

V col·loqui internacional del projecte *Mimesi*

## Auctor(*itas*) in fabula: Figuracions d'autor en la ficció



### AUTOLEGITIMACIÓ EN L'ESCRITURA I EN LA LECTURA

*Authors who read and readings that make authors in early modernity*

Cesc ESTEVE (Universitat de Barcelona)

**T**he paper will be focused on two Catalan literary works of the Renaissance in which the representation of good readers and proper readings is designed and used in order to prove that their authors are genuine literary authors: *Los col·loquis de la insigne ciutat de Tortosa* by Cristòfol Despuig (1557) and the epic poem *Lepant* by Joan Pujol (1573). In both cases, reading is important not only to show *what* the writers have read, but also, and mostly, to reveal *how* they have read what they have read. The strategic value of the representation of reading depends on its capacity to convince that both Despuig and Pujol know how to interpret and use certain kinds of texts and that this expertise allows them to cultivate properly certain types of literary genres, namely the dialogue and the epic poetry. Moreover, the representation of these reading abilities aims at showing that they have a significant role in the literary achievements of both *Los col·loquis* and the *Lepant* poem. In Despuig's dialogue, the paper will analyze the way the character named Lívio is shaped as a highly qualified reader of history books. This capacity enables him to act as a citizen with critical attitudes above all regarding contemporary politics and show how Lívio's abilities are based on values, commonplaces and methods developed by early modern historiographical theory. Lívio's interest and authority on political issues, built upon his historical knowledge, is also characteristic of many contemporary dialogues. Thus, the ultimate purpose of Lívio's

readings is to prove that the forms and functions of *Los col·loquis* are in line with the conventions of the genre and especially appropriate to deal with the issues Despuig wanted to address. In Pujol's work, the use of reading as an strategy to gain authority is less evident than in Despuig's dialogue, since it is implicit in the way that the writer represents himself in the preliminary texts of the poem. In the dedicatory letter, Pujol reveals that he has built his narrative after the reports of soldiers who had taken part in the battle of Lepanto. Apparently, then, he has proceeded as a chronicler, but in the first lines of the poem, before the story of the battle properly begins, Pujol represents himself asking for the Muses for inspiration and help. The Muses send him to the House of Fame, where the poet listens to the story of the battle. By representing himself echoing the narrative of Fame, Pujol suggests that he has re-read and rewrite his sources of information, the reports of the soldiers, adjusting them to the expectations and purposes that an epic poem must observe, namely, the glorification of the victory of Lepanto. Pujol's ability to read and rewrite historical events according to the needs of the genre he means to cultivate aims at proving his literary expertise and status. Despite using different resources, both Despuig and Pujol use reading to shape fictional self-images with the purpose of proving their literary knowledge, a knowledge that, at its turn, supports their claims on being true and excellent literary authors.