

Images of Domitius Apollinaris in Pliny and Martial: Intertextual Discourses as Aspects of Self-Definition and Differentiation

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I. Poet and epistolographer: intertextuality and self-representation (Abstract)

Pictures are ‘a direct shot into the brain’.¹ In discursive terms, their message is an interplay of intellect and sensory perception. Such is the case in a series of repeatedly shifting portraits of the prominent senator L. Domitius Apollinaris. Martial, a knight from the province of Hispania Tarraconensis, produced satirical snapshots of social networking with his patron Apollinaris. Pliny the Younger, a senator from northern Italy, was an ‘engaged observer’ of such relationships and the author of metadiscursive prose epistles *to* and *about* Apollinaris. In the interplay of intertextual discourse between these different genres, the character sketches of Apollinaris should be understood not as depictions of an empirical reality, but as reflections of the ways in which their authors identify themselves and the world around them. In his interactions with Martial’s poems and with Domitius Apollinaris as protagonist, using visions of the underworld as figures for the political atmosphere in Rome and competing to visualise the most beautiful *locus amoenus*, Pliny developed subtle performative strategies and ideas that allowed him to reinvent himself as *littérateur* and politician.

II. The focus of networks: Domitius Apollinaris, Martial and Pliny the Younger

1. Career and family

L. Domitius Apollinaris, governor of Lycia-Pamphylia (93-96)

A. Balland, *Fouilles de Xanthos* VII 103-117 = *AE* 1981, 826:

6 statue bases honour Apollinaris and his family:

The governor (□□□□□□), Valeria Vet(t)illa, his wife, Domitius Seneca, his son, Clodia Decmina, wife to Domitius Seneca, P. Valerius Patruinus, Apollinaris father-in-law, Neratiolus.

2. Home

[Domit]ia [Apolli]naris f. [Fa]dilla, his daughter (Pais 899 = Rhoda, Iscrizioni 20).

AS: Vercellae, G. Alföldy, *Gallia Cisalpina* 328, no. 6.

3. Honorary inscription

dedicated from the *Vercellenses* to C. Plinius Caecilius Secundus (CIL V 5667).

AS: Fegii, *pagus* Cantù, Ager Mediolanensis.

¹ Apophthegm of the Saarbrücken behaviourist and marketing guru Werner Kroeber-Riel, cited after the review of R. Gries: „Stefan Aust/Stefan Kiefer (ed.), *Die Kunst des SPIEGEL*, Kempfen 2004“, in *Humanities, Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte* 2006, <http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-Berlin.de/rezensionen/2006-1-2003>.

III. The politician (*negotium*)

Visions of the underworld: Apollinaris vs. Pliny and the senate of Rome

4. Apollinaris the ex-consul (*suff.* 97) going back for refreshment to his home town

Mart. 10.12.1-3: *Aemiliae gentes et Apollineas Vercellas
et Phaethontei qui petis arva Padi,
ne vivam, nisi te, Domiti, dimitto libenter ...*

5. Apollinaris ‚katabasis‘ from the upper world (Vercellae) into the underworld (Rome)

Mart. 10.12.9-12: *Et venies albis non cognoscendus amicis
livebitque tuis pallida turba genis.
Sed via quem dederit rapiet cito Roma colorem
Niliaco redeas tu licet ore niger.*

Tib. 1.10.37-38: *Illic percussisque genis ustoque capillo
errat ad obscuros pallida turba lacus.*

cf. Tib. 1.3.65 : *rapax mors*

6. The sight of many calamities: the pallor of the accused

Tac. Agr. 45.2: *Praecipua sub Domitiano miseriarum pars erat videre et aspici, ...
cum denotandis tot hominum palloribus sufficeret saevus ille vultus et rubor, quo
se contra pudorem muniebat.*

7. The Certus affair: Pliny’s descent into the kingdom of Death

I. Marchesi, *The Art of Pliny’s Letters* 37 on the Sibyl’s warning:

Plin. ep. 9.13.12 = Verg. Aen. 6.105: *Omnia praecepi atque animo mecum ante
peregī.*

Plin. ep. 9.13.13: *dicit Domitius Apollinaris, consul designatus.*

8. Rewriting Roman history

Plin. ep. 9.13.22-23: *Obtinui tamen, quod intenderam. Nam collega Certi consula-
tum, successorem Certus accepit ...*

9. Pliny, a ‚new Cicero‘: the lost speech *De ultione Helvidi*

Plin. ep. 1.2.4: *Non tamen omnino Marci nostri □□□□□□□□ fugimus ...*

Cic. Att. 1.14.3: *Totum hunc locum, quem ego varie meis orationibus ... soleo
pingere, de flamma, de ferro (nosti illas □□□□□□□□) ...*

IV. The owner of the villa (*otium*)

The semiotics of visualising: Apollinaris' Formianum vs. Pliny's Tusci

10. Introduction: climate and site

Mart. 10.30.1-4: *O temperatae dulce Formiae litus,
vos ... Apollinaris omnibus locis praefert.*

Plin. ep. 5.6.1-3 (to Apollinaris): (1) ... *quod, cum audisses me aestate Tuscos meos
petiturum, ne facerem, suasisti, dum putas insalubres.* (3) *accipe temperiem caeli,
regionis situm, villae amoenitatem.*

11. Pliny's Tusci, a classical *locus amoenus*: nature and art

a. Plin. ep. 5.6.7-15: (7) *Regionis pulcherrima forma. Imaginare amphitheatrum
aliquod inmensum ... Lata et diffusa planities montibus cingitur, montes sum-
ma sui parte procera nemora et antiqua habent.* (11) *prata florida et gemmea
trifolium ... cuncta enim perennibus rivis nutriuntur.*

Plin. NH 4.31 (Tempe valley): ... *ultra visum hominis attollentibus se dextra lae-
vaque leniter convexis iugis, intus silva late viridante, hac labitur Penius viridis
calculo, amoenus circa ripas gramine, canorum avium concentu.*

b. Plin. ep. 5.6.10 = Plin. NH 18.181: *tantis glaebis tenacissimum solum ...
adsurgit, ut nono demum sulco perdometur.*

R.K. Gibson, R. Morello, *Reading the Letters of Pliny the Younger* 224 f.

c. Plin. ep. 5.6.13: *Neque enim terras tibi, sed formam aliquam ad eximiam
pulchritudinem pictam videberis cernere.*

12. Apollinaris Formianum: luxury and victory over the forces of nature

Mart. 10.30.16-17: *Nec seta longo quaerit in mari praedam,
sed a cubili lectuloque iactatam
spectatus alte lineam trahit piscis.*

Mart. 10.30.21-24: *Piscina rhombum pascit et lupos vernas,
natat ad magistrum delicata murena,
nomenclator mugilem citat notum
et adesse iussi prodeunt senes nulli.*

13. Pliny's reflection on ecphrasis

Plin. ep. 5.6.43 (models): Hom. Il. 18.478-482 (shield of Achilles); Verg. Aen.
8.626-731 (shield of Aeneas); Arat, Phaenomena (starry sky)

Plin. ep. 5.6.44: *non epistula, quae describit, sed villa, quae describitur, magna
est.*

14. Catalogue of villas of Apollinaris (10) and Pliny (3):

Mart. 10.30.1-20: ***O temperatae dulce Formiae litus,***
vos ...
Apollinaris omnibus locis praefert.
Non ille sanctae dulce Tibur uxoris,
nec Tusculanos Algidosve secessus,
Praeneste nec sic Antiumque miratur;
desiderantur, nec Marica nec Liris,
nec in Lucrina lota Salmacis vena.

Plin. ep. 5.6.45: *Habes causas **cur ego Tuscos meos** Tusculanis (in Tuscano: reading of Mommsen) Tiburtinis Praenestinisque **proponam.***

15. Conclusion: Discourse on *otium* and *negotium*

Mart. 10.30.25-27 (Apollinaris): *Frui sed istis quando, Roma, permittis?*
Quot Formianos inputat dies annus
negotiosis rebus urbis haerenti?

Plin. ep. 5.6.45: *altius ibi otium ... Ibi animo, ibi corpore maxime valeo. Nam studiis animum, venatu corpus exerceo.*

V. Intertextuality and immortality (*gloria*): The creation of literary authority

16. Final exclamation: makarismos of the servants and invocation to the gods

Mart. 10.30.28-29: ***O ianitores vilicique felices!***
*Dominis parantur ista, **serviunt vobis.***

Plin. ep. 5.6.46: ***Di modo in posterum hoc mihi gaudium, hanc gloriam loco servent!***

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