

**FRANCESCA DA RIMINI, HER  
LAMENT, AND  
VINDICATION; WITH A BRIEF  
NOTICE OF THE MALATESTI**

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Francesca da Rimini, her lament, and vindication; with a brief notice of the Malatesti by Henry Clark Barlow

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**HENRY CLARK BARLOW**

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*Presented by the author*

# FRANCESCA DA RIMINI,

HER LAMENT, AND VINDICATION;

WITH

A BRIEF NOTICE OF THE MALATESTI,

*Di Mastin vecchio, e'l nuovo da Verrocchio.*

BY

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ACCADEMICO CORRESPONDENTE DE' QUERITI DI ROMA.

ETC. ETC.

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MDCCCLIX.

~~200. W. 22.~~  
210. c. 391.

## FRANCESCA DA RIMINI.

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"Amor, ch'al cor gentil ratto s'apprende,  
Prese costui della bella persona,  
Che mi fu tolta, e il MONDO ancor m'offende."

INFERNO, CANTO V. v. 100-102.

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In that memorable year of revolutions, when Italy, electrified with new life, resolved to assert her independence and to vindicate her ancient renown, when the Sovereign Pontiff, seemingly disposed to lead the way, and to inaugurate a new era of Italian unity, heard himself saluted as the *VELTRO* of Dante, there was, in the venerable city of the Exarchs, an enterprising Letterato preparing a new edition of the *Divina Commedia*, with the prepossessing title—" *Edizione Ravennana, fatta per uso degl' Italiani rigenerati da Pio Nono.*"

This gentleman was the Abbate Mauro Ferranti, who, moved by the patriotic motive that the resting place of Dante's remains might send forth to the world a text of his immortal poem more perfect than any which had preceded it, resolved to introduce into this edition, prepared expressly for the use of his regenerated countrymen, certain new readings from the two Codici of the Divina Commedia preserved in the Biblioteca Classense.

One of these Codici, in that surpassing episode of the loves and deaths of Francesca da Rimini and Paolo Malatesta da Verruchio, instead of the ordinary reading of the 102nd verse—

“ Che mi fu tolta, e il modo ancor m'offende ; ”

has

“ Che mi fu tolta, e il *mondo* ancor m'offende ; ”

and the other Codice, which is somewhat the elder of the two, and of the second half of the fourteenth century, has the same reading as a variante, in the margin.

This supposed discovery, for such it was deemed, was hailed with applause ; and from the correspondence which took place on the subject, between the Signor Abbate and certain distinguished letterati, it appeared that the reading *mondo* was as new to them as it was to him.

Gio. Battista Niccolini remarked that although he approved of it, yet he doubted if the reading of the *volgata* could be changed on the authority

of two codici only. To Giovanni Marchetti it was also quite new, and he stated in reply to the letter of the Abbate, that the more he considered it the better he liked it. Carlo Troya also greatly approved of it, and said—"Confesso che l'antica lezione del '*modo* ancor m'offende,' m'era paruta sempre, Dio mel perdoni, una riempitura di verso, tutto che a difenderla, m'andassi dicendo che Francesca si dolesse d'essere stata uccisa in istato di peccato, e senza confessione." "Piace," he added, "ad altri ancora, che ho interrogato, e che si sentono molto avanti nello studio di Dante."

In a villeggiatura from Florence, that year, I visited Ravenna, the Mecca of all Dantofili, to pay my homage at the Prophet's tomb, and on this occasion had the satisfaction of making the acquaintance of the learned Abbate, of seeing his book in the press, and looking at the Codici in the public library from which the new reading had been taken. Since then, however, I have found that the reading,

"Che mi fu tolta, e il *mondo* ancor m'offende ;"

is by no means rare, but, on the contrary, is very frequently met with.

Of forty-two Codici examined by me in the library of the Vatican, and other Roman libraries, *fourteen* were found with *mondo*, that is, half the number of those which had *modo*.

Among the former, in the Vatican library, were the Codici Nos. 365, 367, 2864, 4776, 7566 and 2863. In



the Corsini library, the Codici Nos. 56, 60 and 1354. In the Barberini library, the Codici Nos. 2190, and 1526. In the Chegiana, the Codice No. 109. In the Angelica, the Codice No. 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ; and in the Minerva, the Codice d. iv. d. In this last, and in the Vatican Codice 2863, the reading was

“Che mi fu tolta *al mondo* che m'offende.”

In the Corsini Codice, No. 1354, the verse was written,

“Che mi fu tolta *al mondo* c'or m'offende.”

*Mondo* instead of *modo* occurs in other Codici which I have seen, as in that in the public library at Dresden, in which, however, the *n* has been crossed out; also in certain Codici at Paris, and in London. The Codice Gradonico, in the Gambalunghiana, at Rimini, has also the reading, “e il *mondo* ancor m'offende.”

As regards Codici, therefore, there is abundant authority for the reading *mondo*; and probably, in many instances, where we find *modo*, this latter is to be attributed to the haste or negligence of transcribers, who have omitted to put the hyphen over the *o* to indicate the absence of the *n*, this little mark being generally the sole orthographical difference between the two words. A remarkable instance of this omission occurs in the famous Codice di Santa Croce, at Florence, Inferno, Canto III, v. 49, where we have *modo* for *mondo*—“*Fama di loro il modo*

*esser non lassor.*" In the 75 v. of the IV Canto of the Inferno, we almost invariably find *modo* for *mondo*, which latter the context shows to be the required reading, as the poet is referring to a particular locality where the poets and philosophers of antiquity are placed apart from the "mal mondo" of the common herd, who occupy the "selva di spiriti spessi."—and as we find in the Codice Urbinato, No. 365, in the Vatican library—

"Che dal mondo degli altri gli diparte."

That the omission of the hyphen was the origin of the reading *modo* in the episode of Francesca da Rimini derives support also from the fact, that although none of the early printed editions have the reading *mondo* in the text, yet the earliest two with commentaries, the VENDELINIANA and the NIDOBATINA, have *mondo* in the explanation of the text, and this explanation is very like that in the commentary of the Codice Gradonico with which the text agrees. The commentator here explains—  
 "Onde quello suo compagno abiando come è decto il core gentile si se inamoro di lei et de la persona di lei. La quale persona suso al mondo gli fu tolta, zioè che a male morte de gladio morio, apresso dice chel mondo ancora la offende. Altro qui non vole dire se no de la nominanza et fama, et che di tale cosa ancora el mondo mal ne ragiona."

The corresponding passages in the Vendeliniana and in the Nidobatina, are as follows :

## VENDELINIANA.

"Siche quel suo cōpagno  
avèdo il cuore gètile sinamoro  
della persona di lei, la quale  
persona li fu tolta al mōdo,  
cioè che morì di gladio. Et  
dice che ancora il mondo gli  
offende cioè la nominanza et  
fama."

## NIDOBEATINA.

"Ora dice la conditione del  
suo cōpagno, cavea lo core gen-  
tile e che in li cori gentili sa-  
prende facilmente amore, e pero  
se iāmorò di lei, che li fu tolta,  
zoè che fu morta di gladio, e  
ancora li offende al mondo per  
la fama e nominanza."

The commentary in the Vendeliniana, once attributed to Benvenuto da Imola, and now ascribed to Jacopo della Lana, Bolognese, as it is, next to that by Jacopo di Dante, the oldest extant, and of far more importance, is of the highest authority for the reading *mondo*.

In the British Museum Codice, No. 10,317, although the text has *modo*, the postilla is upon *mondo*, and the explanation is "fama hujus facti."

In the Vatican Codice, No. 367, we have a fuller explanation of this—"fama mea offendit me, quia dicor mortua fuisse per adulterium, et causa mei mortuum fuisse Paulum," and with this the text, as it should do, corresponds,

"Che mi fu tolta, e il mondo ancor m'offende."