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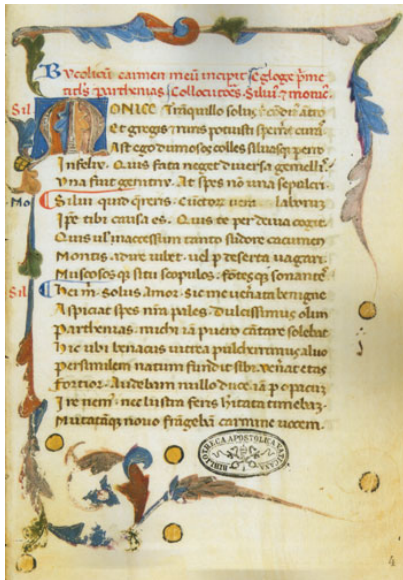
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### Readers and commentators of Petrarch's *Bucolicum carmen* in Italy between 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries

Tuesday, 28.07.2015, 18:00

Zentrum für Alte Kulturen („Atrium“, Langer Weg 11, SR 5)



The *Bucolicum carmen*, among Petrarch's Latin works, is one of the less explored. Considered as an authentic manifesto of the new European Arcadia, it has contributed greatly to the rediscovery of the bucolic genre in 14th c. Europe. This writing started circulating during the author's lifetime and, not unlike many other writings of the great humanist, was instantly as successful among contemporaries as in posterity.

One of the most interesting features of the work (and of pastoral poetry, at a more general level), immediately ascertained by the earliest readers, is its rather cryptic nature. Petrarch was conscious of the fact that the allegorical disguise of the eclogues did not render them understandable forthwith, so that he sent his friends and relatives letters containing the correct explanations of some eclogues. Due to these interpretative difficulties, also posterity needed further exegesis, and for this reason the work became the object of several commentaries, initially, inside the circle of Petrarch's friends and admirers, and later in wider milieus and contexts. The talk aims at providing a general overview of the main exegetical operations on the *Bucolicum carmen* text carried out in Italy between the second half of the 14th c. and the beginning of the 15th c., focusing on the principal early commentaries, i.e. those by Benvenuto Rambaldi da Imola, Francesco da Fiano and the so-called 'Anonimo laurenziano', characterized by the independence and autonomy of their sources. These works, due to their chronological and ideological proximity to the author, represent, undoubtedly, an essential instrument in shedding light on the darkest passages of a text, whose real meanings has been considerably veiled with allegories and metaphors.