

ABSTRACTS

ANDREW LAIRD *Virgil: Reception and the Myth of Biography*

Ideas of Virgil's 'reception' and of his mythical 'biography' can both be illuminated by an exploration of Virgil's role as a constructed character in his own poetry. The consensus between some earlier Roman responses to Virgil and the traditions of commentary on the poet from later in antiquity informs the following discussion of the poet's individual presence in the performance and reception of his work. Earlier sources, which show an interest in the development of Virgil's work over time, often convey a strong sense of the poet's character.

Later material, mostly in the form of commentary, presents Virgil as an instructor - of poetic technique, rhetoric, and philosophy, who composes to be heard as well as read. The role ascribed to the poet by all of his ancient readers amounts to a dramatic role. It will be argued that the Eclogues, Georgics and Aeneid are not only representations of pastoral, heroic, and historical worlds: through their reception they constitute a representation of the poet's character, as an autographic imprint of Virgil himself.

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DAVID PANIAGUA *'Soccorri me, che solo non so ire'. Solino in aiuto di Fazio degli Uberti*

Julius Solinus' *Collectanea rerum memorabilium* was held in a really high esteem during all the Middle Ages, higher than almost any other Classical Latin prose work. A good example of Solinus' *auctoritas* may be found in Fazio degli Uberti's *Dittamondo*, an allegorical poem written in imitation of Dante's *Divina Commedia*. Fazio degli Uberti chooses Solinus as the incarnation of Roman knowledge and his role in the poem runs parallel to the role played by Vergil in Dante's *Commedia*. This paper offers a description of Solinus' role in Fazio's *Dittamondo* and emphasizes the significance of Solinus as a counterpart of Dante's Vergil.

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JOHANNA HANINK *National poets and 'uiri illustri', from fourth-century Athens to quattrocento Florence*

In this paper I explore a striking parallel in the early biographical traditions for two very different poets, Euripides and Dante. In life both of these poets had difficult relationships with their native cities: while Dante was exiled from Florence, Euripides is said to have sought a kind of 'self-exile' in Macedon because of his mistreatment in Athens. Nevertheless, in early biographical material for Euripides and Dante alike it is possible to identify a certain rhetorical strain which sought to reclaim the poet for his native city by casting him in civic terms as an ideal citizen. While there seems to be no direct relationship between the two traditions, fourth-century Athens and quattrocento Florence do hold in common an interest in cycles of 'viri illustres', and in both cases this interest in great men of the past seems to guide the application of pointedly civic rhetoric to lives of the poets.

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GIANFRANCO AGOSTI *Paradigmi biografici e poetici nella tarda antichità*

The *Suda* lexicon informs that Marinus composed the biography of his master, the philosopher Proclus, in a double version, prosastic (the only one conserved) and in verses. Instead of consider the poetic version as a mere example of rhetorical exercise, it should view it as a serious attempt: one can reconstruct a tradition of hagiographic verse encomia in the neoplatonic school, starting from the long hexametric oracle in Porphyry's *Life of Plotinus* (ch. 22), which had a decisive role in such a tradition. Especially from the end of the fourth century CE Neoplatonists composed encomiastic poems in honour of the leading figures of their school, treated as *theioi andres* (divine men) in order to create an encomiastic-biographic poetry (*enkômion* and biography tend to mingle in Late Antiquity), which could be alternative not only to the biblical paraphrases, but also to the verse hagiographies composed by Christians (a genere which begins with the so-called *Codex of Visions*, P. Bodmer 20-37, in the middle of the fourth century CE). Neoplatonic poetry should actually be viewed against the wider context of the cultural debate on religious classicizing poetry of the fourth and fifth centuries CE. The core of such a debate was the Homeric poetry, considered a sacred text by Pagans as well as by Christian intellectuals. For Neoplatonists Homeric poems were the Scriptures, to put together with the oracular poetry of *Chaldaic Oracles* and Plato's dialogues, whereas Christians tried to show that epic language was perfectly suitable to sing biografies of Christ and of saints, thanks to figural reading and allegorical interpretation of Homeric expressions, syntagms and verses (as in the *Paraphrase of St John's Gospel* by Nonnus, or in the *Hoeric Centos* by empress Eudocia).

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SONJA WEISS *La figura di Pitagora nelle dottrine morali neoplatoniche*

The article presents different aspects of the figure of Pythagoras in the biographies from the 3rd century, trying to understand the development of the image of this mysterious and charismatic character: the renown of a man of great knowledge gave way, when Pythagoras was still living, to the fame of a sage, magician and god incarnated. In the centuries that followed, this figure, influenced heavily by the Platonic doctrines, reappears as the prototype of philosopher and teacher of virtue and of the ideal way of life. In the period of the rising Christianity, the figure of Pythagoras was offering an alternative salvation, attainable through the cathartic power of the Philosophy.

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LORETO NUNEZ *Personae romanesque. Voix enchâssées comme miroir de l'auteur-narrateur*

Two specificities distinguish *Leucippe and Clitophon* from the other sentimental Greek novels: the narrative is effectuated by the hero himself and includes numerous excursuses by the narrator and by other figures. Focusing on the narrative digressions by characters, this contribution proposes a panoramic view of them according to the order in which they appear in the novel. Thus, various progressive movements are individualized: on the one hand, the digressions characterize, and even favour Clitophon's 'I' qua character; on the other, it is rather his 'I' of narrator which is given a higher profile; yet, the latter is finally subordinated to the enhancement of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, a work by another 'I', Achilles Tatius.

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MARCO FUCECCHI *Biografia (e storia) antica in feuilleton. 'Memoires d'Horace' di Alexandre Dumas*

Edited as a *roman-feuilleton* in 1860, *Mémoires d'Horace* has been collected as a volume for the first time in 2006 by Claude Aziza. It is the last member of a series consisting of novels, essays and theatrical pieces, which Alexandre Dumas devoted to the ancient Roman history. This time, however, the great '*vulgarisateur*', as the French author often named himself, significantly chooses the genre of the so-called 'fictional autobiography'. By assuming the authoritative mask of the famous Augustan poet, who is given the role of an internal protagonist-narrator, Dumas manages to enrich his picture of Roman civil wars, and the final fight for power leading to Augustus's victory, with stimulating thoughts about relevant issues (literature and its social function, the author's relationship with the public of readers, the political establishment etc.) as well as with the tender evocation of private memories (the beloved figure of his father, in particular). The synthesis of history and biography results from the confluence of precedent novels by Dumas himself (e.g. *César*, another *feuilleton* of the series *Les grands Hommes en robe de chambre*, published in 1855 in *Le Mousquetaire*) with modern recollections of Horace's life, e.g. that of Charles-Athanase (Baron) de Walckenaer (firstly edited in 1840), whose monumental erudite bulk seems to be literally animated by the brilliant and colourful style of the great storyteller Alexandre Dumas.

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ENRICO MARIA ARIEMMA *Il disincanto del dottor Reis. Un eteronimo eccellente tra Orazio, Pessoa, Saramago*

Ricardo Reis is one of the most important of Fernando Pessoa's heteronyms. He embodies a special kind of wisdom, based on passivity and acceptance of the destiny. His style is highly refined and disciplined, revealing his classical education of cultured man who read Greek and Latin authors. In particular, Horace's *Odes* seem to be his major model; this paper aims to recognize, in a close intertextual analysis, how some themes and topics of high relevance (e. g. *carpe diem*) has been received and transformed by the latter poet. The female 'speaking' name of Lidia is another obvious point of interference of the two writers, and provides a starting point for a brief additional analysis involving José Saramago's novel *O ano da morte de Ricardo Reis*, published in 1984. Saramago seeks successfully to generate a striking contradiction between the heteronymic creation and its recreation in the novel. The 'new' Ricardo Reis is now placed inside the real world that surrounds him, and involved in a love relationship with the hotel maid Lidia, a woman which experiments a 'special' form of *carpe diem*.

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