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**Published on** H-Italy (May, 2015)

**Commissioned by** Brian J. Maxson (East Tennessee State University)

From the beginning, the practitioners of the *studia humanitatis*—the Renaissance educational, literary, and cultural recovery of classical Latin and Greek—struggled to find a balance between their own expansive artistic and scholarly pursuits and the narrower need to fulfill the desires of their wealthy patrons. Moments of this tension abound. One thinks immediately of Vasari's (certainly apocryphal) story of Michelangelo blowing a puff of marble dust off the nose of his David to fool the masterpiece's chief benefactor, Piero Soderini. Soderini thought the statue's nose was too large; Michelangelo, of course, knew better. Modern scholars of humanistic studies often find in their premodern forebears kindred spirits. So often we are caught between our desire for close readings of long-lost texts and the practical needs of publishers and provosts.

The thirteen essays in *Neo-Latin and the Humanities*, a volume produced from a colloquium at East Carolina University in celebration of the career of Charles Fantazzi, explore this theme and many others by examining Fantazzi's chief academic passion: Neo-Latin learning, literature, and translation. The collection is divided into an opening introduction and orientation, four sections of essays, and a concluding epilogue. Within the volume, readers will find essays exploring such themes in Neo-Latin scholarship as the contrasts between the return of Latin literature in twelfth-century Francia and the explosion of Latinity in the culture of early Renaissance Florence; the reception of the works of Juan Luis Vives (1493-1540) and Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536), two of Fantazzi's favorite subjects; and the expansion of Neo-Latin learning and criticism in Spain, the Low Countries, Paris, and the New World. The net effect of the volume's mixture of historiographical essays, original research, and close textual analysis is a significant addition to the scholarship on Neo-Latin in the premodern world.

Throughout the collected essays, the enduring tension between practitioner and patron looms large. Such tension was not particularly new to
Quattrocento Italy, as an essay by Ronald Witt makes clear. Witt reminds us that while the French experienced an earlier revival of Latin poetry, theological treatises, biblical commentaries, and many other literary outlets in the 1100s, Latin's recovery in twelfth-century Italy was largely restricted to Roman law. Yet a lack of reliable patronage, Witt claims, did not stifle Latin's revival south of the Alps. Rather, through a close reading of the “rolls of the dead,” collections of commemorative verses that bounced from monastery to monastery, he shows that while the French built a reliable “network of readership” (p. 55), Italian monks remained parochial, even contentious. Scholarly networks, it would seem, mattered more than any individual's charity.

Two chapters, one by Timothy Kirsher and another by Jeanine De Landtsheer and Marcus De Schepper, further describe how patronage and political ambition often shaped networks of Neo-Latin philologists and poets in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Through a case study of a contest over Greek and Tuscan translations of Latin Homeric texts by Leonardo Bruni, Lorenzo Valla, and Leon Battista Alberti, Kirsher unpacks how philological accuracy often suffered in the name of political competition. In spite of Bruni’s claims to “capture with grace” Homer's original meaning or Valla's awareness of the cultural differences between Latin and Greek, Quattrocento humanists cared more about flashing rhetorical flourish to bedazzle potential patrons than faithfully translating the original meaning of ancient texts. Affection among Neo-Latin scholars replaces competition in Landtsheer and Schepper’s contribution: the first critical edition of a sixteenth-century Berlin manuscript celebrating the humanist Juan Luis Vives’s career following his death in 1540. One of the joys of the volume, the collection of fifteen epitaphs collected from a circle of Vives's humanist friends display the intersections of Christian and pagan devotional language.

Other contributions to the volume examine how Neo-Latin texts were taught, criticized, and circulated first around Europe and then the globe. Paul F. Grendler examines the shifting reception of Vives among the Jesuit order. Vives presented a difficult problem for Ignatius Loyola and his forebears in the Society of Jesus: while Vives's polemical views on scholastic theology and religious hypocrisy went against the Jesuits' dedication to scholasticism, his Latin grammar, the *Colloquia*, directly contributed to the group’s educational program. James K. Farge's essay expands on the contest between humanistic and scholastic scholarship at the universities of Alcalà, Louvain, and Paris. Again, the search for patrons shaped the development of humanistic curricula at these universities, with Neo-Latin scholars like Guillaume Budé attempting (and often failing) to free themselves from scholastic traditionalism by appealing directly to royal patrons.

Yet in spite of such institutional restrictions, the power and popularity of Neo-Latin endured and grew in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, a trend shown clearly in a pair of essays by Luc Deitz and Dustin Mengelkoch that explore, respectively, close readings of Aristotle’s *Poetics* and Statius's *Thebaid*. The success of the Neo-Latin project in Europe’s intellectual center also helped circulate its ideas outward, to the early modern colonial periphery. Enrique González González and Keith Sidwell examine the expansion of Neo-Latin scholarship into a colonial setting in their respective essays on the lives of Francisco Cer- vantes de Salazar, a humanist and librarian in New Spain, and Thomas Butler, the 10th Earl of Ormond. Once again, patronage shaped both men, with the former relying on the aid of Emperor Charles V to collect an extensive library in New Spain while the latter oversaw a trilingual Irish court where Gaelic, English, and Latin poets drew on each other’s vitality.

Reading this volume with an eye on the role of networks and patrons seems appropriate. To-
day, scholarship on Neo-Latin literature often appears on the wane as the cultural and now global turn in historiography outcompetes philologists for funding. Yet two historiographic essays in the volume remind us to be bullish about the state of Neo-Latin in the academy. The first, by James Hankins, takes stock of the current state of institutional support for Neo-Latin. Having weathered the recent economic crisis, the resources for Neo-Latin studies remain strong, with more active editorial series, chaired positions, and specialized journals dedicated to philology and humanistic inquiry today than ever before. But, as was the case with their premodern forebears, the power of Neo-Latin scholars in twenty-first-century North America and Europe only partially rests on their patrons’ largesse. Another strong mark of the continued health of Neo-Latin studies can be found in the wide network of scholars themselves, a topic explored in the second historiographic essay by James M. Estes on the Collected Works of Erasmus (CWE) series. This project, in which Fantazzi was integral, not only produced numerous notable translations of Erasmus but also attests to the continued strength of a network of Neo-Latin philologists, annotators, editors, translators, and historians across two continents. Combined with this volume, one cannot help but see a bright future for Neo-Latin studies in the twenty-first century.

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