

CULTURES OF EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Angelica's Book and the World of Reading in Late Renaissance Italy

Brendan Dooley



B L O O M S B U R Y

Angelica's Book and the World of
Reading in Late Renaissance Italy

Cultures of Early Modern Europe

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Preface

Some of the most unusual discoveries occur when looking anew at what was there all along. By a quirk of perception all too familiar in the humanities, an object in plain sight may easily go unnoticed, and probably would remain so, if not for the casual insight that it might be important, or at least, might lead in directions that put other random clues in place. Set in context, it may suggest an untried route to be pursued by further study—in the case in point, regarding a half-forgotten European past and the place of a woman within it. In reporting a personal experience of research I make no pretense to a definitive account such as might appear in a specialized journal or a scholarly monograph. Instead, I propose to explain what drew me down a certain path, and after describing some of the surrounding terrain, to state where I think I arrived. *Angelica's Book* is as much about ways of looking as about ways of understanding, and neither occurs without a good deal of curiosity and even a leap into the unknown. And unknowns in this story are many.

I would almost be inclined to begin, as Alain Corbin did in his *Le Monde retrouvé de Louis-François Pinagot*—aptly translated into English as *Life of an Unknown*—with a disclaimer. Of the main subject of his research, a nineteenth-century clog-maker, he admits, “nothing has remained.”¹ For writing about such a life, there is none of the material a biographer normally requires for anchoring a series of conjectures in the realm of the real. There are no legal documents, no writings, no testimonies by neighbors; there is no record of things owned or persons loved, places visited, or experiences recorded. In effect, all around there is “a void.” With an impish allusion to a kind of scholarship that seems to thrive instead on sounding the depths or tallying the sums of a huge mass of data, he remarks, “just the type of person I was looking for.” Nonetheless, expressing a certainty all the more impressive as it carries the weight of the intense archival knowledge that is the author’s trademark, he adds, “Louis-François Pinagot existed.”

So did Angelica Baldachini. In a way, I know far more about Angelica than can be known about Louis-François, at least regarding matters relevant to the cultural historian. I know she owned a book, and I know what that book was. I know she could sign her name, and write of other things as well. Yet there are

many gaps. Are they worth filling? I believe they are. The life of this reader and her book make a story worth telling, within the limits of the possible, for reasons that I hope will become apparent in the following chapters. I even hold that the eventual conclusions may be of some use not just to historians, but to anyone who has thought about the fundamental questions posed by our object-filled existence: questions such as the permanence or transience of the things around us, the conservation or destruction of what is familiar, the past intruding upon the present and vice versa.²

This is also a book about a book. It refers to a time when books were precious and readers were few; when communication was not ubiquitous. Words upon words did not march before one's eyes in ceaseless profusion every day—sentences upon sentences in various media, involving social contacts and business correspondents. People were not drenched in texts of varying lengths with varying degrees of significance, delivered in various ways, including that hybrid entity to which we still attach the name “book.” Why, indeed, did people read at all? When not constrained by livelihood or family responsibilities, were they simply entertained or did they draw sustenance from texts? What did reading mean to people when reading was less and controls on reading were more? Not that such a time is impossible to fathom, if examined in the light of the way of life that has since disappeared, and people's mentalities. Instead, I suggest, our own world is incomprehensible without the world that came before. I'll start with the past and save the present for later.

Angelica's book was not only a thing to be read. It was also a thing to be owned, cherished, stored, and maybe, at least in part, recycled (to mention just a few of the issues explored in the following pages). There is more. It marked the distinctions between people, between groups, genders, affiliations. Admittedly, I know more about the book than I do about the owner. I know its author and time of publication; I know what it contained and what it did not, and I think I know the reason why. Decades of scholarship on the matter have yielded a wealth of information, although there is still much more to learn. By strange meandering paths the book leads me to the owner and back again. Those who could read Angelica's book, or the many volumes like it, stood apart from those who could not. Those who would read such a book, if given the chance, belonged to a community of shared interests, distinguished from other communities sharing other interests.

Consisting of a collection of novels by the prohibited author Giovanni Francesco Straparola, Angelica's book and the category of book to which it

belonged also delineated the confines between licit and illicit; it marked the difference between right and wrong. It supplied authorities in Church and state with a token for exercising powers of surveillance. One might say, like other items on the *Index of Forbidden Books*, it gave growing bureaucracies yet another *raison d'être*, yet another instrument for distinguishing the compliant from the noncompliant, the disciplined subjects of authority from the undisciplined—not just for replacing disorderliness with orderliness, impurity with purity, but also for confirming the divinely ordained sources of human power. Evil books, and those who read them, placed the community in danger by provoking divine punishment, not just of the reader but of the people who enabled them. Governments and ecclesiastical institutions had to watch and act.

Yet a study written from the standpoint proposed here does not fit easily into any one faculty, nor within the output of any particular department in the university, at least not as constituted today—although in our age of scholarly nomadism, the transition between one form of inquiry and another has ceased to require a passport stamped by the disciplinary border patrol. The contributions of legitimate refugees, so to speak, are judged on their own merits—and I hope mine are too. I am encouraged by Helga Nowotny's insight that a new order of knowledge may hold some promise for allowing researchers to focus a combination of sometimes heterogeneous resources on a problem as long as they pay the cost, which requires a finely tuned appreciation of the different outlooks and approaches of each specialty, without any guarantee of forestalling criticism by any.³ If the result is a kind of "book history" that puts undue stress on the ever more generous limits around this subdiscipline, I will then propose a wider definition. For the time being, however, I can promise only to impart what I have learned, along with the fascination that this case has held for me, in spite of what has been, and may occasionally also be for my reader, due to the frequent stops and starts, the discontinuities in the narrative, the doubts and questions, a slightly bumpy ride.

Normally this space is reserved for discharging, far from adequately, the multitude of obligations accumulated over the course of a project, and for acknowledging the many debts of gratitude to people, places, and institutions. These would include, in my case, Ann Blair, Mario Infelise, Ed Muir, Guido Ruggiero, Andrew Pettegree, Jake Soll, Peter Burke, and Sheila Barker, in the first instance, as well as, for various courtesies, Chris Michaelides at the British Library, Maria Mannelli of the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence, Francesco Martelli at the Florentine State Archives, Patrizia Rocchini and

Barbara Giappichelli at the Municipal Library of Cortona, Ewa Glodowski at the Municipal Library in Lyon, Brian J. Dooley for reasons that you will see, plus many others whose conversation, perhaps unwittingly, added new aspects and sparked new interpretations, and finally, audiences at University College Cork, the University of St. Andrews, the University of Graz, and Florence University of the Arts, not to mention the many impromptu gatherings where Angelica's story found ready listeners. At a crucial stage in the writing, I enjoyed the hospitality of the Bard Graduate Center in New York, where the lively discussions about material culture influenced the final versions of several chapters. There I would like to single out Peter Miller, Ivan Gaskell, Deborah Krohn, and Shawn Rowlands for special thanks. At Bloomsbury, I would like to thank Alexander Cowan and Rhodri Mogford for helpful suggestions and encouragement. Alas, a key figure in this research, responsible in a certain way for the discovery on which it is based, Signora Annamaria Colzi, late of Piazza Santa Croce in Florence, intelligent, good-humored merchant of marvels par excellence, though she did not live to see the results, nonetheless deserves honorable mention here.

Introduction

Perhaps it is only fitting that an inquiry about sixteenth-century reading patterns should begin in a junk shop. What other locale so effectively exemplifies the unpredictable vagaries, curious meanderings, and even the rootedness in real objects, typical of the humanist's approach? The badly damaged book that will largely occupy me here betrayed none of its most precious contents at first sight. And along with a dozen other works liquidated for small change by a seller normally dealing in furniture, it sat on a shelf for years. In a moment of distraction, the new owner found the brief, neatly penned line of text on folio 144 which seemed to reveal something about women's experiences a half-millennium ago. Working out from these two crucial pieces of evidence, a book and a signature, I seek the vague outlines of a forgotten world of semi-clandestine reading and its effects on the sixteenth-century psyche. If the definitive conclusions are few and the conjectures are many, at least, the journey will be accompanied by some of the best tales of intrigue and adultery, love and hate, devilry and piety, lies and confessions, that the sixteenth-century mind ever devised.

Stories abound in this research, and as I embark on my journey of discovery, I seem to be one of those characters in Cristoforo Armeno's folk tale, of Persian origin, first published in Venice in 1557 and later rendered into English as *The Travels and Adventures of Three Princes of Serendip*.¹ It tells of three young men who set out in search of knowledge about the world by visiting the lands and courts of distant rulers, encountering a series of improbable adventures along the way. Horace Walpole, the English connoisseur and writer, apparently coined the term "serendipity," based on this folk tale, in a 1754 letter to a diplomat's secretary named Horace Mann (not the American reformist).² There he uses it to refer to a new discovery he made by accident regarding the coat of arms of a Venetian noble family known as the Cappello, while researching a recently purchased portrait of Bianca Cappello, concubine of a Medici grand duke, which he considered to have been painted by the late Renaissance artist Giorgio Vasari. But the first to develop serendipity into the serious principle of research that I want here was Robert K. Merton, the Columbia University sociologist, whose

study on the subject begins, conveniently enough for my purposes, by joining Horace Walpole, Horace Mann, Giorgio Vasari, Bianca Cappello, and the princes of Serendip.³ That the late Renaissance world, crucial to my theme, tangentially gave rise to the term, may just be another case of serendipity.

Serendipity of course does not mean sheer chance. In Cristoforo Armeno's work, the princes are predisposed to placing their mental abilities at the service of their fellow human beings—they discover an evil counselor in the court of a neighboring king and set off on a mission to retrieve a magic mirror in India, where they will liberate the country from a horrible curse. Each adventure requires the young princes to exercise their ingenuity and *savoir faire*, which is richly rewarded in the end. In India, in return for the queen's hand in marriage, they are asked to solve two riddles, one of which calls for demonstrating how a man could eat an entire magazine of salt in one day. Brought before the salt magazine, the aspiring husband puts three salt crystals in his mouth, saying this would be his preferred approach—to the delight of the utterly infatuated queen. The most famous story involves a stolen camel, whose characteristics and manner of abduction the youths are able to divine on the basis of details such as the half-eaten grass on one side of the road (indicating a one-eyed animal) and a particular sensation experienced by the males while sniffing footprints in the dirt (indicating a female thief). Mainly on the basis of the camel episode, the fable has played an outsized role in discussions about intellectual innovation, which is the connection that interests me here.

There are many ways of gaining new knowledge; and Merton names a few of the more familiar ones. Some seem more applicable to the task at hand, some less. I do not envisage much use of the so-called experimental method, where the researcher “contrives a situation in which it may be possible to make significant observations to support or discredit an existing hypothesis,”⁴ unless the situation in question is conjured up only in the mind. More to the point seems the method of retrospective prophecy, or “retroduction,” in Merton's terminology. In this method we start with an anomalous effect, a strange phenomenon, and attempt to reason back to the most probable cause of what we observe. Whatever the method, Merton explains, a kind of orchestrated or controlled serendipity is always involved. Much actual foreknowledge of the possibilities is necessary, as well as careful preparation of the experimental setup, in order to make the seemingly fortuitous discovery that runs counter to accepted views. Likewise in this book, more than just fortune may have drawn me to the particular anomaly whose existence I wish to predict by the various causal theories. I have to be aware of what elements are important and what are not; and I must have more than

a passing acquaintance with the accepted view. Serendipity has accompanied human curiosity over the centuries, as Merton shows, but it is seldom alone. I will see where it takes me.

The objects in this quasi-archaeological exercise do not easily yield up their secrets. I am required to learn their language, and by that I mean not just the vernacular of Renaissance Florence. The context which they illuminate and which in turn sheds some light on them is a late sixteenth-century world still only barely understood in spite of the masses of documents in the Medici archive and the stacks of scholarly texts in various libraries around the world.⁵ I find rather a lot is known in general about this time and place; there is specific knowledge about a few people in it—usually those who left a long paper trail behind them, either because they were literary figures themselves, or because they were protagonists in the grand events about which the literary figures wrote and versified, or else because they committed crimes requiring documentation within the tribunals. But the lives of ordinary people who minded their own business without deserving extraordinary praise or blame usually do not appear on the horizon of the modern observer except by accident or by inference.

Accident and inference are chief allies in this investigation. Time is also on my side. Before becoming evidence in an inquiry, the object I am scrutinizing was a book lover's dream: an important sixteenth-century work in bad shape but still respectable, available at a bargain price, among other treasures that had been conserved within a piece of furniture that the proprietor was emptying of its contents. The book, bound in crinkled muddy-looking vellum with the leaves numbered by folio (recto and verso) as was common with sixteenth-century editions, was missing the eight last folios and all of the first twenty-five folios except for a loose folio nine, tucked away between others. The absence of a colophon indicating the date, which could have been on the first or last leaf, removed the ordinary ways of determining the starting point of my story. However, the typesetting was definitely in "aldino," or "italics" as we say in English, the style introduced in Venice by Aldo Manuzio in 1501, utilized for many early modern vernacular texts in Italian and mostly superseded by other fonts well before the eighteenth-century triumph of the typefaces invented by Giambattista Bodoni.⁶

I could have guessed the name of the work from the running titles at the tops of the leaves ("First Night," "Second Night," etc.), even if I did not encounter the full identification halfway through the volume, where a splendid engraving depicted three female figures seated on a balcony or terrace, engaged in spinning thread within a frame graced by classical architecture. They are easily

recognizable. The Fates or *moirai* from Greek mythology were called Clotho (the spinner of the thread of human life), Lachesis (the disposer of lots), and Atropos (the inflexible one, i.e., the inevitable). In Plato's *Republic*, they sing along with the Sirens: Lachesis about the things that were, Clotho about the things that are,



Figure 0.1 Straparola, *Le piacevoli notti* (Venice: Comin da Trino, 1570), vol. 2, fol. 2r.

and Atropos about what will be. They offer a fitting complement to a book of imaginative literature that narrates the lives and experiences of mostly fictive personages, from the past to the present. Above the engraving is the title of the work: *Book II of the Fables and Enigmas of Giovanni Francesco Straparola from Caravaggio*. So the book could not have been acquired before 1550, when the first of many editions came out, and in fact, not before 1556, the date of the first one-volume editions of the two-part work.

The curious object before me is a (broken) book by a certain sixteenth-century writer; so my inquiry begins here. Who was Giovanni Francesco Straparola from Caravaggio, and what did he write? The scarcity of biographical details is enough to overwhelm even the seeker after information about the much less significant figure of Angelica. My inquiry sends me in pursuit of two unknown personages, not just one. Some details are suggestive. “Straparola” was very likely not a proper surname but a mere nickname, conveying the notion of “garrulous.”⁷ His geographical designation points to the same tiny Lombard town as his much more famous fellow countryman, the painter Michelangelo da Caravaggio, who lived about a half-century later. Here was as good a place as any for enjoying the pleasant Lombard landscape depicted in the upper corner of the “Rest on the Flight into Egypt” now hanging in the Doria Pamphili gallery in Rome, but not for seeking fame and fortune. The painter left as soon as he could, and so, apparently, did the writer. What little is known about Straparola suggests that he spent a good deal of time in and around Venice, possibly conversing in the academies there, and certainly engaging with the thriving publishing industry—the Venetian publishing industry that in the century since Gutenberg’s invention, had acquired a temporary position of world leadership. What can be imagined about his life there has already been set out by the folklorist Ruth Bottigheimer.⁸

Born around 1480, Straparola would have been under thirty when his first-known publication came out in Venice: a collection of poems called *New Work* (printed in 1508 for Georgio di Ruschoni, self-identified as a “Milanese”),⁹ which went through at least one other edition seven years later, again in Venice, printed in 1515 for “Alexandro di Bindoni” (another name for Alessandro Bindoni, born, apparently, on Lago Maggiore).¹⁰ The work consisted of a collection of poems—sonnets and several other verse forms including the more exotic *strambotti*, often in ottava rima—covering a wide array of topics, ranging from human relations and religion to politics and travel. Just to give the flavor, I here translate a stanza (somewhat freely, reader be warned) from a poem which he

dedicates to an Italian city, referring to the current power broker there, namely, Giacomo Pesente (or Pesenti):

Oh my Caravaggio happy land
 Ser Giacomo at present is secure
 And virtue is his only cynosure
 With him as Lord your fortune's well in hand.¹¹

[O Caravaggio, castel venturato,
 come felice ti trovi al presente,
 godendo miser Iacomo Pesente
 che ti ten per virtù tanto inalzato.]

I am thus safe in affirming that the geographical diction attached to his name, “from Caravaggio,” was not merely a suffix, but a reference to his real home.

Geographical rootedness is one element of an author's profile. There may be others. Here is a stanza from a poem concerning a far more serious subject:

O holy Virgin of celestial reign
 Great Queen of ardent fire, source of light
 From East to West most splendid guide in sight
 Of every navigator on the main . . .¹²

[Vergine sacra del celeste imperio
 somma Regina: lampa e focho ardente
 lume: e splendor: dal orto: al occidente
 guida fidata d'ogni bon nauclero . . .]

Sincere sentiments or just perfunctory? Direct or ironic? Holy or unholy? On the surface, a religious poem of the kind so common in contemporary literature as to suggest a strong demand among readers; but in the absence of any other signs of extraordinary devotion, I hesitate for the moment to assign a meaning in the context of the author's biography.

Alongside such routine expressions of piety, I find yet others regarding more profane matters, which place the possibly religious significance of some poems in a different light. The following is dedicated to another celestial being, whether virgin or not, I do not know:

The Sun had travelled far beyond its height
 When my lady spread her splendid hair
 Than which Diana's seemed less fair
 And Phoebus's golden crown seemed far less bright.¹³

[El sol nel megio gia rendea calore
 Quando madona stese i bei capelli
 che di Diana i soi parea men belli
 di Phebo i lor mancava di colore]

Recall one of Petrarch's sonnets (*Canzoniere* no. 162) in Lorna de' Lucchi's early twentieth-century translation, a classic of love literature attempting to evoke the image of the beloved. I make no pretense of offering sufficient material to make an artistic judgment between the two. With the original Italian of both authors before me, there would be no question who is the greater; but that is not the point here.

O fortunate fields through which Madonna goes,
 And you, O happy, happy flowers and sweet,
 O upland who her gentle accent knows
 And bears the dainty imprint of her feet,
 O saplings lithe and early, verdant sprays,
 O love-lorn violets pale, O forest dim
 Which beauty's sun hath pierced with his rays
 And drawn in proud floescence unto him;
 O limpid stream that laves her lovely face,
 Her luminous eyes, and doth their radiance share,
 O primrose path, I envy you the grace
 Of tender, loyal servitude you bear!
 In you no single pebble now remains
 That is not kindled with my passionate pains.¹⁴

Even in translation, something of the power of the original comes through. However, my purpose is not to say that, in comparison, Straparola's quiver of love-arrows is less packed, or his reservoir of metaphor less deep. I am engaged in recreating the wider cultural world of the writer of the broken book.

What can clearly be said about all these examples from Straparola is that he is drawing on the same muse—that is, of Petrarch and subsequent masters—which would later inspire Shakespeare's sonnets. However, this other sonnet by Straparola seems to add a particularly strong and novel element, one which will play a major role in later work, and in my account: namely, the vein of sensuality. I translate:

The blushing visage, forehead, nose and eyes,
 The throat so delicate to see

And my slow demise: the breast of thee
Seem to me all made in paradise.

The motion whence that smile doth arise
The tresses, blonde, which always are to me
So troubling, as when shoulders white I see
Cleave my heart, which, suff'ring almost dies.

The subtle lips of red which cannot fade
The tiny feet which toward me slowly stray
In paradise by gods were surely made.

The human tongue, which 'twixt white teeth doth lay
Thus never mortal Jove has so displayed,
The work of his own hands, in his own way.¹⁵

[Il tuo vermiglio e delicato viso
la fronte el naso gli occhi con le mano
la gola el petto qual mi da gran danno
mi mostrati esser fatte in paradiso

El moto col parlar el dolce riso
le bionde treze che dato mi hanno
con le polite spale un grave affanno
forza gli ha facto al cor de esser diviso

Le rosee labra con la bocha affilata
li pichol piedi con li passi lenti
certo che da li dei in ciel fu facta

L'humana lingua con li bianchi denti
credo el supremo Iove l'ha formata
con le sue proprie mano e soi accenti.]

There is nothing here that would have scandalized either Petrarch or Shakespeare. Nor, on the other hand, is there anything like the transgressive spirit of Pietro Aretino's "Lewd Sonnets" (as the *Encyclopedia Britannica* calls his "Sonetti lussuriosi") penned in 1527 and accompanied, in publication, by Giulio Romano's series of engravings, "The Positions" ("I modi"), depicting, as the title implies, the positions taken by couples during intercourse.¹⁶ Straparola's most recent translator (me) is at no loss to lend a measure of fidelity to the original; there is no particular coarseness or obscenity to convey by ill-fitting modern terminology in English. There are no lines even approaching Aretino's "Tu m'hai 'l cazzo in la potta, e 'l cul mi vedi," which may or may not be perfectly rendered

by “You have your cock in my pussy and you see my ass.”¹⁷ In Straparola’s case, I am nonetheless obviously in the workshop of an artist who is experimenting with modes of expression which he may consider to have a certain power or at least appeal, due to the extended description of sense experience.

The theme of sensuality, as introduced by Straparola, in fact belonged to a venerable tradition within Renaissance ethical discourse. The positive valuation of sensual pleasure, drawing freely upon ancient sources, was supposed to stand in contrast to a medieval ideology, inspired by the Church Fathers, which turned attention instead exclusively to the soul’s salvation. There is no need to evoke the enthusiasm of Walter Pater or the other Victorian rediscoverers of the sensual Renaissance to appreciate the significance of this aspect. “Who then will lend mine eyes a font of tears,” exclaimed Pope Innocent III in the last years of the twelfth century, “to lament the misery of the human condition.” Man was “formed out of earth, conceived in guilt, born to punishment.” What he does is “depraved and illicit, is shameful and improper, vain and unprofitable.”¹⁸ Instead, said the fifteenth-century humanist Pico della Mirandola, quoting Hermes Trismegistus: “What a great miracle, Asclapius, is Man.”¹⁹ Designed by the Creator as a potential for good or ill, “with freedom of choice and with honor, as though the maker and molder of thyself, thou mayest fashion thyself in whatever shape thou shalt prefer.” Added Pietro Bembo, the noted Neoplatonist, writing some twenty years later, in 1508: “Since everything natural is good, Love, as a natural thing, is always good, nor can it ever in any way be evil.”²⁰

Bembo places more explicit statements regarding sensuality in the mouths of the female characters in his dialogue, *The Asolani*. “But let us move on, if you wish, to the sweetness of love,” suggests Madonna Berenice, addressing her sex: “To be sure, there is great difficulty, O women, in finding words to describe what is easier felt than said.” She resorts to a genre switch. “A great painter may depict the whiteness of snow convincingly, but not the coldness, since what is sensed only by touching does not appear to the eye, which is served by paintings.” Literary synesthesia, the strategic combination of different sensory elements to evoke a real experience, was easier said than done. “I may have been able to explain a few of the benefits of love, nonetheless the sweetnesses which that spurting fountain, far greater than the one we see before us, makes fall upon every sense, overwhelming all of them, can never be grasped by any of our speech.”²¹ Hard as writers might try, they would always be bested by painters in the effort to convey what was felt—but this was no reason to stop trying.

Renaissance artworks strikingly confirm Bembo’s insight, where the abundant themes of sensuality seem inspired by the same ethical precepts, shared by

so many contemporary writers, of the normativity of nature and the essential goodness of creation, between the limits of law and lust.²² Moving beyond the age of Bembo toward the time of Straparola and the Venetian Renaissance painting of the late Titian, we note that the very paint itself is handled sensuously.²³ Massive swirls of thick pigment adumbrate a nude form of extraordinary flamboyance, bedecked only with elegant but simple pearl adornments, in the Prado "*Venus with Organist and Cupid*" (inventory no. P00407), obviously enjoying the effect she is having on the distracted organist sitting next to her. Whoever he is, his eyes are glued to her crotch.²⁴ The rich deep purple velvet coverlet beneath her throws off shimmering reflections of her radiance and that of the natural light seeping into the room from the garden scene outside, as she seems to press her feet nonchalantly into his side, while appearing to turn away to take advice from Cupid whispering in her ear. What music is being made here?

To be sure, Straparola's early poetry scarcely prepared me for the material I found in the work that now interests me and most interested his contemporaries, first printed by Comin da Trino in 1551 (or, according to the Venetian calendar, in 1550). The original title was *Le piaceuoli notti di m. Giouanfrancesco Straparola [!] da Carauaggio. Nelle qali [!] si contengono le fauole con i loro enimmi da dieci donne, & duo giouani raccontate, cosa diletteuole, ne piu data in luce*, now usually called the *Piacevoli notti*. The misspelling of the author's name on the title page apparently did nothing to diminish the appeal, and at least thirty-two more editions came out before 1613. The work was translated into French by Jean Louveau as *Facetieuses nuits* (1560); into Spanish by Francesco Truchado as *Honesto y agradable Entretenimiento de Damas y Galanes* (1578); and into German several times in now-vanished sixteenth-century editions and then by an anonymous translator working for Ignaz Alberti, Mozart's Viennese publisher, as *Die Nächte* (1791), followed by a partial anthologization in Adelbert von Keller's *Italiänischer Novellenschatz* (1851), all superseded by Hanns Floerke's two-volume translation with the title, *Die ergötzlichen Nächte* (1908). The editorial history in English, save for the single story (II, 2) published by William Painter in his *The Palace of Pleasure* of 1556, begins with William George Waters' translation entitled *The Nights of Straparola* (1894), which subsequently appeared as *The Facetious Nights of Straparola* (1898); next, translated by Sir Richard Burton, there were *The Most Delectable Nights of Straparola* (1906), and in a condensed version of Waters' translation edited by Edward Robert Hughes, *The Merry Nights of Straparola* (1931). Recently, Donald Beecher, reusing much of Waters, gives us *The Pleasant Nights* (2012), and in her entirely new translation (2015) Suzanne Magnanini calls them the same, and so will I.