee made up of Medievalists from many Italian universities as well as representatives from foreign academic institutions operating in Italy.

Since 1987, the "Centre" has set up a one-week Seminar every year on a different type of sources for the study of Late Medieval History: the chronicles (1987), notary records (1988), tax records (1989), hagiographic sources (1990), judicial records (1991), records of economic activities (1992) and literary sources (1993).

This farreaching research project, always open to improvements, deals with methods and practices of the sources research into the Middle Ages. Tailored in an original fashion, this research has proved to be extremely fruitful. I shall try to describe this initiative starting from my own recent experience. The sketch of the history of the "Centre", kindly provided by its Director, Prof. Sergio Gensini, will help me to report

the activities of the past few years.

About a dozen teachers of various nationalities specialising in a variety of subjects and coming from different universities are invited to give a lesson on specific subjects in their areas of study to a group of young Italian and foreign scholars. This year, there were more than thirty such scholars, twenty of whom had their living expenses entirely or partially paid by the "Centre", through grants and scholarships. The lessons take place in the morning and are followed by ample and often heated discussion, in which everyone is anxious to participate. Quite often, the youngest participants ask the most provocative questions. In the sessions from 6 to 11 September 1993, after an introduction to the theme suggested by Prof. Massimo Miglio (Università della Tuscia), the following subjects were dealt with: official writing (Prof. Claudio Ciociola, The University of Cassino, and Giuseppe Scalia, Rome, "La Sapienza"); historical and political poetry (Antonio Ivan Pini, Bologna); comic and realistic poetry (Corrado Bologna, Chieti); Icelandic sagas (Teresa Pàroli, Rome, "La Sapienza"); epic literature (Franco Cardini, Florence); sermons (Lina Bolzoni, Pisa); Italian *novellas* (Giovanni Cherubini, Pisa), Chaucer (Dianella Savoia, Milan); mystery plays (Anna Cornagliotti, Turin), theatre (Michel Plaisance, Paris IV^e); and Dante's *Commedia* (Franco Tateo, Bari).

In the afternoon sessions, the roles are reversed: the young participants take their turns as speakers to expound on their research, whereas all those present take part in the debate, teachers and young scholars alike. The subjects dealt with concern various branches of Medieval studies: history, paleography, Romance and Germanic philology, Italian studies, etc. There follows a highly instructive and stimulating comparison of various and differing methodologies.

The time spent by the participants together as they get to know one another and exchange ideas is very profitable indeed. Discussions over meals in the charming refectory, walks in the delightful town

during breaks, and frequent strolls in the cloisters, when the weather is bad, contribute to this exchange. A climate of cordiality and cooperation is created, and this is especially the case this year thanks to the coordinators of the "Seminar" (Profs. Miglio and Cherubini), who lead the discussions without any formality, thereby making it easier for the youngest and shyest scholars to participate. After a week of serious and intensive work, we remain relaxed and serene and take leave of one another at the end with the sense of having learned a great deal and of having made new friends.

The "Centre's" activities continue both with meetings with the young people of the "Seminar" to check on the progress of their research, and with study congresses, which are held every two years at San Miniato and whose proceedings (*Atti*) are published. The next congress, scheduled for October 1994, will be the fifth of the series.

This year, Medieval Icelandic culture was part of the "Centre's Seminar", and I was asked to conduct a lesson, which I entitled "Icelandic Sagas between History and Literature". After an introduction on the background and culture of Iceland, I dealt with the well-known problem of the 'historicity' of the sagas beginning with a rapid examination of the history of the historiography and literary criticism on that subject. As a tangible example of the polysemy of historicity, I chose to treat in greater detail the two sagas on the discovery of Vínland *Grænlandinga saga* and *Eiríks saga rauða*.

Thanks to the generosity of the two organisers, the lesson was quite long, but the charm of the Vínland sagas, in my opinion, made this encounter with a world quite different from the Mediterranean one not only easy but exciting as well. The discussion aroused great interest and gave rise to many interesting questions. Iceland and its culture fascinated both the young and the not-so-young participants to such an extent that some of them, during lunch, already began planning trips to this country.

This unexpectedly successful outcome was a great joy for me, not so much as a question

of personal gratification, as because this area of study, in which I have been involved for many years, is so important to me. I therefore dedicate this wonderful and profitable event to Prof. Jónas Kristjánsson, the Director of the Arnarnagney Institute in Reykjavík, on the occasion of his upcoming seventieth birthday, wishing him many more years of fruitful activity. I do so not only on my behalf but also on behalf of my colleagues of "Classiconorroena". Jónas honoured me with his presence as a guest in Rome for several months a few years ago, and on that occasion he took part in the Congress held in Macerata which marked the beginning of our Association. Subsequently, during my recent trip to Iceland, he and his charming wife introduced me to their wonderful island. It was an unforgettable experience as the heirs of classical and Icelandic culture met and understood each other without difficulty. The result has been a solid friendship as well as a fertile cultural exchange. I am certain that Jónas will share my positive assessment of a "Seminar" orientated towards young scholars, who appreciate and enjoy those sagas that he is so fond of and with which he has worked for so long.



SCHEDA / REVIEWS

***L'Edda. Récits de mythologie nordique* par Snorri Sturluson, traduit du vieil islandais, introduit et annoté par F.-X. Dillmann, Paris 1991, Gallimard.**

L'opera merita una specifica segnalazione per l'impegno del curatore nel pubblicare questa nuova traduzione francese dell'*Edda* di Snorri, opera il cui approccio per un lettore non specializzato è senza dubbio complesso e difficile sia per il contesto ideologico e culturale di quello che al tempo stesso consideriamo un trattato di arte