

The Quest for Epic

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THE QUEST FOR



FROM ARIOSTO TO TASSO

SERGIO ZATTI

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Translated here for the first time into English, Sergio Zatti's *The Quest for Epic* is a selection of studies on the two major poets of the Italian Renaissance, Ludovico Ariosto and Torquato Tasso, by one of the most important literary critics writing in Italy today. An original and challenging work, *The Quest for Epic* documents the development of Italian narrative from the chivalric romance at the end of the fifteenth century to the genre of epic in the sixteenth century. Zatti focuses on Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, written in the early 1500s, and progresses to Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, written at the end of the century, but also touches briefly on Boiardo, Ariosto's great predecessor at the Estense court in Ferrara, as well as on Pulci, Trissino, and many other Italian writers of the period. Zatti highlights the critical debates over narrative form in the sixteenth century that become signposts on the way to literary modernity and the eventual rise of the modern novel. Albert Russell Ascoli's introduction provides context by mapping Zatti's criticism and situating it among Italian and Anglo-American literary critical studies, making a case for the contribution this book will have for English-language readers.

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目录:

[The Quest for Epic 下载链接1](#)

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