

Fiammetta; Paradise. Ugolino Verino.

Ed. Allan M. Wilson. The I Tatti Renaissance Library 69. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015. xxiv + 472 pp. \$29.95.

In 1997, I received a copy of the *Fiammetta*—accompanied by Allan M. Wilson's translation—together with the request to promote an edition of the text. I then felt unable to do anything and left the request unanswered. Only a few years later, I myself

failed to devote any attention to my (German) translations of poems by Beccadelli, Pontano, and Marullo, and was forced to let a minor editor print them. At the end of the twentieth century, the forecast was cloudy for Renaissance poetry in Latin.

The clouds were lifted by the I Tatti Library in 2002 when it published elementary texts such as Bruni's *History of Florence* and Biondis's *Illustration of Italy*. It has quickly expanded to include famous poetry (the previously mentioned Beccadelli and the Florentine Cristoforo Landino) and poetical representation of famous events (the Battle of Lepanto). Now, with Ugolino Verino, it begins to uncover poets who were well-known only for a certain period but played no leading role in the poetical development of Latin literature. They may be called minor poets from an academic standpoint, but to the contrary, they form the authentic testimony of the Quattrocento, loaning a vivid, written voice to the pictures of painting and architecture.

Verino's *Fiammetta* is a collection of love poetry and epigrams from the mid-fifteenth century in two books; his *Paradisus* was written shortly after and deals with the author's vision of a Neoplatonic paradise and limbo. Together they provide the reader with the poetical production of Verinus's youth. The 2016 edition of Verino is a revised version of the first (finished in 1997) that was only distributed in six original copies to major libraries. It consists of a brief but substantial introduction with editorial explanations; the text, in a standardized orthography; a translation; three appendixes; and annotations. It ends with a bibliography and indexes.

Wilson's introduction refers to the author's life and his love poetry: the development of the love story, the construction of lover and beloved, and the relationship to his forerunner (Landino) and competitors (Braccesi, della Fonte, and Sassetti). He is less interested in the development of the Latin Renaissance love elegy and its reciprocals with contemporary Petrarchisms (see Thurn, "Neo-Latin and the Vernacular," in *Brill's Encyclopaedia of the Neo-Latin World*, ed. Philip Ford, Jan Bloemendal, and Charles Fantazzi [2014]: 287–99). As a general introduction the reader is adequately informed. A specialist, however, will miss some bibliographical references: the original work was finished in 1998, and later literature is, if cited, rarely used, and much has since been written about Verino that is not listed.

The text of the *Fiammetta* presents the Mencaraglia edition (1940), emended with later reviewers' observations (Dionisotti, Munari, Perosa). In the appendix, the reader is also informed about marginal notes and variations of the manuscripts. Therefore, the Latin version is undeniably better than the former edition. Presenting the text in an orthographically standardized form, however, is especially problematic with an author like Verino: his deviations seem to be intentional and, to clarify this, some additional annotations in the "Note on the Texts" would have been welcome. One decision is particularly questionable: the title of the love poems, as well as the name of the beloved, is "Flametta" in Verino's orthography; here it is changed to the more-common "Flammetta" (it. "Fiammetta"). While it is justifiable that the very personal orthography of Ugolino Verino is substituted for a normalized form (his first scribe,

Pietro Crinito, was, in fact, the first to change his orthography), the same is not true for the title itself.

The translation is generally correct, readable, and clear; sometimes it tends to simplify (“pharetrata Diana” is translated as “quivered Diana” [2.7.3]) or is excessively pedantic in the meaning of words (“caballino lacu” is translated as “the nag’s pool” [2.42.60]), but I have not noticed any transgression or misunderstanding. The commentary is helpful for prosody, identification of persons, and historical remarks. Concerning imitation, it not only deals with the classics, but also serves a wider field of Neo-Latin authors. Contemporary literature written in Italian, however, is nearly absent.

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