

## CAMWS 2022 in Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Ninth Paper Session, Section D: Pedagogy: Greek,  
Latin, and Classical Studies

Saturday, March 26th: 10-11:45 AM in Hearn D

### **“Teaching Boccaccio’s *De Mulieribus Claris* in an upper-level Latin class”**

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**Some links, bibliography, images, and Latin text for my talk.**

#### **Links and Bibliography:**

Link to Lupercal: <https://www.lupercallegit.org/>

Link to online text of *De Mulieribus Claris*:

<http://www.bibliotecaitaliana.it/testo/bibit000947> (This was the text for the course, freely available and without notes.)

Link to Forcellini Latin dictionary: <http://www.lexica.linguax.com/forc.php>

(Latin/Latin dictionary useful for finding Latin definitions for Latin words as well as Latin synonyms. A good aid for teachers explaining Latin in Latin.)

Brown, Virginia, editor and translator. *Giovanni Boccaccio: Famous Women*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 2001. (I used this for my own reference purposes, and I assigned Brown’s Introduction to my students as well as Boccaccio’s Dedication and Preface to be read in English.)

Ancona, Ronnie. “‘Cave of the Heart,’ The Medea of Martha Graham and Isamu Noguchi: Twentieth-Century Classical Reception in the Visual and Performance Arts,” *New Voices in Classical Reception Studies* 13 (2020) 1-25.

<https://fass.open.ac.uk/sites/fass.open.ac.uk/files/files/new-voices-journal/issue13/ronnie-ancona.pdf> (Figs. 8 and 9 [see end of handout] used in teaching.)

### Articles Assigned:

Shemek, Deanna. "Doing and Undoing: Boccaccio's Feminism (De mulieribus claris)." In *Boccaccio: A Critical Guide to the Complete Works*, edited by Victoria Kirkham, Michael Sherberg, and Janet Smarr, 195-204. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013. (all)

Case, Mary Anne "What Turns on Whether Women Are Human for Boccaccio and Christine de Pizan? In *Reconsidering Boccaccio: Medieval Contexts and Global Intertexts*, edited by Holmes and Stewart, 189-216. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. (section on Boccaccio)

### Text (Selection):

**Eōs quippe sī potēns clausisset Mēdēa, aut aliōrsum flexisset, dum ērēxit avida in lasōnem, stetit diūtius potentia patris, vīta frātris et sue virginitātis decus infrāctum: qu(a)e omnia hōrum impudīcitiā periēre.** (from Boccaccio's *DMC*)

"De Medea regina Colcorum," with some highlighting and macrons added)

Sample Comprehension Questions and Answers:

Clauditne oculos Medea? Ita aut minime? Minime; Medea oculos non clausit.

Eratne Medea potens? Ita aut minime? Ita; Medea erat potens.

Quae periēre oculorum impudicitia? Responsum: Potentia patris, vita fratris, et decus virginitatis Medeae oculorum impudicitia periēre.

**Lives Read (using standard spellings of names):**

Camilla, Medea, Pope Joan, Rhea Silvia, Sappho, Arachne, Nicaula, Polyxena, Niobe, Medusa, Juno, Dido (part), Dripetrua.

Comparative images were used, as with Medea. Comparative texts read in English translation included Vergil, Ovid, Livy, the Old Testament, Nina MacLaughlin (*Wake, Siren*, on Arachne). Sometimes students were sent to Wikipedia for an overview of other versions of the lives.

**Some topics raised through the readings:**

Beauty, class, race, geography, power, gender, chastity, Christianity/Greco-Roman gods, royalty, wealth, divinity, deformity, the body, family, fidelity, status, attitudes towards women, the role of vision, cross-gender matters, what makes a woman noteworthy (“clara”).



Figure 8: Martha Graham performs with Isamu Noguchi's set design for her dance "Cave of the Heart", 1946. ©The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artist Rights Society. Photo by Martha Swope.

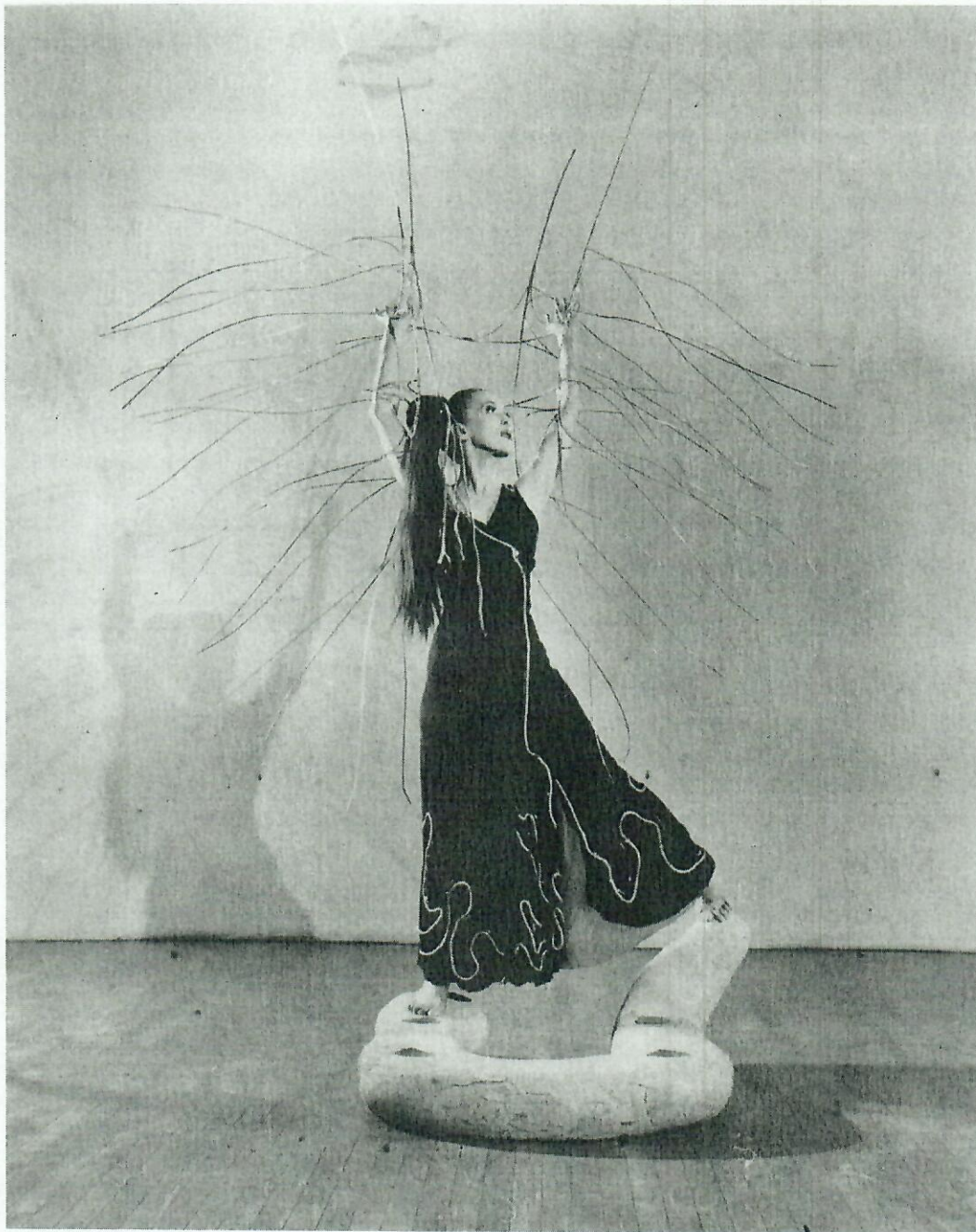


Figure 9: Martha Graham with Isamu Noguchi's set design for her dance "Cave of the Heart", 1946. ©The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, New York / Artist Rights Society. Photo by Cris Alexander.