



Vides d'escriptors a l'Edat Moderna: retòrica, història i poètica

I. MODELS CLÀSSICS I MODERNS

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Un bel morir tutta la vita onora... *o or not: ways of dying by Ancient Greece intellectuals*

The scenes of the last moments of life, often accompanied by juicy anecdotes and memorable phrases, are not usually lacking in the biographies of ancient Greece intellectuals – if I may be allowed the anachronism. In fact, accounts of deaths have often been a criterion for whether or not a work can fit into the biographical genre, conceived, in its wider meaning, as a story of someone's life from birth to death. However, the ways these intellectuals die present a very simple variety, with fairly well-defined features, which are plausibly based on the rhetoric exercises at school, and which are also openly symbolic: What determines the form of death and its social value, for better or for worse, is the life that the intellectual has led, the literary genre he has mainly cultivated and the kind of doctrines he has professed. We can say, therefore, that this type of story, as usually happens in ancient biographies, does not allow to determine the historicity of what is explained, but it is very useful to define the image that a specific society, in a certain historical moment, has of a cultural agent – poet or philosopher – and of the literary genre or the philosophical school that they typologically represent.