The World beyond Europe in the Romance Epics of Boiardo and Ariosto

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For my children,
Cristina and Alberto

Non se cognosce la virtute intera
se non al tempo che fortuna è fiera.

(Matteo Maria Boiardo, *Orlando innamorato* 2.2.29)

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Contents

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Introduction

Just over twenty years separate the publication of the definitive version of the *Orlando innamorato* (1495) and the first edition of the *Orlando furioso* (1516), arguably the two most important romance epics of the Italian Renaissance.[1] Nevertheless, as this study maintains, the poems are worlds apart when it comes to their depiction of the world at large. Writing for a fifteenth-century court society hooked on medieval chivalric narrative but also attuned to the latest current world events, Boiardo charts a complex course in which characters from East Asia, northern Africa, the Middle East, and Europe interact in myriad ways, from armed conflict to friendship and romance. Although Ariosto continues to mix imaginary sites and the geographical reality of a rapidly expanding globe, he increasingly replaces the *Innamorato*'s prevailing attitude of international cosmopolitanism with a more restrictive outlook that brings to bear the crusading ideology characteristic of Carolingian epic.

In an introductory sonnet included in early editions of the *Innamorato*, Boiardo's friend Tommaso Mattacoda alerts readers using their intellect ("gente con ragione") that Matteo Maria's cantos contain "Favole, historie, e comparatione, / Cosmographia con philosophia, / Costumi e usanze d'ogni natione / Et altre cose degne d'armonia" ("Fables, histories, and comparisons, / Geography with philosophy, / Customs and practices of every nation / And other things worthy of harmony") (Harris 1: 107). The poem's geographical tour de force begins in the opening canto when Angelica of Cathay suddenly appears in Paris, disrupting Charlemagne's tournament and eventually drawing paladins from Latin Christendom across the expanse of Asia. There is also movement in the poem towards western Europe from a variety of other directions. Each of the three books, in fact, opens with a foreign ruler determined to reach France:

Gradasso of Sericana covets Ranaldo's horse and Orlando's sword, the North African kings Agramante and Rodamonte seek to conquer Charlemagne's realm, and in the third book the Tartar Mandricardo aims to kill Orlando.[2] At the same time, the interlaced plot introduces additional foreign protagonists whose interests remain beyond the confines of Europe, from the formidable Tartar khan Agricane to the courteous Syrian king Noradino. Regardless of their provenance, Boiardo's characters are motivated by a range of passions – primarily love, ambition, empathy, and the desire for glory or revenge – but not by religious or ethnic differences. The narrative thereby breaks out of the binary opposition of Christians and Saracens typical of Carolingian epic, presenting a broader vision of the globe consonant with a number of ancient, medieval, and fifteenth-century historical and geographical texts that were capturing the attention of the Ferrarese court.

When Ariosto picks up the threads of Boiardo's narrative about a decade after the publication of the 1495 edition, he subjects Boiardo's East Asian and North African protagonists to a process of degradation whereby they lose their earlier positive characteristics, until they are ultimately removed from the poem through physical departure (Angelica) or death (Mandricardo, Agramante, Gradasso, Rodomonte). The only exception to this drastic fate is conversion to Christianity (Marphisa). In the latter cantos, moreover, Ariosto transforms not only the nature of the characters but the epic plot itself. The war between Agramante and Charlemagne, which began in the *Innamorato* as a case of *aviditas dominationis* in which the African king sought to imitate Alexander of Macedonia, increasingly takes on the connotations of a holy war, culminating when the Frankish sack of Biserta evokes the conquest of Jerusalem in the First Crusade. The knight who plays the principal role in this ideological shift is Astolfo, who after a purgatorial experience in the Indian Ocean develops into a *miles Christi*, evidenced by his worship at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, his charitable mission on behalf of Prester John in Ethiopia, and finally his participation in the destruction of Agramante's North African kingdom under God's direction. Consonant with this shift is the different treatment of the Middle East in each poem: whereas Boiardo imagines what the region would have been like if the crusades had not taken place, Ariosto anachronistically envisions the Holy Land under European domination.

The distinctive Weltanschauung of the two poems did not escape the attention of the nineteenth-century philologist Pio Rajna, who maintained that whereas in the *Innamorato* "the barriers between the Christian and

Saracen world, if not removed entirely, have largely collapsed," in the *Furioso* "with a bit of the crusading spirit reintroduced and with religious creed placed once again above the chivalric code, it will be sufficient to adore Mohammed in order to be, whether to a greater or lesser extent, portrayed in a bad light."[3] Rajna attributes Ariosto's negative treatment of Boiardo's Asian and African heroes to the younger poet's desire to conform to the demands of his society: "Where Ariosto sees Christians and Infidels, Boiardo did not distinguish except between the valorous and the inept, the courteous and the uncivil. It's not that Lodovico, in his heart, believed more than Boiardo; he's an indifferent fellow who goes to church out of habit, and to preserve appearances, but in any case he goes" (*Le fonti*, 56). Yet rather than analyse the *Furioso*'s disapproving depiction of non-Christians, Rajna simply concludes that "Ariosto was poorly inspired in the portrayal of Saracen characters" (*Le fonti*, 422).

Roughly a century later Antonio Pasqualino, considering the two romance epics in the context of puppet theatre, also found Ariosto's presentation of Boiardo's non-Christian heroes to be less than sympathetic: "[Boiardo] exalts hyperbolically the valour not only of Saracens destined to convert, like Agricane, but also that of Sacripante, Gradasso, Mandricardo, and Rodomonte, heroes whose adventures near the end of the poem are narrated independently of the rest of the plot. [...] No other chivalric text exalts to such a degree Saracen heroes. In the *Orlando Furioso* the same characters are presented in a less favourable light and are judged more severely."[4] To date, however, no study has attempted to account for these perceived differences through a sustained, contextualized comparison of the world beyond Christian Europe envisioned by the two poets.[5] On the contrary, the distinctions on this score are generally blurred or ignored completely. Italo Calvino, who stated that "the *Furioso* is a unique book in its genre and can – I'd almost say must – be read without reference to any other book preceding or following it" (xxxviii), maintains instead that "being 'of two different faiths' does not mean, in the *Furioso*, much more than the different colour of pieces on a chessboard; the time of the crusades, in which the cycle of paladins had attained a symbolic value for the life-and-death struggle between Christianity and Islam, is far away" (xliii).[6] A close reading of the two poems shows on the contrary that while Calvino's assertion rings true for the *Innamorato,* it cannot be applied to much of the *Furioso*.

Nor has Boiardo's precedent been taken sufficiently into account in previous considerations of geography in the *Furioso*. As early as 1923 Santino Caramella maintained that Boiardo "goes beyond the traditional

geography of the *Chansons de geste* with his immense new material and offers geographical knowledge not in a descriptive way but in the adventurous progression of the [characters'] travels" (45–6).[7] He drew attention, in particular, to the precedent of Andrea da Barberino for Boiardo's poem: "Boiardo's geographical method is in direct correspondence to that of Andrea [...], and indeed represents here and there an accurate perfectioning" (45). Yet the most extensive recent treatment of the *Furioso*'s geographical focus, Alexandre Doroszlaï's investigation of the use of maps in the poem, looks exclusively to the example of Andrea da Barberino without considering Ariosto's closest predecessor.[8] My comparative reading argues that Ariosto's use of geography does not simply aim to update or surpass Boiardo's references but rather to overturn his worldview.

In short, the present study intends to chart the narratological strategies that Boiardo and Ariosto use to depict characters and places, both imaginary and historical, that represent the world outside Christian Europe in their respective poems. In focusing on interactions of various kinds occurring in the most disparate regions of the globe, I will be addressing issues bearing on the poems' historical and literary context. How did each poet renegotiate the Carolingian epic's traditional backdrop of Christian-Saracen hostilities to reflect contemporary attitudes and political realities? What part did the Ottoman military threat and periodic calls for a renewed crusade against the "infidel" play? How did information about Asia, the Middle East, and Africa from a range of non-fictional works get factored into the fantasy? To what extent was identity created through geographical provenance or religious creed? At issue here is not simply how the geographically and religiously other is portrayed in each poem but rather how, through episodes featuring characters and sites from outside Christian Europe, both poets offered a blueprint for reading their poems and consequently for relating to the geopolitical realities of their day.

A View of the Globe from Fifteenth-Century Ferrara

While it is undeniable, as Margaret Meserve has stated, that "for most fifteenth-century Europeans [...] the countries of Asia were strange and foreign places," it is also true that during this period Ferrara was at the forefront in pursuing knowledge about the world beyond the Italian peninsula through newly translated works of ancient geographers and historians as well as through more recent sources, such as travellers' accounts,

merchant activity, and increasingly accurate maps.[9] Donald Lach singles out the Este family among Italian bibliophiles as "the first to begin collecting books on Asia and the overseas world" (vol. 2; bk 2, 48).[10] Jerry Brotton names the Este along with the Montefeltro of Urbino as prime examples of wealthy patrons and power brokers who "were quick not only to commission new manuscript texts but also to allow their names to be associated with new printing initiatives within the field of academic geography" (*The Renaissance Bazaar*, 37).[11] Not surprisingly, both Ptolemy and Strabo figured prominently in the Ferrarese court: Strabo's voluminous *Geography* was translated by the city's preeminent humanist, Guarino da Verona, and an illuminated manuscript of Ptolemy's *Geography* in an early fifteenth-century Latin translation was dedicated to Borso d'Este in 1466.[12] Ercole d'Este kept this precious latter volume in his personal study along with a crucial Bologna edition that was the first to contain a comprehensive cartographical apparatus.[13] These works not only provided factual information – Ptolemy alone described more than 8,000 places – but offered models of open-mindedness in viewing the globe. Brotton explains that the impact of Ptolemy's work "on the world of geography was to revolutionize a certain perception of space itself, which was no longer charged with religious significance but was instead a continuous, open terrestrial space."[14] Strabo explicitly encouraged his readers to adopt an unbiased attitude towards other peoples. Commending a treatise by Eratosthenes as a worthy precedent on this score, he writes: "After withholding praise from those who divide the whole multitude of mankind into two groups, namely, Greeks and Barbarians, and also from those who advised Alexander to treat the Greeks as friends but the Barbarians as enemies – Eratosthenes goes on to say that it would be better to make such divisions according to good qualities and bad qualities; for not only are many of the Greeks bad, but many of the Barbarians are refined" (1: 247–9).

Ancient historians with an interest in foreign cultures also held a prominent place at the Este court – thanks in large part to Boiardo's translations of Herodotus's *Histories*, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, and Cornelius Nepos's *De viris illustribus* (*Lives of Famous Captains*). In the preface to his translation of the *Histories*, Boiardo celebrates Herodotus expressly for his global reach: "Si debbe Herodoto tra gli historici nominare Principe e padre, per il quale si ha cognitione della vita & costumi di tutte quasi le nationi che habitano il circuito della terra" ("Herodotus must be called among historians the Prince and father, through whom we have knowledge about the life and customs of almost all the nations that in-

habit the circumference of the earth") (2v).[15] Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* surpasses perhaps even Herodotus in its attention to other cultures by portraying a Persian ruler as a protagonist warranting emulation rather than as a threat to the Greeks. Boiardo asserts that Nepos's biographies, moreover, bear witness to the excellence of "alcuni valorosi capitani Greci e Barbari" ("various valiant Greek and foreign captains") in whose lives he can see the reflection of Ercole's own: "io conosco la vita tua per vera forma rappresentarsi in quella di questi illustri" ("I recognize your life to be the true form represented in that of these illustrious men") (1).[16] In this way Ercole is envisioned as embodying exemplary qualities that transcend the purview of his own culture.

The Este court could have also followed an extensive account of European history from ancient Rome up to the end of the thirteenth century in the works of the medieval compiler Riccobaldo of Ferrara (c. 1245–1318). Boiardo composed an expanded translation of Riccobaldo, entitled *Historia imperiale*, extending the material on Europe's foreign affairs to cover periods of both defensive and offensive warfare.[17] After recounting the particularly destructive Saracen incursions in Italy during the ninth and tenth centuries, he turns to the Italo-Norman reconquest of Calabria and Sicily spearheaded by Roger I and his brothers, and subsequently to the early crusades in which, now in the context of a defensive war, the Saracen leaders Nur ad-Din and Saladin emerge as admirable figures.[18]

Medieval travellers' accounts updated and complemented the information provided by historians, shifting the focus from military conflict to peaceful encounters. Among this group, the Venetian merchant Marco Polo (1254–1324) was a privileged witness, having spent several years in the Mongol court of Kublai Khan and journeyed extensively throughout Asia (1271–95). His widely available *Milione* sought to enlighten his contemporaries regarding "le diverse generazioni delle genti e lle diversità delle regioni del mondo" ("the diverse populations and the variety of regions of the world"), specifically "le grandissime maraviglie e gran diversitadi delle genti d'Erminia, di Persia e di Tarteria, d'India e di molte altre province" ("the great marvels and great diversity of the people of Armenia, Persia, Tartary, India, and many other provinces") (*Mil.* 1.1, 2).[19] Marco Polo attempted to convey the reality of foreign lands as objectively as he could, and he often expressed respect and approbation for his Eastern hosts. As Sante Matteo writes, his account "puts on display a different, more humanistic way of looking at the natural world and assessing people's place in it."[20] In the course of the fifteenth century both Latin and

vernacular copies of the work are recorded in the ducal library, in Ercole d'Este's private study, and circulating among members of the court.[21]

A number of ambassadors and missionaries who both preceded and followed Marco Polo to the Mongol court also provided accounts of their travels that would have been available to fifteenth-century readers. In 1245 Pope Innocent IV sent the Franciscan friar Giovanni da Pian del Carpine as his emissary to the Mongol khan with the goal of spreading Christianity and gathering information about the empire. The friar's record of his journey, *Historia Mongalorum* (1245–7), not only circulated independently in manuscript form (Olschki, *L'Asia di Marco Polo*, 58n44), but was incorporated into Vincent of Beauvais's encyclopedic *Speculum historiale* and subsequently into the popular *Travels* of Sir John Mandeville, a fictitious travel manual of sorts ranging from the Middle East to India and Cathay.[22] The latter work is mentioned specifically in a letter in which Ercole asks a minister to return a borrowed copy (Milano 90), and is documented in the 1495 inventory as *Giovan de Mandavilla* (Bertoni 242, no. 213). Odorico da Pordenone, another friar who undertook missionary work in the Mongol Empire, wrote a first-hand account of his journeys (1318–30) that was present in the Estense collection both as "Frate hodoricus in latino" (Bertoni 241, no. 178) and through its substantial use in Mandeville's *Travels*. The missionary friar William of Rubruck also documented his experiences among the Mongols (1253–5) in his *Itinerarium*, which became readily available to literate Europeans in the following decades when it was incorporated into Roger Bacon's encyclopedia. In addition, the "Fiore de historie doriente" noted in the Estense library inventory (Bertoni 241, no. 193) corresponds to the title of an early fourteenth-century history of the Mongol Empire by the Armenian noble-turned-monk Hayton of Corycus, *La flor des estoires d'Orient (The Flower of Histories of the East)*.[23] These works would have been the most up-to-date writings available to the Ferrarese court on the Mongol Empire because foreign Christians were expelled after the Mongols were overthrown by native Chinese Ming in 1368. Evelyn Edson notes that in the Catalan-Estense world map of 1450–60, "China is pretty much the world of Marco Polo; the Great Khan is still ruling there" (198).[24]

Extensive land and sea travel during the fifteenth century led to ever-increasing familiarity with various other parts of the world. Given that the Este family were in close contact with both Venice (until the war of 1482) and Naples, contemporary testimonials about eastern regions could have reached the court through merchants and ambassadors from

these Italian port cities. Beginning in 1425, in fact, Venetians travelling abroad were required to furnish both an oral and a written account upon their return, and anyone interested in knowing the habits and customs of faraway peoples could consult these reports.[25] Furthermore, Maria Pia Pedani points out that diplomats from Egypt, Persia, the Ottoman Empire, and Albania were a regular presence in Venice, making it "truly an international city, an open door towards the East and the West, where it was possible to tie together the threads of contacts and encounters, open and secret, among Christians and Muslims" (116).[26]

The Estense family assiduously sought the most up-to-date world maps as well as the latest news regarding Portuguese and Spanish attempts to reach India by sea.[27] Ercole d'Este not only possessed a translation of one of Columbus's 1493 letters regarding his purported discovery of India, but his 1494 correspondence regarding Columbus's voyage "demonstrates that the duke's curiosity was based on quite precise geographical ideas" (Greppi, "Luoghi e miti," 448).[28] Lach notes that Ercole followed the progress of Portuguese explorers as they travelled south along the African coast, eventually finding a sea route to India (vol. 2, bk 2, 49).

Imported goods present in Ferrara also served as a window to foreign lands, and the city's access to this material culture was greatly facilitated by, although not limited to, Venice's hegemony in trade with Muslim territories.[29] Giovanni Ricci writes that in the 1460s Borso sent his representatives on various missions to Tunisia to purchase Arabian horses (*I turchi alle porte*, 153).[30] The *Diario ferrarese dall'anno 1409 al 1504* mentions in passing a centrally located "speciaria del Saracino" (Saracen spice shop) in 1471 (69). Oriental carpets were increasingly in demand, and from the middle of the fifteenth century a "tapedo turchesco" was considered a "status symbol" among the Ferrarese (Boralevi 217).[31] In the Salone dei Mesi fresco of Palazzo Schifanoia, painted in the late 1460s or early 1470s, young women view the Palio of St George (April) from balconies draped with four Turkish carpets.[32] In 1490 Ercole d'Este invited an Egyptian weaver and carpet merchant originally from Cairo to establish a workshop near the ducal palace. Ten years later "Maestro Sabadino tapeziero," also referred to as "Syro," "Negro," and "Moro," received as a gift from Ercole two houses for himself and his male descendants (Ricci, *Ossessione turca*, 27–8).[33]

The ducal family's predilection for astrology and esoteric culture also brought them indirectly into contact with different currents originating in the East. This is likewise reflected in the fresco paintings of the Salone dei Mesi, where astrological symbols based on the authority of the Arab

astronomer Albumasar (Abu Ma'shar) fill the centre zone. In addition, the earliest Tarocchi known to have circulated in Italy were those of the Este court (1442). Although the exact origin of Tarot cards is unknown, it is thought that they were conceived in Egypt, China, India, or ancient Greece. Boiardo's verses composed to accompany an elaborately illustrated deck attest to their continued popularity (*Tarocchi*).

Pilgrimage narratives, in vogue throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, were a venue for information specifically about the Middle East. In 1358 Petrarch penned a pilgrimage itinerary that appears to have been translated into Tuscan at the Estense court by Niccolò III d'Este's preceptor.[34] Pilgrimage expeditions from northern Italy to Jerusalem sometimes stopped at Ferrara on their way to or from the port of Venice. The Franciscan friar Niccolò da Poggibonsi, who described his five-year pilgrimage (1345–50) in his *Libro d'oltramare* (*Voyage beyond the Sea*), stayed various months in the "benedetta e gentile" ("blessed and kind") Ferrara upon his return (2: 239). In 1458 the *condottiere* Roberto da Sanseverino (1417–87) visited Borso d'Este in Modena on his way to the Holy Land and then wrote an extensive account of his travels the following year.[35]

The Estense did not need to rely solely on external sources for descriptions of the Middle East, however. In 1413 the marquis Niccolò III d'Este and his entourage, which included Boiardo's grandfather Feltrino, went on what Theodore J. Cachey, Jr, calls "one of the most important and high-profile Italian pilgrimages to the Holy Land of the Quattrocento" (53). Niccolò commemorated the journey through the court chancellor Luchino Dal Campo's detailed account of their various steps, *El viaggio al santo Sepolcro del nostro Signor Gesù Cristo in Jerusalem, el qual fece lo illustrissimo signor marchese Nicolò da Este con altri gentiluomini suoi compagni*.[36] Another member of the Este family to record his voyage to the Holy Land was Milliaduse (1406–52), one of Niccolò's illegitimate sons. His chaplain Don Domenego provides a meticulous account of their experiences during the trip, which took place between May 1440 and February 1441.[37]

Although Ercole did not travel outside Europe, it apparently pleased him to have his court considered the destination of dignitaries from around the world. In the preface to his translation of Herodotus, Boiardo proclaims the global extension of the duke's hospitality: "spesse volte molti principi forestieri ho veduti in quella [corte] ricetare, e di Inghilterra & di Spagna, & di Ungaria, & dalle altre estremita del mondo" ("very often I have seen many foreign princes received in that court, from

England, and Spain, and Hungary, and from the other extremities of the earth") (3r). Since Boiardo does not indicate what he means by the term "other extremities," the duke's avowed cosmopolitanism could have been more an image he wanted to project than documented reality. At the same time, it is worth noting that Ercole could have hosted any number of foreign visitors whose presence is mentioned in court chronicles only by chance. On the occasion of Isabella d'Este's christening, for example, we find that she was baptized by the bishop of Cyprus, who was serving as an ambassador in Ferrara at the time (*Diario ferrarese*, 90).

Some interaction with the Muslim world can be gleaned from the art of the period. The various turbaned figures in the works of the Ferrarese court painter Ercole de' Roberti (c.1451–96) have prompted one recent historian to comment that turbans "radiated out from Ferrara" (Ricci, *Ossessione turca*, 26).[38] And while Ercole de' Roberti was busy depicting a foreign presence in the Estense state, another Ferrarese artist actually took up residence in the Ottoman Empire. Although Gentile Bellini's arrival at Mehmed's court in 1479 is the more commonly cited example of artistic exchange, it appears that the painter Costanzo da Ferrara was sent to Istanbul by King Ferrante of Naples a full year earlier (Babinger 505). In 1485 the Estense orator in Naples informed Ercole that Costanzo was still painting under the patronage of the "Gran Turcho," who had in the meantime dubbed him a knight (Ricci, *Ossessione turca*, 30).[39]

The Este court knew the Ottoman Empire not only for its commercial opportunities and artistic interests, however, but also for its military aggression. As Robert H. Schwoebel remarks, "in the fifteenth century Latin Christendom experienced something entirely new – a direct confrontation with a hostile Moslem Turkish power" ("Coexistence, Conversion, and the Crusade against the Turks," 166). Mehmed II (reigned 1451–81), having captured the Byzantine capital of Constantinople two years after coming to power, continued to extend his dominion into eastern Europe in the following decades. From 1463 to 1479 the Ottomans were at war against Venice for control of the Aegean and Adriatric Seas, and they progressively seized Venetian commercial and military holdings, including Negroponte (Euboea) in 1470, and penetrated into Venetian territory in the Friuli on various occasions.[40] After emerging the victor from this protracted conflict, Mehmed restored commercial relations with the Venetian republic and subsequently proceeded to invade the Kingdom of Naples. In the summer of 1480 his troops attacked Otranto, massacring its inhabitants and effectively establishing a foothold on Italy's southern coast. Only his death in May of 1481 put an end to further plans for

expansion and allowed the Neapolitans to regain their territory in September of that year.[41]

The escalation of the Turkish threat during the reign of Mehmed II did not automatically lead to alliances along religious or cultural lines, however. King Alfonso I of Naples (reigned 1442–58) had sought alliances with the Mamelukes and other Muslim rivals of the Ottomans, and his son Ferrante I (reigned 1458–94) was initially friendly to the Ottomans during the latter's war against their mutual enemy, Venice.[42] The Venetians, in turn, not only refrained from intervening on behalf of their southern Italian neighbour when the Ottomans landed at Otranto in 1480, but were suspected of having supported the invasion.[43] Indeed, during the ensuing year in which Ferrante's son Alfonso II d'Aragona was fighting to free their Neapolitan kingdom from Turkish invaders, Venice was preparing to wage a war on Ferrara that they officially declared in early 1482. Although Alfonso II was initially blocked on his way through the Papal States, he arrived in Ferrara the following year in time to confront the Venetian forces that had in the meantime reached the city walls. An irony of history is that Alfonso brought with him not only Greek and Albanian *stradiots* (the latter employed likewise by the Venetians), along with Spanish soldiers, but also five hundred Turkish foot soldiers and horsemen he had captured in Otranto (Rosenberg 126).[44]

The divide became even less clear-cut in the following decades when the Ottoman Empire was involved in European politics not only as a potential threat but also as a useful ally.[45] The 1503 treaty between Venice and the Ottoman Empire marked the beginning of an Ottoman disengagement from Europe that lasted until 1521 (Imber 36), and thus the years corresponding to the composition of the *Furioso* (1505–16) were virtually free of Ottoman aggression.[46] According to Francesco Guicciardini, even after 1517 when Selim I's power grew substantially, the various European states "considered the danger uncertain and very far off" and thus preparations to combat the Ottoman threat were undertaken "only frivolously and, as it were, ceremoniously" (*History of Italy*, 301).[47] Indeed, throughout this period the European sovereigns tended merely to pay lip service to combating the Turks while they were mostly intent on fighting against each other (Housley, *The Later Crusades*, 124–5).[48]

Epic Narrative and the Construction of Group Identity

Multilayered perceptions of the world outside Christian Europe would also have reached the Este court through works of fantasy, especially the

epic, the predominant fictional genre of the period. While fifteenth-century humanists promoted ancient Greek culture as the basis of their new educational program, the Italian literary tradition, especially medieval renditions of the Trojan War such as Guido delle Colonne's *Historia destructionis Troiae*, depicted the Greeks negatively as the deceitful enemies of Rome's Trojan ancestors. According to Virgil's *Aeneid*, the ancient epic par excellence in fifteenth-century Italy, these ancestors headed from Asia Minor to Italy after the destruction of their city and subsequently merged with the indigenous peoples of the peninsula.[49]

Movement could also be found from west to east in narratives relating the exploits of Alexander of Macedonia. Alongside earlier, more historical records of Alexander's military expedition through Persia and India, a host of popular legendary biographies appeared with epic and romance episodes that imagined the East as an inexhaustibly fantastic landscape. Leonardo Olschki goes so far as to claim, "Everything that was commonly known in Europe about Muslim and pagan territories outside the restricted limits of geographical experience was in large part from the gests of Alexander the Great which, from the eleventh century onwards, dominated in diverse poetic and fictionalized forms in Western depictions of Oriental lands" (*L'Asia di Marco Polo*, 45). Multiple versions of the life of Alexander are documented in the Estense library.[50]

The medieval period also featured non-Christians as the perennial enemy in its own brand of epic matter, the Carolingian cycle. *Chansons de geste* recounting battles between Christians and Saracens taking place mostly in Spain originally lent moral support to military efforts in the Holy Land by fostering a crusading ideology. The genre continued to circulate and thrive in various guises and languages in the following centuries despite the fact that successive attempts to establish a permanent Latin state in the Middle East ended in failure. Already in the early French tradition, however, stories about Christians fighting Saracens competed with other narrative paradigms, in particular the internal conflicts within the Frankish court and the adventures of its paladins in the Orient.[51] The Franco-Venetian *Entrée d'Espagne* (c. 1320–30), referred to as "the most relevant work of Venetian literature and perhaps of all northern Italian literature up to the Renaissance," combines both patterns.[52] In the context of recounting Charlemagne's exploits in Spain prior to the battle of Roncevaux, the anonymous Paduan author relates that Orlando departs from the Christian camp and heads eastward because of his anger at the emperor. The paladin eventually conquers the Holy Land and surrounding territories, compelling his Saracen allies to convert en masse, after

which he returns to Spain and helps bring victory to the Frankish army. The popular fifteenth-century Italian verse redaction of this narrative, *La Spagna in rima*, existed in versions of both thirty-four and forty cantos, including a precious manuscript of the shorter poem elaborately illustrated for Borso d'Este in 1453, the fateful year that the Ottoman Turks seized Constantinople.[53]

Whereas the *Spagna* narratives present Charlemagne on the offensive in a territory long subjected to Muslim rule, the French epic *Aspremont* and its many rewritings imagine the Franks defending southern Italy from a new attack by North African Saracens. Fifteenth-century Italian versions of the *Aspramonte*, in both *ottava rima* verse and in the prose of Andrea da Barberino, provide a respite from the military encounters by relating a romance between a North African female warrior and an Italian paladin that leads to their marriage.[54] Yet this heterogamous union soon ends tragically, and battles dominate the action until the Franks succeed in destroying the entire North African invading army. It is in this epic prequel that the young Orlando makes his debut as a fighter, saving the emperor from death at the hands of the Saracen Almonte and acquiring his sword Durindana and oliphant in the process.

Other popular prose compilations and adaptations by Andrea da Barberino, such as the *Reali di Francia, Ugone d'Avernia,* and *Il Guerrin Meschino*, contain both traditional and novel ways of depicting Saracens in relating the vicissitudes of individual Christian paladins travelling from Spain to the distant East. Referring specifically to the *Guerrino*, Gloria Allaire finds that Andrea combines a disparaging presentation of Islam and Mohammed with a "more detailed and accurate portrayal of Saracen culture than is normally found in chivalric literature" ("Portrayal of Muslims," 245). Antonio Franceschetti similarly contrasts Andrea's depiction of Christian moral superiority in war with a more positive depiction of Saracens during peace ("On the Saracens," 207).[55] Despite this mixed portrayal of Saracens, Juliann Vitullo maintains that a crusading ideology nevertheless informs the plot: Guerrino "becomes the captain of both the Persian and Arab armies against the Turks, precisely because they cannot properly organize themselves. [...] As Guerrino moves closer to discovering his aristocratic genealogy, [...] he uses those same skills to defend Christianity against the Saracens, transforming himself from a merchant into God's knight – the *cavaliere di Dio*" (76).[56]

The most ambitious and successful epic poem to appear in the years immediately preceding the publication of the *Innamorato*, Pulci's *Morgante*, continues this ambivalent attitude towards the non-Christian

world. Pulci creatively adds new comic episodes and develops an innovative linguistic register with iconoclastic brio, even bringing upon himself the suspicion of heresy. Nonetheless, his plot follows the same basic storyline of earlier Carolingian works, leading to its culmination in the battle of Roncevaux.[57] Indeed, as Michael Murrin reflects: "If one juxtaposes the poems at either end of this line, the *Roland* and the *Morgante*, one can easily see that the essentials of the story did not change through all the intermediate versions" (*History and Warfare*, 21). Ruggero M. Ruggieri thus sums up the action of the *Morgante* as "a grandiose offensive against Islam" (15).[58]

The storyline invented by Boiardo and brought to a conclusion by Ariosto is situated chronologically between Agolante's invasion of southern Italy in the *Aspramonte* and the fateful Spanish expedition leading to the battle of Roncevaux recounted in the various *Spagna* narratives and the *Morgante*. The *Innamorato* begins with the Christians and Spanish Saracens together in Paris at a peaceful festive gathering, and the *Furioso* ends back in Paris after the Christians have thwarted a massive invasion from all directions and led a counter-offensive destroying the Saracen seat of power in Africa.

Although individual chapters of my study follow the trajectory of events in the two poems, the overall structure is guided primarily by geography rather than narrative chronology. Part One examines a number of prominent East Asian characters created by Boiardo: Angelica of Cathay, Gradasso of Sericana, Agricane and Mandricardo of Tartary, and the Eastern queen Marphisa.[59] Ariosto does not invent any new Asian protagonists of his own; rather, he transforms these characters, often in ways that contradict their development in the earlier poem.

Part Two focuses on Africa and Saracen Spain. The opening chapter examines the historical and literary models of Boiardo's Agramante, the North African king who sets into motion an invasion of France in the opening canto of Book Two. Given that this Tunisian ruler is closely identified with the war right up until the final combat that determines its outcome in the *Furioso*, I postpone my discussion of Ariosto's Agramante until turning to the destruction of Biserta in Part Four. The next two chapters offer a comparative treatment of Agramante's courteous cousin Rugiero and his fellow-overachiever, Rodamonte, across the two poems. Part Two concludes with a consideration of the shifting role of Spanish Saracens in the wake of contemporary vicissitudes involving Venice and the Ottoman Empire.

Part Three turns to episodes taking place within a more finely delin-

eated eastern Mediterranean, from Cyprus and Egypt in the *Innamorato* to Jerusalem and Syria in the *Furioso*. While chapter 10 interrogates the historical and contemporary relevance of Boiardo's courteous King Noradino, chapter 13 traces Ariosto's refashioning of the Syrian ruler into a poor leader and avowed enemy of the Christians. Focusing on Ariosto's Astolfo as he moves from the Indian Ocean to Egypt and Jerusalem before arriving in Damascus, chapters 11 and 12 begin to track his transformation into a *miles Christi* in the latter cantos of the poem.

Part Four keeps the focus on the *Furioso* as we follow Astolfo to the African continent. The English knight takes on an increasingly prominent role as Ariosto superimposes upon Boiardo's chivalric foundation an ideology based on the animosity between Christians and Muslims consonant with the pattern established in the Old French Carolingian cycle. Chapters 14 and 15 examine the major turning point in the poem in this regard: Astolfo's voyage to Ethiopia and the moon followed by his instrumental participation in the destruction of Biserta.

Part Five compares two extended narrative sequences that epitomize the poets' opposing views: in the *Innamorato*, Brandimarte's adventure at Phebosilla's palace projects an irrepressible openness towards the world beyond Europe despite the dangers of facing the unknown (chapter 16); in the *Furioso*, Rinaldo's adventures along the Po River Valley recombine elements from Brandimarte's earlier episode to darken Ariosto's representation of humanity at both a local and a global level (chapter 17).

The present study is outside the scope of Edward Said's concept of orientalism in its stricter sense since the two poems under consideration are not products of colonial-minded imperialist systems.[60] Nevertheless, it is undeniable that the imaginative geography of both romance epics derives from the poets' (and their society's) assumptions, projections, and misapprehensions, as well as from an indeterminate range of fictional and non-fictional sources depicting the various lands outside the Italian peninsula. Likewise, none of us as critical readers can claim a vantage point fully divorced from our perspective on the world we inhabit today. What I do hope to offer, nonetheless, is a nuanced interpretation of the ways of thinking about geographical provenance and identity in two Italian Renaissance masterpieces and perhaps beyond. The following pages thereby aim to move in the direction suggested by Said in the introduction to his classic study: "Perhaps the most important task of all would be to undertake studies in contemporary alternatives to Orientalism, to ask how one can study other cultures and peoples from a libertarian, or a nonrepressive and nonmanipulative, perspective" (*Orientalism*, 24).[61]

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PART ONE

Asia

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Chapter One

Angelica of Cathay

Boiardo's Angelica

The Innamorato's *Carolingian Prelude: Saracens in Paris*

Counting on his readers' familiarity with the ever-popular Carolingian tradition, Boiardo opens his romance epic by depicting encounters across religious and national lines, thwarting expectations and overturning literary convention even as he prepares the stage for more radical changes to come. As the narrative begins, Charlemagne has proclaimed an international tournament to take place in Paris at Pentecost, the anniversary of the day in which the apostles miraculously spoke in languages they had not learned and were understood by the various foreign visitors gathered in Jerusalem (Acts 2: 6–12). As though to underscore the holiday's implied potential of universal understanding, the tournament is not limited to Christians but is open to those of all nations and faiths. In fact, only apostates and renegades (*OI* 1.1.9) – that is, those who have renounced their original Christian identity – are not welcome. We are told that "una gente infinita" ("numberless people") have arrived in Paris "da ogni parte e da tuti i confini" ("from every region, every nation") (*OI* 1.1.9).[1] Delphia Robinson Eboigbe considers the tournament itself as "the first indication that in Boiardo's universe, religious differences no longer separate men" (130).

As the scene continues, however, we soon discover that the joust's participants are not drawn from the vast lands stretching across the *mappamundi*, but from the narrower space typical of the Carolingian epics circulating in Italy at the time. All the foreigners identified by name turn out to be either Saracens from Spain and Morocco (*OI* 1.1.10) or Chris-

tians from Great Britain and Lombardy (*OI* 1.1.14). The Saracens mentioned in the opening sequence – Grandonio (king of Morocco), Feraguto (nephew to King Marsilio of Spain), Balugante (Marsilio's brother), Isolieri (ruler of Pamplona), and Serpentino (Balugante's son) – are all well-known characters from the *Spagna* narratives.[2] This combination of the narrator's initial claim to universality and the limited origin of the named participants creates the impression that the world consists only of these specific regions, a provincial assumption soon to be overturned by the appearance of a princess from distant Cathay.

Already at this preliminary stage, however, the parameters of the familiar Carolingian world have been dramatically altered. The *Spagna*, for instance, opens with Charlemagne's planned invasion of Spain to fight against "ciaschun chi non crede / nel vero Idio, ne la cristiana fede" ("whoever does not believe in the true God, in the Christian faith") (*Spagna* 1.41).[3] Boiardo's Carlo Magno, on the other hand, has welcomed Spanish and North African Saracens as his guests at the tournament's inaugural banquet. Yet the fact that the *Innamorato* brings these two traditionally hostile groups together to break bread rather than cross swords does not mean that the poet feigns ignorance of their conflictual history. The opening narrative oscillates between tension and harmony, placing the focus on both the difficulties of and possibilities for understanding across borders.

The image of Charlemagne sitting among his knights at his "mensa ritonda" ("Round Table") (*OI* 1.1.13) initially suggests an Arthurian setting in which individual characteristics take precedence over collective identity, creating the basis for friendly relations among all.[4] Before the stanza is over, however, we are alerted to the fact that although religion is not a cause for hostile feelings, differences in cultural practice may nevertheless create a disturbance. Employing a derogatory term that Christians and Saracens frequently call each other in Carolingian epic, the narrator announces that the Saracens are lying on their carpets "comme mastini / [...] / Spregiando seco il costume di Franza" ("like hounds / [...] / scorning the customs Frenchmen use") (*OI* 1.1.13).[5] In the initial absence of communication between the groups, an assumption about the other culture's alleged disparagement of French manners goes hand in hand with an attitude of disdain towards them.

Boiardo promptly goes on to expose such assumptions as erroneous by staging a conversation between the Frankish Christian Ranaldo and the Spanish Saracen Balugante, initiated by the latter precisely because of his acute interest in (and ability to understand) the ways of the French

court. When Ranaldo is mocked for the poverty of his clothing by Orlando's treacherous stepfather Gano and his clan, the enraged knight "nascose nel petto i pensier caldi, / Mostrando nela vista alegra facia" ("hid his burning thoughts inside / while offering a face that smiled") (*OI* 1.1.16). Balugante is nevertheless able to see through the facade: "in viso il guardava / E divinava quasi il suo pensieri" ("[he] watched his face / and practically divined his thoughts") (*OI* 1.1.17). That Balugante could read Ranaldo's mind demonstrates that an attentive observer can understand a great deal about an individual from another cultural group even prior to any dialogue. Balugante subsequently approaches Ranaldo and, referring to himself as "forestieri / E de' costumi de' Cristian degiuno" ("a foreigner / and ignorant of Christian customs"), has his interpreter ask Ranaldo whether in the French court honour is won "per robba o per vertute" ("by prowess or by wealth") (*OI* 1.1.17). Charles S. Ross suggests that Balugante's "conversational gambit may be read as a first step toward friendship."[6] Whether or not this is the case, Balugante's question concerning the moral values of Charlemagne's court not only opens a channel of communication but points to honour as an essential value common to both Christian and Saracen conceptions of chivalry.

Boiardo's early readers would have been familiar with the character of Balugante from Carolingian narratives. In the *Spagna*, he is repeatedly invoked as one of the principal Saracen enemies along with his brothers, King Marsilio and the sinisterly named Falserone (*Spagna* 1.28). With Charlemagne's invasion imminent, Marsilio sends him to Persia, Alexandria, and Syria to seek assistance (*Spagna* 2.10), and he returns with allies to fight in Saragossa (*Spagna* 27.22).[7] According to an alternative literary tradition found in Andrea da Barberino's *Reali di Francia*, Charlemagne had married Balugante's sister Galerana after having spent time in the court of Saragozza. Andrea does not depict Balugante in a positive light because of this family tie, however, but says of him: "nessuna verità si trovava in lui, crudele contro a' nimici, e degli amici non fu misericordioso" ("no truth was found in him, he was cruel towards his enemies and not merciful to friends") (*Reali* VI.xxi, 475).[8] Balugante and his brothers even plan to kill the young Charlemagne before the latter escapes with his bride (*Reali* VI.xxxvii, 505). In the *Innamorato*, on the contrary, Balugante is not only a relative of the Frankish emperor ("di Carlo parente"; *OI* 1.1.10) and a keen observer of his court, but is the one who makes possible a rapprochement between the two groups. The nature of his question, moreover, lays bare the strained relations among

the paladins and thus draws attention to a potentially graver problem internal to Charlemagne's social order.

Ranaldo laughs and replies with good cheer ("con benigno aspetto") that although affection is shown to prostitutes in bed and gluttons at the table, in the end true valour is the only thing that leads to honour: "dove poi convene usar valore, / Dasse a ciascuno il suo debito honore" ("when our valor is on view, / let each receive the honor due") (*OI* 1.1.18). Ranaldo thereby unequivocally affirms his society's adherence to a code of chivalry despite Gano's apparent threat to such values. Thus the first dialogue in the poem – and the only one preceding the appearance of Angelica – demonstrates that erroneous suppositions arising from cultural, political, or religious diversity can be overcome by perceptive individuals from their respective groups who enter into dialogue. In this case, the exchange, revealing a shared chivalric ethos, brings together the Frankish paladin most beloved by the reading public and a figure customarily depicted in a negative guise in Carolingian epic precedents.

The Appearance of Angelica

Once Boiardo has suggested that even within the familiar space of Carolingian epic things are not always what they seem, he is ready to remind readers that the world extends far beyond the homeland of the characters who have initially gathered for the tournament. At the very same instant in which Charlemagne, surrounded by his vassals, golden platters, and enamelled goblets, arrogantly "Tuta la gente pagana disprezza, / Come arena de il mar denanti ai venti" ("scorned all the pagan populace / as ocean sands before the winds"), something new emerges to shatter his self-centred worldview: "Ma nova cossa che ebe ad aparire, / Fè lui con li altri insieme isbigotire" ("But there appeared a prodigy / that left him – with the rest – amazed") (*OI* 1.1.20).[9] The "prodigy" is Angelica who, collapsing the customary framework of Carolingian geography, arrives in Paris from the "fin del mondo" ("ends of earth") (*OI* 1.1.24), referred to in travel time as a two-hundred day journey beyond the Don, the river traditionally considered the dividing line between Europe and Asia.[10]

Angelica goes on to identify her homeland as "Cataio" (Cathay), which she vaguely locates as both between India and Tartary (*OI* 1.1.52) and as part of India (*OI* 1.10.14).[11] In maps of the period "Cathay" corresponded largely to China.[12] Marco Polo equated Cathay more specifically with northern China, drawing attention to its "belle cittadi e belle castella di mercatantie e d'arti, e belle vigne e àlbori assai, e gente dimes-

tica" ("beautiful cities and castles with merchandise and arts, and beautiful vineyards and many trees, and civilized people") (*Mil.* 105.7, 139). In Mandeville's *Travels*, Cathay is referred to as "un grant pays et bel et bon et riche et bien mercheantz" ("a great country, beautiful, rich, fertile, full of good merchandise") (*Le livre* 369; tr. 141).[13] The Armenian historian Hayton likewise underscored the sophistication of its inhabitants: "The kingdom of Cathay is considered the richest and most noble realm in the world. Full of people and incalculable splendor [...] as far as the foot of man has traveled thereabouts, countless luxuries, treasures, and wealth have been observed. [...] People there are creative and quite clever; and thus they have little regard for the accomplishments of other people in all the arts and sciences" (*The Flower of Histories of the East,* bk 1, ch. 1).[14] Among Boiardo's contemporaries, the urge to reach Cathay for commercial purposes was so pressing that the Spanish monarchs financed a highly risky and unprecedented expedition by a Genoese navigator who intended to reach this distant land more swiftly by sailing west across the Atlantic Ocean. Columbus initially presented this audacious plan to the Portuguese crown around the same time that the first two books of the *Orlando innamorato* came out in print.[15]

Cathay would have been known in Ferrara not only for its precious goods and spices, imported through intermediaries by Italian (especially Venetian) merchants, but also for its purported military potential. Ercole's father, Niccolò d'Este, expressed a particular interest in this realm for that reason when he and his entourage travelled to Jerusalem. Following an encounter with a certain "uomo antico, molto pratico e informato delle cose di Levante" ("elderly man, very experienced and informed about things in the East"), Niccolò explicitly instructed his chronicler Luchino Dal Campo to make a record of the immense power of Cathay's emperor, whose many barons could each bring 7,000 horses to the battlefield (112).

Boiardo does not at first direct our attention to the region's commercial or military assets, but to its lovely princess. Odorico da Pordenone had earlier claimed that while the men of India "are of a fair and comely personage, [...] the women are the most beautiful under the sun" (229). Boiardo likewise does not distinguish Angelica by any exotic features in appearance or dress, but simply states that her superior beauty diminishes that of all the other women present (*OI* 1.1.21).[16] Every knight without exception falls in love with her in one fell swoop, thereby providing the first concrete example of the poem's opening assertion of love's universal power (*OI* 1.1.2). This simultaeous enamourment nullifies any

ethnic or religious distinctions among the group and thus erases the conflictual themes associated with Carolingian epic. Simona Cremante has in fact remarked that Angelica has the function of enacting "Boiardo's well-known operation of converting Carolingian heroes to Breton values" (5).

Angelica seems equally uninterested in making distinctions between her eastern realm and western Europe. The only explanation she gives Charlemagne for arriving at his court is its reputation for chivalry, which she says reaches "Quanto distende il mare e soi confini" ("as far as seas and shores extend") (*OI* 1.1.24). When proposing a joust against her brother Argalìa with herself as the prize, she includes all those present, whether pagan or baptized ("pagano o batizato"; *OI* 1.1.27). Even after we learn through the Christian wizard Malagise and his demons that Angelica and her brother Argalìa are instruments in their father Galafrone's treacherous plan to capture and imprison knights, this project is never explicitly presented as a Saracen-Christian or East-West conflict. Boiardo, in fact, underscores the desire of Galafrone to have *all* knights ("Tutti i Baron; Ogni [...] Barone"; *OI* 1.1.40) in his grip. Accordingly, both Christians and Saracens hasten to throw their names into the lot, and the first names drawn are those of the Christian Englishman Astolfo and the Saracen Spaniard Feraguto.

The ensuing episode will both recall and refute the poem's Carolingian precedents. In the *Spagna*, Astolfo and Feraù were also the first to fight – albeit, against each other. Astolfo was quickly unhorsed and became a prisoner of Feraù (*Spagna* 3.6–8), who then proceeded to defeat Charlemagne's knights one after another in battles interspersed with verbal exchanges that kept the Christian-Saracen conflict at the forefront. In the *Innamorato*, however, Boiardo ignores religious difference and compares Astolfo and Feraguto in terms of their adherence, or lack thereof, to a code of courtesy. The more chivalrous Astolfo greets Argalìa, formally renews the terms of the joust, and accepts imprisonment without protest when thrown from his horse (*OI* 1.1.60–7). Feraguto, by contrast, disregards the rules of chivalric conduct and acts on impulse: after unceremoniously challenging Argalìa, he does not acknowledge defeat when unhorsed and continues the battle on foot, eventually killing his opponent (*OI* 1.1.68–1.2.16, 1.3.52–67).

The consequent thwarting of Galafrone's plan allows Boiardo to develop the character of Angelica in unforeseen ways. Although she succeeds in returning to Cathay when left to her own devices, she inadvertently drinks from the *Fonte dell'Amore* (Fountain of Love) while still in France and falls hopelessly in love with Ranaldo (*OI* 1.3.38–50). If until this

point Angelica was viewed by the love-struck knights as a passive object of desire to be conquered, she now takes on the role of an active pursuer. Indeed, she demonstrates remarkable agency and ingenuity in tracking down the knight she desires, commanding Malagise to lure him away from Barcelona, and erecting by magic the luxurious *Palazo Zoioso* (Pleasure Palace) on an island somewhere in the Indian Ocean where she hopes to enjoy his company (*OI* 1.8.1–14).[17] Although her plan fails because of Ranaldo's intransigence, Angelica nevertheless goes on to save him – a knight in distress! – from the clutches of a monster at the *Roca Crudel* (Castle Cruel) despite his cold rejection of her direct offer of assistance and romance (*OI* 1.9.18–21).[18]

Angelica also occasions the appearance of other new Eastern characters in the poem, most notably her intractable suitor Agricane of Tartaria (chapter 3). Galafrone would have agreed to marry his daughter to Tartary's emperor through fear of his military might, but Angelica overrules her father and adamantly refuses the match. Just as earlier she boldly entered Charlemagne's court proposing a joust on her own terms, she now shows similar aplomb by withstanding Agricane's lengthy siege at the fortress of Albracà near the capital city of Cathay. When her forces are diminished, she travels alone to Dragontina's garden in Circassia (the Caucasus), west of the Caspian Sea, where she frees Orlando from the fairy's spell and leads him and his comrades eastward to take up her defence (*OI* 1.14.23–49). She negotiates command over Orlando's battle against Ranaldo, then, just as he is about to deliver a fatal blow to his cousin, sends him off to the perilous Garden of Orgagna, which may correspond to the realm of Organça (Turkmenistan) on Fra Mauro's world map (Falchetta 609–21). She continues to show inventiveness and an enterprising character in her pursuit of Ranaldo, whether by sending his horse to him by way of messenger or by later convincing the newly returned Orlando to leave Albracà and accompany her to Paris where she hopes to find her love.

Even during moments in which Angelica is in danger – first of rape and subsequently of enslavement and possible death – she quickly manages to take charge of the situation. In the first, Malagise originally intends to place her into a deep sleep through a magic incantation in order to kill her, but then, overwhelmed by her beauty, decides to take advantage of her instead. Since Angelica's ring has the property of breaking spells, she wakes up as soon as he attempts to embrace her and restrains him using her superior physical strength (*OI* 1.1.46–7). After ordering her brother to tie up the wizard, she appropriates his book of spells to conjure up