



# The Ethics of Nature in the Middle Ages: On Boccaccio's Poetaphysics (The New Middle Ages)

*Gregory Stone*

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Contemporary intellectuals have banished the phrase "human nature" from their vocabulary because it seems to remove human beings from their historical situation. In this volume Gregory Stone argues that medieval thinkers had a way of calling humankind "natural" without implying that humans are bound by a universal, "ahistorical" essence. He shows that in the Middle Ages "nature" and "history" were by no means regarded (as they are by today's literary theorists) as polar opposites. Using Boccaccio's theory of poesis as a focal point, Stone treats works by Saint Augustine, Cicero, Philo of Alexandria, Meister Eckhart, John Scotus Eriugena, Ramon Llull, and others. He shows that medievals formulated sophisticated, anti-mimetic theories of language and poetry. In addition, he offers fresh interpretations of the works covered, particularly of Boccaccio's writings. *The Ethics of Nature in the Middle Ages* is a book packed with new and mind-expanding insights for all students of philosophy and the Middle Ages.

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