



**Patterns of Patronage in Renaissance Rome:  
Francesco Sperulo: Poet, Prelate, Soldier, Spy.  
Volume I (Court Cultures of the Middle Ages and  
Renaissance)**

*Paul Gwynne*

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*Patterns of Patronage in Renaissance Rome* is the first full-length study of the life and works of Francesco Sperulo of Camerino (1463-1531). In a remarkable career during which the poet progressed from serving as a soldier of fortune in the service of Cesare Borgia to an Italian bishopric, Sperulo produced a significant body of Latin poetry, here presented in a critical edition for the first time. An impressive array of contemporary figures including Leonardo da Vinci, Isabella d'Este, Raphael and Baldassare Castiglione appear in his verse. By placing his work within the larger historical, literary, political and social context, this study, published in two volumes, sheds light on the role played by neo-Latin poetry at the papal court and documents the impact of classical culture in Rome during the period usually referred to as «the High Renaissance».

Volume I reconstructs Sperulo's life and circle of contacts by placing the poet's works in chronological order and setting them within the political and social circumstances of their composition. Archival documents scattered across Italy, penitentiary records from the Vatican Archives and a voluminous correspondence with the Duke of Urbino and members of the Varano family of Camerino show that Sperulo was intimately involved in papal politics and intrigue; indeed, he was almost assassinated for his involvement. A selection of this correspondence is included here to supplement the poet's biography.

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