

**More about “Tirant lo Blanc”. From the sources to the tradition /
Més sobre el “Tirant lo Blanc”. De les fonts a la tradició,
edited by Anna Maria Babbi and Vicent Josep Escartí,
Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2015, 173 pp.**

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The articles in this volume, edited by Anna Maria Babbi and Vicent Josep Escartí (Università degli Studi di Verona and Universitat de València – Institut Interuniversitari de Filologia Valenciana, respectively), highlight the fact that the chivalric novel *Tirant lo Blanc* –written in Valencia by Joanot Martorell in the 15th century and translated into Italian in the 16th century– keeps being relevant in both the Italian and the Iberian Peninsulas, so closely related in past and present. The knight Joanot Martorell wrote a classic of universal literature despite the fact that he belonged to a minority culture. Nowadays, after having been translated into numerous languages, it is studied in many European and American universities and provokes great interest among researchers, as proven by the contributions included in this book.

Cecilia Cantalupi, in “A Petrarchan source of *Tirant lo Blanc*. The letter *Familiare* XII 2 and its Catalan tradition” (pp. 1–16), explains how chapter cxliii of the Catalan novel relates to Abdallah Salomon’s didactic speech to the protagonist, Tirant. It is a faithful adaptation of the Latin letter *Fam. xii 2* written by Petrarch in 1352 and sent by him from Avignon to Niccolò Acciaiuoli. The letter was first translated into Catalan at the beginning of the 15th century. Two different, independent copies of the original translation are preserved in Madrid (Biblioteca Nacional, ms. 7811) and Barcelona (Biblioteca de Catalunya, ms. 6). This essay tries to determine how the original Latin letter could have arrived in Catalonia and will draw attention to some significant variations between its critical text and the three Catalan versions, intending to identify which witness of the Petrarchan *Rerum familiarium libri* could have been the base for the translation.

Elena de la Cruz Vergari, in “Vegetius’ *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch*” (pp. 17–34), proposes reading of *Tirant lo Blanch* in the light of Vegetius’ *Epitoma rei militaris*, the military manual par excellence of the Middle Ages. Indeed, in the prologue to what we now consider a chivalric novel, Joanot Martorell describes his book as a manual, in which military practice, be-

yond mere exercise and sport, is primarily an art that offers the hero a means of social advancement and the chance to command an empire.

Abel Soler Molina, in “La relació de Martorell a la cort de Nàpols i la discreta presència d’Itàlia en *Tirant lo Blanc*” (pp. 35–52), argues that despite the presence in documents of Joanot Martorell in the court of Naples, Italy (the geography, the linguistic influx, the humanism, the glorious king Alfons d’Aragó) does not belong to the novel project titled *Tirant lo Blanc*, which ranges from the Atlantic West to the Byzantine East. Although the appearance of two different lists of noble people from Naples –identified by Riquer, respectively, as supporters and detractors of the king Ferran– there is not any coherence nor accuracy. Nevertheless, the precarious coexistence in Naples of Joanot Martorell with Jaume de Vilaragut (hero in the siege of Rodes, captain in an unsuccessful crusade in Constantinople, master of a “servant” called Carmesina) had an influence in the plot and the fictional universe thought by the writer.

Vicent Josep Escartí, in “La scrittura nel *Tirant lo Blanch*: Usi e rappresentazione” (pp. 53–68), explains how in *Tirant lo Blanc*, as in other contemporary texts, the characters reveal their relations with writing, thus reflecting everyday uses of this intellectual tool. The script interacts as a way of communication between individuals and institutions, and makes the task of ensuring the reliability of communication and legal relations, since society has posted the *fides publica* in it. In *Tirant* we can note that the mentioned or reported writings give us qualitative data about informative functions, legislative, administrative, fictional and other kind of functions that were granted in different social strata, so they give us a lively picture of communicative situations –from public to private uses– in the world of Joanot Martorell.

Lara Quarti, in “The Fier baiser: A fantastic episode in Joanot Martorell’s realism” (pp. 69–86), explores how chapters cdx–cdxiii of Martorell’s *Tirant lo Blanc* narrate knight Espèrcius’ fantastic adventures after the shipwreck on the shores of Lango. Unlike the rest of the novel, which is characterized by the verisimilitude, this episode shows many typical topoi of fantasy fiction, particularly referring to Espèrcius’ ultimate trial: the Fier baiser. Martorell draws from several sources –starting with Sir John Mandeville’s *Le livre des merveilles du monde*– developing and adapting the legend of Hipocras’ daughter, turned into a dreadful dragon, to his purposes. By kissing the monstrous Dragon Maiden and breaking the spell Espèrcius completes his initiation thus fulfilling his destiny: he obtains the princess’ hand and the sovereignty of the island. This episode represents a small break from the predominant realism of the novel, since in these chapters magic and fantasy take over the reality.

Rafael Beltran, in “De *Guerrin Meschino* a *Tirant lo Blanc*: el simbolismo de la Sibila narrativa y teatral” (pp. 87–100), starts remembering how in Martí Joan de Galba’s will (1490) we can find that he owned a book called “Anderino Meschino”, which has been identified with *Il Guerrin Meschino*, the most popular work by Andrea da Barberino (c. 1372–c. 1432). *Il Guerrin Meschino*’s translation into Spanish was published in 1512. The article aims to study the hypothetical influences of this Italian novel in *Tirant lo Blanc*, and highlights the striking role of the sibyl in both narratives as well as in some other Hispanic texts. Even though we still have no evidences of Martorell’s knowledge of *Il Guerrin*, he could well have been acquainted with the novel in Naples. In any case, the appearance of sibyls in both texts could help us confirm this hypothetical knowledge or influence.

Anna Bognolo, in “Il *Tirante* a Venezia: Sul contesto editoriale della prima edizione italiana, Pietro di Nicolini da Sabbio alle spese di Federico Torresano d’Asola, 1538” (pp. 101–118), takes into consideration that the first edition of *Tirante* in Italian was published in Venice by the

printer Pietro Nicolini da Sabbio at the expense of the bookseller Federico Torresano d'Asola in 1538, dedicated to the Duke of Mantua Federico Gonzaga. This essay investigates these protagonists in the context of the production of Spanish printed books in the Thirties in Italy, when Castilian became the imperial language and a lot of Spanish books were published in Venice. It also analyses the historical and cultural framework in which the book was printed, reconstructing the differences with the background in which it had been translated by Lelio Manfredi, at the beginning of the Sixteenth Century, in the court of Mantua, dedicated to the young Isabella d'Este, together with the translations of the *Cárcel de amor* and *Grisel y Mirabella*.

Chiara Concina, in "Ancora sulla fortuna del *Tirant* in Italia (con alcune postille sulla traduzione di Lelio Manfredi)" (pp. 119–138), describes how the fortune of Martorell's *Tirant lo Blanch* in Italy is characterized by the early interest for this novel expressed since the beginning of the sixteenth century. The documentation on this subject, consisting mainly of letters, shows in particular the early attention of Isabella d'Este for the novel, as witnessed by the letters of the Marquise mentioning the Catalan *Tirant*, and by the presence of two copies of this text in the inventory drawn up after her death. Furthermore, the first Italian translation of *Tirant*, written by Lelio Manfredi between 1515 and 1519 (and printed posthumously in Venice in 1538), was made for Federico II Gonzaga. Once provided a summary on the genesis of this translation (as it can be reconstructed on the basis of the information provided by Manfredi's correspondence with the court of Mantua), the paper focuses on some specific aspects of the text, studied in relation to its Catalan source. The analysis confirms once again what has been observed by previous scholarship, i.e. the extreme stylistic care paid by the author in transferring Martorell's text into Italian.

Rafael Roca Ricart, in "The reception of *Tirant lo Blanc* in Valencia in the second half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century" (pp. 139–152), emphasizes the fact that during the second half of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century Valencian intellectuals showed a remarkable interest in the major works of the 15th century among which we find *Tirant lo Blanch*, a novel which was not published in Catalan during the Modern Age until 1873, and therefore was only accessible to librarians and scholars. This article reviews the efforts made by Valencian writers between 1866 and 1928 to approach, reveal and study the matter. These authors' aim, related to the *Renaixença* movement, was to value and demand a reappraisal of Joanot Martorell's work, and so, they took the first step in a long process of cultural recovery which stretched on for the whole of the 20th century.

Finally, Roberta Capelli, in her contribution "Tirant e il paradosso del Cavaliere inesistente" (pp. 153–166), analyzes the third chapter of Italo Calvino's heraldic trilogy *Our Ancestors, The Nonexistent Knight* (1959), from the perspective of the book profile Calvino drew of the late-15th-century Catalan novel written by Joanot Martorell, *Tirant lo Blanch*, published in the catalogue of the exhibition *Tesoros de España. Ten Centuries of Spanish Books*, held at the New York Public Library in 1985, and later gathered in his posthumous collection of essays *Perché leggere i classici* (1991). Capelli postulates that Calvino's catalogue record raises some interesting issues of literary criticism with respect to the ideology of the "libros de caballerías" and the critique of Martorell's novel that Cervantes invokes at the beginning of his *Quijote*.

In conclusion, this volume, *More about 'Tirant lo Blanc' / Més sobre el 'Tirant lo Blanc', From the sources to the tradition / De les fonts a la tradició*, shows how relevant and present the famous chivalric book is in the current context. In that sense, these articles will meaningfully

guide the following studies and will help to understand the wide influence and persistent mark of *Tirant lo Blanc*.