Introduction

Leslie Zarker Morgan, April Oettinger, John C. McLucas

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Introduction

2016 marked the 500th anniversary of Ludovico Ariosto's first publication of the *Orlando Furioso*, in 40 cantos, at Ferrara. Throughout the world, scholars, students and poets celebrated Ariosto's lasting achievement and its continuing charms. Four universities in Baltimore, Maryland, joined together to offer their contribution: Goucher College, the Johns Hopkins University, Loyola University Maryland and Towson University. Invited scholars spoke on topics from before, during and after Ariosto's time: romance epic precedents, his contemporary influences and his afterlife in other media, such as theater, and of course, in other languages, particularly English. The editors of the present volume hope that it will give the academic community a sense of the rigor, collegiality, broadly speculative range, and engaging good humor which characterized the conference.

The keynote speakers opened the presentations by continuing and challenging their own earlier works. David Quint's talk, "Palaces of Enchantment: the 1516 Orlando Furioso," examines Ariosto's complex relation to his predecessor Boiardo, whose *Orlando Innamorato* he not only continues but also absorbs and critiques. Specifically, Quint ponders the fates of magical palaces and castles as they are erected and leveled throughout the *Furioso*, and, more broadly, the ends of enchantments in both poems. Fully alert to the tragic overtones of Ariosto's poem, Quint also details the systematic elimination, in the *Furioso*, of Boiardo's protagonists, as the later poet kills them off one by one in a darkening poetic vision. Quint's readings span past, present, and future—whether reaching forward to Tasso's continuation of the Estense dynastic epic, or reflecting on the unpredictable, almost magical shifts and dissolutions in the political realities of Ariosto's time.

Eleonora Stoppino is author of *Genealogies of Fiction: Women Warriors and the Dynastic Imagination in the Orlando Furioso,* which explores aspects of the romance epic tradition in Ariosto's classic. Here Stoppino re-examines the genealogies she studied in her monograph, starting with

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the material evidence of wedding decorations and gifts. She suggests that canto 34 depicts the necessary violence of history and the foundation of a dynasty though important intertexts and contexts from Boccaccio and romance precedents. The role of Lidia in that canto, where Ariosto revisits Dante, also reflects other episodes in Ariosto's poem (for example, canto 3). However, romance texts contribute to the tale as well, and Ariosto thus can use his *Furioso* as political commentary. His rewriting, Stoppino suggests, leads the reader to question the apparent message of the story: Ariosto brings violence not only to the woman and her family, but also to the plot of his poem.

Charles S. Ross presents his ongoing project of translating Ariosto into English. Ross, an experienced translator of poetic works, including the *Thebaid*, Boiardo's *Orlando Innamorato* and Sydney's *Arcadia* into modern English, reflects upon how best to bring Ariosto's genius into English. He demonstrates the difficulties with previous attempts—others' and his own—and explains his desire to duplicate the form of the poem without introducing anything extra. From examples of this approach and the reasoning behind it, he proposes his translation of the first canto of *Orlando Furioso*.

Jo Ann Cavallo, author most recently of *The World beyond Europe in the Romance Epics of Boiardo and Ariosto* and editor of a forthcoming volume *Teaching the Italian Renaissance Romance Epic*, examines some "foreign" characters and places based on Ariosto's and Boiardo's poems in modern puppet theater and *maggi* (folk operas), particularly in regard to teaching Ariosto and Boiardo by focusing on ways in their themes resonate with discussions of today's social issues. How do we visualize Angelica, daughter of a sorcerer from the East? Cavallo offers an analysis of the productions from different companies, both physical representation and rhetorical form, that the reader can verify by linking to the videos taken of performances. Angelica's interactions with Medoro, a "Saracen," on stage, may surprise both instructors and students. Other topics she examines include Biserta, the Saracen city, and Doralice. Cavallo's choices, both her exposition in the article and the videos available on her website, eBOIARDO, will certainly enable and enliven discussion.

Ayesha Ramachandran, author of *The Worldmakers: Global Imagining in Early Modern Europe*, examines the crossing and interaction of two genres—the lyric and the epic—in the *Orlando Furioso*. Revealing Petrarch's and his contemporaries' mixing of genres in their own writing, as well as their appreciation of such hybridity in classical authors, she begins with Boiardo's deployment of lyric in the

Innamorato, both in direct quotes and in more subtle allusions. She then shifts to Ariosto's uses of lyric, concentrating on Orlando's madness. She argues that the language of lyric is individual and "self-making," and that the second half of the 1532 *Furioso*—after Orlando's descent into madness—shows a series of characters (Orlando, Ruggiero and others) for whom Petrarchan lyric expression can be exultant or lethal: Medoro's joyous lyrics initiate Orlando's self-destruction, which is itself expressed in Petrarchan terms. Comparing Ariosto's Canto 23 and Petrarch's Canzone 23, Ramachandran investigates the role of multi-referential lyric within the *Furioso*, a lyric which evokes Boiardo recalling Petrarch who had already echoed Ovid. She thus offers a new appreciation of lyric intertextuality within the framework of the *Furioso,* suggesting that Ariosto informs the ethical meaning of the *Furioso* through its conscious reuse of lyric.

Jane E. Everson and Morten Steen Hansen's contributions to the present volume explore the reception of the *Orlando Furioso* through the lens of design and the visual arts, an approach that scrutinizes the blurred boundaries between word and image, form and content. Everson's essay addresses the *editio princeps* of the *Orlando Furioso* from the perspective of the history of the book. She makes a compelling case for the relationship between Ariosto and his publisher, Giovanni Mazzocchi, who was widely known for printing humanistic works in Greek and Latin. She provides a close study of the traditions and innovations that guided the production and packaging (size, presentation and page layout) of the 1516 edition, which came to press in an age when the nascent business of printing was precarious for both author and printer. By comparing the first edition of the *Furioso* with chivalric romances that preceded it into print (in particular, the *Innamoramento de Orlando* and the *Mambriano*), Everson demonstrates that both Ariosto and Mazzocchi played fundamental roles in guiding the visual (e.g. frontispiece, typeface, layout) and paratextual (dedication, title, colophon, errata) aspects of the *Furioso.* Aside from elucidating aspects of design in the first edition of the *Furioso,* Everson also suggests Ariosto's keen awareness—even anxiety—concerning intellectual property and need to establish his authority in the publication of a chivalric epic that innovates upon tradition. Broadly, Everson's essay belongs to an expanding discussion of book design and marketing, authorship and authority, and the anxiety of print in the early modern era.

Morten Steen Hansen's essay treats the expanding popularity of the *Orlando Furioso* in seventeenth-century Florentine painting in relation to contemporary discussions of painterly naturalism, expres-

sion, and affect in the post-Tridentine era. Hansen takes up the ways in which artists variously depicted two episodes from Ariosto's tale of the virginal Angelica: Angelica's declaration of her love for Medoro, and her rejection of Ruggiero's unwanted advances. For painters, the challenge of translating Angelica's nude flesh into sensuous form represented an opportunity not only to demonstrate their skill, but also to express Ariosto's poetics of desire (whether fulfilled or denied) through the lyricism of pigment and brushstroke. Hansen explores how seventeenth-century images of the nude Angelica appealed to the sensual and imaginative faculty of the beholder, at once fulfilling the demand for beautiful naturalism and, resonating with the call for images crafted to appeal to Christian beholders in the age of the Counter-Reformation.

Deanna Shemek's paper, "Ariostan Armory: Feminist Responses to the *Orlando Furioso*," pursues a double path through the tangled wood. She describes the archival evidence for the presence of the *Furioso* in the libraries of early modern women—and in the case of Isabella d'Este, how it became an active part of her intellectual and courtly life. Shemek also presents evidence of ways in which Ariosto's poem informed and stimulated the creativity of women authors in the generations after him, making possible what she terms "a language of valorization, protest and feminist critique." Laura Terracina, Moderata Fonte, Lucrezia Marinella, and Arcangela Tarabotti are among the most frequent female authorial voices in this portion of Shemek's study.

Ann E. Mullaney brings the acute and ironic eye of a Folenghista to Ariosto's at-times subversive and anarchic discourse, suggesting that he resorted to an established, if heterodox and transgressive, lexicon of ribaldry evident in other authors of his day. Mullaney argues that this language informs Ariosto's trademark critique of religious, political, and intellectual platitudes. She illustrates how some of the *Furioso* poet's exact contemporaries, including Bembo and Folengo himself, deploy this vocabulary pointedly and to virtuosic effect.

From Classical through contemporary, from lyric to artistic, from the physical book to individual words in it, these contributions span genres, languages, and fields of academic specialization. They together form a tribute to the ongoing relevance of Ariosto's masterpiece, in which we invite you to participate.

Leslie Zarker Morgan, Loyola University Maryland
April Oettinger, Goucher College
John C. McLucas, Towson University