



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

II. USOS RETÒRICS I FUNCIONS LITERÀRIES

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Writers suffering from 'stomach ache': on some 16th century biographies

This paper dwells on some specific 16th century biographies of men of letters, starting with a certainly marginal datum. From the life of Ariosto elaborated by Pigna (1556) to the life of Sannazaro elaborated by Crispo (1593), it is possible to identify a consistent number of biographies (see, among others, the profiles of Cicero and Boccaccio outlined by Dolce or - again - the work on Bembo written by Della Casa), in which the author highlights a particular malady of the writers, namely the 'stomach ache'. It is a marginal fact that allows, however, a broader reflection on the relationship between history and verisimilitude. This 'bad disposition', in fact, is often considered as an infirmity typical of any writer: noting its frequency within many different lives allows us to emphasise the high degree of literariness of the biographical form, in the 16th century and otherwise. If the same illness is indiscriminately associated with a considerable number of writers, it means that it falls within a dimension of verisimilitude rather than historical truth. In this sense, starting from this all too common 'stomach ache', we will address some of the main nodes in 16th century life writing.