



The Worlds of Petrarch (Duke Monographs in Medieval and Renaissance Studies)

Giuseppe Mazzotta

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At the center of Petrarch's vision, announcing a new way of seeing the world, was the individual, a sense of the self that would one day become the center of modernity as well. This self, however, seemed to be fragmented in Petrarch's work, divided among the worlds of philosophy, faith, and love of the classics, politics, art, and religion, of Italy, France, Greece, and Rome. In recent decades scholars have explored each of these worlds in depth. In this work, Giuseppe Mazzotta shows for the first time how all these fragmentary explorations relate to each other, how these separate worlds are part of a common vision.

Written in a clear and passionate style, *The Worlds of Petrarch* takes us into the politics of culture, the poetic imagination, into history and ethics, art and music, rhetoric and theology. With this encyclopedic strategy, Mazzotta is able to demonstrate that the self for Petrarch is not a unified whole but a unity of parts, and, at the same time, that culture emerges not from a consensus but from a conflict of ideas produced by opposition and dark passion. These conflicts, intrinsic to Petrarch's style of thought, lead Mazzotta to a powerful rethinking of the concepts of "fragments" and "unity" and, finally, to a new understanding of the relationship between them.

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