manico. Per Régis Boyer (Parigi), che ha presentato 
Sigurdr 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 dia cronica, 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 
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 
aricolazione sufficientemente ampia da 
contenere variazioni dia croniche, 
diastatiche 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 
Appenine 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 construc­
tion 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 at­
mosphere 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 dei 
Tardo Medioevo" ("Centre for the Study of 
Late Medieval Civilisation"), located in San 
Miniato (mailing address: Loggiati di S. Do-
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); 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
CLASSICONORROENA, 2
during breaks, and frequent strolls in the
cloisters, when the weather is bad, con­
tribute to this exchange. A climate of cor­
diality 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 his­
toriography 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 Vinland Gørnælloydinga saga and Eiriks
saga rauda.
Thanks to the generosity of the two or­
ganisers, the lesson was quite long, but the
charm of the Vinland sagas, in my opinion,
made this encounter with a world quite dif­
f erent 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 Arnamagnæan Institute in Reykjavik, 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 is­
land. It was an unforgettable experience as
the heirs of classical and Icelandic culture
met and understood each other without dif­
ficulty. 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.

SCHEDÉ / REVIEWS

L'Edda. Récits de mythologie
nordique par Snorri Sturluson,
traduit du vieil islandais, intro­
duit et annoté par F.-X.Dillmann,

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