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**power". Literature and Society in the Fourth Century A.D.: Ghent-Brussels, 23-24 September 2010.** – Whilst attention for late antique literature is growing, much of current scholarship remains focused on exploring strictly literary issues, i.e. what a text means and what tropes it uses, at best in relationship with earlier, classical literature. Drawing inspiration from recent work on the Second Sophistic, the workshop “*A magic stronger than the governors’ power. Literature and Society in the Fourth Century A.D.*” organised in Ghent and Brussels (23-24 September 2010) by Peter Van Nuffelen (Ghent) and Lieve Van Hoof (Leuven), wished to draw attention to an aspect that is often neglected in the study of literature of Late Antiquity: the social role of literature, and in particular its role as an instrument of social promotion. The major question it intended to ask is the extent to which literature could still be the instrument and expression of social promotion it had been in previous centuries. The workshop thus proposed to test the hypothesis that there is more continuity between the second and the fourth century than traditional views about a retreat of rhetoric into the schools and a slow fossilization of literature and traditional culture from the fourth century onwards suggest. – The workshop opened with two papers dedicated to the Gregories. N. McLYNN (Oxford) explored the remarkable relationship between Gregory of Nazianzus and the governor Olympius, his second most important correspondent after Basil the Great. McLynn argued that Gregory owed his position to the support of the governor, when faced with opposition of both the local priests and the provincial synod. Gregory’s letters flaunt that relationship while at the same time obscuring the exact run of events. – M. LUDLOW (Exeter) showed how Gregory of Nyssa construed a relationship of pupil and master through text: whilst he is a teacher at distance, his writings have the aim of creating a real presence and are propounded as examples to imitate. At the same time, his orations claim the heritage of distinguished teachers such as Basil for himself by positioning himself as their natural successor. – After these papers, S. MRATSCHEK (Rostock) discussed the strategies at play in Letter 49 of Paulinus of Nola, a petition to the vicar of Rome in order to obtain rehabilitation for a friend and ship owner. Paulinus revolutionises the traditional petition by weaving into it a narrative of miracles which turned the unlucky ship owner into a living relic. The combination of striking descrip-

and were often sought out to be recruited for imperial service. The relationship was not, however, always very warm, both sides distrusting each other. – In the afternoon session, B. SALWAY (Univ. College London) presented two epigraphically preserved petitions, found in Hispellum (AD 333/335; *CIL* XI 5265) and Orcistus (AD 324/326; *MAMA* VII 305 = *CIL* III 352 + 7000). He showed that both cities convinced the emperor of the legitimacy of their claim to civic autonomy in a demonstrably disingenuous if straightforward fashion, and then commemorated the imperial response in language of a much more elevated register. In both cases, the imperial government was taken in by the rhetoric deployed against it by its subjects or, at least, colluded with them in a game of charades. – G. KELLY (Edinburgh) surveyed the dedications to emperors in fourth-century literature and in particular historiography, where this practice was most common. He argued that the emperor Valens first made a request for a history of the Roman Empire and that this was taken up by two courtiers, Eutropius and Festus. In Festus’ preface, the first lines should be restored as *de breviario rerum gestarum populi romani brevem fieri clementia tua praecepit*, which can be taken to imply that Festus is offering a reworked version of the so-called Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte. – M. GERTH (Göttingen) argued that, contrary to what may appear at first sight, encyclopaedic writings do interact with society, and can be understood as a genre in its own right that seeks to instruct the audience. – On the second day, M. VESSEY (Vancouver) explored the position of late Antiquity in recent attempts to write a history of Roman literature. Volume 5 of the *Handbuch der lateinischen Literatur* was put under the sign of change and discontinuity with the preceding ages (*Restauration und Erneuerung: die lateinische Literatur von 284 bis 374 n. Chr.*), suggesting that from late Antiquity onwards ‘Latin literature’ came to be identified with a cultural identity. Parallel to that, Christians invented the idea of a Christian literature (in particular Jerome), shaping our modern concept of literature as a distinct practice. – R. REES (St. Andrews) asked the question what the role of panegyric is in its textuality. Already Pliny had tried to create political *belles lettres* that would outlive the short actual performance of the text. A similar attempt is made by Pacatus, whose literary debts to earlier panegyrics but also to epic, are very pronounced. Indeed, the orator was sometimes called a poet. This was part of a literary strategy to

outperform contemporary orators and compete with the earlier literary tradition. – R. DIJKSTRA (Nijmegen) showed how the motif of the apostles could be used in building up a position of authority in fourth-century Christian literature. – The afternoon session opened with P.-L. MALOSSE (Montpellier), who showed how Libanius explicitly reflects on the power of oratory. The orator argues that a well-prepared speech raises the level of the debate, increases chances of success, and can force individuals to act on the advice expressed. Such theoretical views tend to be overtly optimistic, and in many cases it is clear that Libanius failed to achieve results. – C. COOMBE (Reading) argued that traditional readings of Claudian's panegyric underestimate the literary complexity at play. Claudian is creating not only a persona for Stilicho to exist as a literary character, but also an entire story-world in which that character can then function. Through public performance of his poetry this would be propagated as a 'real' depiction of Stilicho: panegyric thus substitutes myth for reality so that reality becomes more like myth. – Drawing on a selection of texts from Themistius, Constantius, Julian, and Libanius, L. VAN HOOF (Leuven) demonstrated that traditional views of an opposition between Julian supporting Greek culture and Constantius II rejecting it, are mistaken. Indeed, Constantius not only promoted cultural figures such as Themistius, but also divulged his own ideas on the relation between culture and politics. Julian, on the other hand, was not willing to honour just any cultural or philosophical claim: Greek *paideia* was an asset that needed to be creatively adapted to, and performed in, ever-varying social circumstances. Fourth-century utterances on the relationship between culture and power should thus be read as rhetorical strategies, having a particular aim at a specific moment. (Lieve VAN HOOF)

**Dicere laudes. Elogio, comunicazione, creazione del consenso: Cividale del Friuli, 23-25 settembre 2010.** – Il dodicesimo convegno internazionale della Fondazione Canussio, che ha potuto fregiarsi dell'adesione del Presidente della Repubblica, si è svolto come di consueto nella sede cividalese della Fondazione, il Castello Canussio, e si è incentrato sull'affascinante tema dell'elogio come forma di creazione del consenso nel mondo antico. È stata l'occasione di incontro per una ventina di specialisti provenienti da Italia, Francia, Germania, Regno Unito, Spagna, Stati Uniti e Svizzera, che per tre giorni hanno dibattuto dell'uso che delle forme letterarie è stato fatto, dalla Grecia di età arcaica al Tardoantico e oltre, per creare adesione al potere politico. – La giornata inaugurale di giovedì

23 settembre, dopo i tradizionali saluti delle autorità, si è aperta con la brillante relazione di Glenn W. MOST (Pisa) dal titolo *Power and its Perils in Archaic Greek Lyric Poetry*. Lo studioso è partito dalla constatazione che, se il tiranno è soprattutto disposto ad ascoltare dalla sua corte ciò che desidera ascoltare, pure questa esigenza poteva lasciare un certo spazio per la verità e per parole di franchezza, che in determinate circostanze potevano addirittura arrivare ad esprimere una qualche velata critica. Per i poeti e i letterati che avessero voluto esplorare queste aree di libertà il problema era quello di trovare un delicato e difficile compromesso tra toni di aperto servilismo e atteggiamenti di presuntuosa superiorità, che avrebbero potuto mettere a rischio le loro fortune. La sfida, per quanto potesse risultare pericolosa, evidentemente risultò affascinante, come Most ha avuto ampiamente modo di mostrare, partendo dai componimenti di Pindaro e Bacchilide in onore dei tiranni sicelioti, per giungere fino alla prosa di Erodoto e Senofonte. – Nino LURAGHI (Princeton), nella sua relazione intitolata *In Praise of Hieron, or the Masks of the Tyrant* ha continuato ad esplorare il medesimo orizzonte cronologico e concettuale, focalizzando tuttavia la sua attenzione sul problema fondamentale che poeti come Pindaro e Bacchilide dovevano affrontare nei loro componimenti in lode delle vittorie sportive dei tiranni sicelioti: gli uomini che essi dovevano celebrare non erano semplicemente dei ricchi ed influenti aristocratici, figura sociale prevalente tra i vincitori degli agoni, dunque i termini generalmente impiegati per costruire il discorso di lode non potevano essere adeguati a queste figure eccezionali. D'altra parte l'ideologia aristocratica dominante, che informa di sé anche il genere letterario in esame, non conosceva la monarchia come regime in sé positivo, mentre l'approdo alla tirannide era addirittura considerato una delle peggiori degenerazioni della dialettica politica. È quindi abilissimo (oltre che praticamente senza paragoni nel mondo greco) il modo in cui in cui Pindaro celebra Ierone I di Siracusa nel quadro di quella che potrebbe sembrare una semplice esaltazione delle sue vittorie sportive: il risultato viene raggiunto soprattutto richiamando, quasi in qualità di "maschere", numerose figure eminenti della storia e del mito, che indirettamente e per analogia concorrono a tratteggiare le qualità monarchiche di Ierone, evitando però di far riflettere il lettore sul modo, scandaloso nell'ideologia politica greca, attraverso il quale il Siracusano aveva conseguito il suo potere. – A un diverso genere letterario è stata dedicata la relazione di Carmine CATENACCI (Chieti) su *L'epica e l'encomio. Modelli mitici di età arcaica e l'epos storico ellenistico*. Lo studioso ha