

---

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Lokaj, Rodney. Two Renaissance Friends: Baldassarre Castiglione, Domizio Falcone, and Their Neo-Latin Poetry

Charles Fantazzi

---

Volume 40, Number 2, Spring 2017

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1086287ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v40i2.28524>

[See table of contents](#)

---

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

---

Cite this review

Fantazzi, C. (2017). Review of [Lokaj, Rodney. Two Renaissance Friends: Baldassarre Castiglione, Domizio Falcone, and Their Neo-Latin Poetry]. *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 40(2), 207–209. <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v40i2.28524>

---

© Canadian Society for Renaissance Studies / Société canadienne d'études de la Renaissance; Pacific Northwest Renaissance Society; Toronto Renaissance and Reformation Colloquium; Victoria University Centre for Renaissance and Reformation Studies, 2017

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

---

**é**rudit

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

**Lokaj, Rodney.**

***Two Renaissance Friends: Baldassarre Castiglione, Domizio Falcone, and Their Neo-Latin Poetry.***

Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 466. Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2015. Pp. xii, 372. ISBN 978-0-86698-519-2 (hardcover) US\$70.

At the very beginning of his introduction to this edition and translation of the two poets, Rodney Lokaj alludes to the socio-linguistic phenomenon of diglossia that is much discussed in linguistic circles at the present day. The coexistence of Latin and Italian in the Renaissance is the perfect example of this cultural situation. Although the vernacular literature had already made great strides of its own, the rich patrimony of classical Latin poetry continued to be the inspiration of a vast body of Renaissance Latin poetry in Italy. Castiglione is a very good example of this bilingual fluency. In my opinion he is a better poet in Latin than in Italian, yet his Latin poetry has been unjustly neglected even in Italy, where, as Lokaj points out, the UTET edition of Castiglione's *Opera omnia* includes only one of his twenty-two Latin poems. A projected second volume of *Poeti del Cinquecento*, dedicated to the Latin poetry of that period—from the distinguished publishing house Riccardo Ricciardi—had been assigned to the brilliant scholar, Giovanni Parenti, professor of humanistic philology at the University of Florence. Sadly, Parenti died suddenly at the age of 53. We do possess, however, his superb edition, translation, and commentary of four poems of Castiglione: the famous bucolic elegy, *Alcon*, the equally famous *Cleopatra*, based on a statue thought to represent her but actually a representation of the sleeping Ariadne, and two other less famous compositions, a *Prosopopoeia Ludovici Pici Mirandulani* and a poem to his wife, Ippolita Torelli. Fortunately, we now have the texts of the remaining poems as well in the present work, based on a little-known edition of M. Scorsone, which reproduced the 1773 Volpi edition, collated with various Cinquecento editions, and also including many of the emended readings of Parenti for the poems he edited.

The edition of the poems of Domizio Falcone, a friend of Castiglione from the same town of Casatico near Mantua where Castiglione was born, is an important new contribution to the studies of Neo-Latin poetry. Although of lowly estate, Falcone studied Latin with Castiglione under Giorgio Merula, an irritable but learned scholar, and Greek under Demetrius Chalcondylas.

His poems are transmitted in five manuscripts, always directly following the poems of Castiglione. One of these manuscripts, Vat. Lat. 6250, the one that contains the greatest number of compositions of Falcone, is very difficult to read, a factor that necessitated quite a few emendations and reconstructed verses in the present edition. It will require further work, no doubt, to interpret certain passages. There are seventy-nine poems in all, divided up into three sections based on thematic material: *De amore sive de Paula*, *De variis*, and *Priapeia*. The poems of Falcone are much inferior in form to the elegant verse of Castiglione. They exhibit some strange rhythms, anacolutha, and frequent instances of hyperbaton, or transposed word order. The Priapean verses are quite innocuous, typical of this goliardic pastime of the period.

It must be said in all honesty that there are many mistranslations and even more awkward, eccentric translations of the texts to be found in the present edition. To give but a few examples, in poem 25 of Falcone, *tempora floribus corona* (crown my head with flowers) comes out as “in the garland of flowers on my head,” where the imperative *corona* is taken as a noun. In the famous pastoral elegy to Falcone, *Alcon*, the vocative *miser*, addressed to the deceased Alcon, is translated “my poor dear,” which in the context is pure bathos. Poem 3, consisting of two distichs, had been consistently omitted in all the humanistic editions of Castiglione’s Latin works, but was resurrected by Parenti in a Festschrift in 1996, which was not available to me. It should have been omitted here since its provenance is very suspicious and its content and style simply too vile and crude to have been written by the Mantovan nobleman. It poses as a sequel to the previous poem about a heroic Pisan female warrior defending her city against the Florentines. Seeing her lying there pierced by a sword and dying, her lover “proffers the pitiful words, ‘Alas! You should have been pierced by a very different weapon.’” Pitiful indeed. To make things worse, Lokaj adds a pedantic commentary. A simple Latin expression, *accurrit propere* (he hastens quickly), is glossed with a sentence from Tacitus’s *Histories* which has nothing to do with this scene, while the patent *double entendre* of the word *telum*, Latin for “weapon,” generates a series of glosses from Martial and the *Corpus Priapeorum*, an anonymous collection of phallic obscenities.

The commentary, in general, is full of interesting and pertinent information, even if at times it may be somewhat excessive. To explain a single allusion to a classical poet, an entire passage of a dozen verses or so is sometimes

cited. This will be a very useful book to students of Castiglione and Renaissance Latin poetry.

CHARLES FANTAZZI

East Carolina University

**Bathsua Makin and Mary More, with a Reply to More by Robert Whitehall. *Educating English Daughters: Late Seventeenth-Century Debates*. Ed. Frances Teague and Margaret J.M. Ezell, assoc. ed. Jessica Walker.**

The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe: The Toronto Series 44 / Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies 491. Toronto: Iter Academic Press / Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2016. Pp. xvi, 201. ISBN 978-0-86698-546-8 (paperback) US\$34.95.

The latest volume in The Other Voice in Early Modern Europe's Toronto Series is a welcome addition to a series that has published an impressive forty-four editions of early modern women's texts since 2009. *Educating English Daughters*, edited by Frances Teague and Margaret Ezell with Jessica Walker as associate editor, makes available in an attractive teaching edition two works: Bathsua Makin's *The Ancient Education of Gentlewomen* (1673) and Mary More's *The Woman's Right* (ca. 1674). The former appeared in print, while the latter circulated in manuscript and was preserved in a volume compiled by Robert Whitehall alongside his own refutation of More's tract, *The Woman's Right Proved False*, which is included as the third edited text in Teague and Ezell's book.

The general introduction clearly lays out the history of women's education in theory and practice. The editors argue for the importance of their chosen writers as articulating views that anticipate Enlightenment thinking. They outline classical and medieval views that women were inferior to men on physical, intellectual, and moral levels, views that continued to be expressed in the works of male humanists. And they explain the ways in which past scholarship underestimated women's literacy rates—pointing out that more women could read than could write, that Protestants promoted Bible reading, and that manuscript writing was widespread. The introduction also explains the mechanics of schooling (from private tutors for the elite to the growth