

Giuliano Bellorini. *Il magnifico Signor Cavallier Luigi Cassola Piacentino: Edizione critica dei madrigali; Censimento e indice dei capoversi di tutte le rime*. Biblioteca dell'“Archivum Romanicum” Serie I: Storia, Letteratura, Paleografia 401. Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2012. xvi + 220 pp. €26. ISBN: 978-88-222-6177-9.

The poet Luigi Cassola (1473/4?–1553) was born in Piacenza, Northern Italy. Friend of Pietro Aretino and Antonfrancesco Doni, he is also representative of Petrarchist poetry and the author of a *Canzoniere*, which remained only in manuscript, and of another volume published under the title *Madrigali del magnifico Signor cavallier Luigi Cassola Piacentino* (1544, second edition 1545). The literary madrigal was at the time a minor genre, making the contributions of Cassola innovative and conventional: conventional, because the sonnet and the canzone were still the most noble forms of poetry, after the example of Petrarch and Bembo; and innovative, for Cassola was the first to publish a collection exclusively made up of madrigals (short verses of six to fourteen lines with or without a defined metric scheme). Giuliano Bellorini already edited Cassola's *Canzoniere* in 2002, making this edition of the *Madrigali* a useful complement to it: the index at the end of the volume establishes a complete list of all Cassola's known verses (from both collections, plus a few verses published in anthologies) and another index gives the names of most of the musicians who chose madrigals in their own musical collections.

The 1540s were the period of the development of the musical madrigal, with Cassola becoming one of the most successful poets for music, just after Petrarch and Sannazaro, and later passing to sixth position in the time of Tasso, Guarini, and Marino, yet generating interest until as late as the 1650s. The book ends with a very interesting testimony by Antonfrancesco Doni on musicians, in which he criticizes their lack of respect for poetry. Of Cassola's poetry, few things have been written, except two excellent essays: the first by Claudio Vela in 1984 (“Luigi Cassola e il madrigale cinquecentesco,” in *Tre studi sulla poesia per musica*: 29–65) and the second by Giuliano Bellorini himself (“Luigi Cassola madrigalista,” *Aevum: rassegna di scienze storiche, linguistiche e filologiche* 69 [1995]: 593–615). Bellorini's edition is therefore most warmly welcomed not just by scholars in literature, but also by musicologists. In addition to the different variants between both original editions, each verse has an adequate comment that helps the sometimes difficult understanding of these short and epigrammatic verses. The introduction, however, is dense and not always easy to read. The above mentioned article by Giuliano Bellorini, on the other hand, is clearer in addressing all critical aspects of the edition, and also very useful in its appreciation of the specificities of Cassola's poetry and his contribution to the genre.

The alphabetical index of all verses helps to locate the verses in the different original editions or manuscript, including the reference to the *Nuovo Vogel*, the well-known bibliography of polyphonic repertory from 1500 to 1700 (1977). Nevertheless, there is no page indication to help find them within the volume itself, which would have been very useful for the reader. As the author states, the *Nuovo Vogel* is incomplete, but he could have used the online *Repertorio della Poesia*

*Italiana in Musica, 1500–1700* (<http://repim.muspe.unibo.it>), still in progress, to identify other musical settings. The madrigal *Come avrà vita, Amor*, to take just one example among others, was set to music by fourteen musicians between 1546 and 1606, and yet there is no mention of any of them in the index. Given the important role of Cassola in the musical field, it would have been helpful to contribute a more systematic list. Nevertheless, with thanks to Giuliano Bellorini and despite some small mistakes (such as confusing Torquato Tasso — born in 1544 — and his father Bernardo), Luigi Cassola will henceforth be more than just a name in the history of Italian literature and music: his texts, now available in a very accurate edition, will contribute to research in the literary as well as the musical field.

CHRISTOPHE GEORIS

Université Catholique de Louvain