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# Livy's preface

## ***A captatio benevolentiae* addressed to educated readers?**

Georgios Vassiliades, Nicosia

**Abstract:** The first paragraphs of Livy's preface (*praef.* 1–4) are constructed as a *captatio benevolentiae*, through the use of specific devices drawn from rhetorical treatises of the late Republic: the attack on the adversaries, the appeal to the *ethos* of the writer/orator, the reference to the difficulty of his task and the praising of the audience. Livy indirectly praises his audience by referring to most readers (*legendium plerisque*) who will not be interested in early Roman history (*praef.* 4). Drawing on the topos of Antiquity as a noble object of study, Livy portrays in advance his prospective readers as intellectually superior and thus attempts to convince them to engage in the study of his work (*praef.* 5–13), so that they can claim to be part of this elite.

**Keywords:** Livy, preface, persuasion, *captatio benevolentiae*, rhetorical treatises, audience.

### **1 Introduction: Livy's rhetorical communication with the audience in the *praefatio***

In Cicero's *De Oratore* and *De Legibus*, history is viewed as an *opus oratorium*, a literary *genre* which should conform to the norms of rhetoric.<sup>1</sup> Based on these premises, scholars, since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, have shown that historiography was viewed by ancient historians as an artistic creation based on the norms of rhetoric,<sup>2</sup> and that the rhetorical dimension of historical works assumed a progressively greater importance.<sup>3</sup> Critics tended, however, to overlook an important component of rhetorical

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1 Cic., *De orat.* 2.12.51–15.64; *Leg.* 1.1.5 sq. On the relationship between historiography and rhetoric in Cicero, see R. W. Cape, "Persuasive history: Roman rhetoric and historiography", in W. J. Dominik (ed.), *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society and Literature* (London 1997) 212–228. Cape 1997.

2 See among others T. P. Wiseman, "Practice and Theory in Roman historiography", *History* 66 (1981) 375–393.; C. W. Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley 1983) 134 sq.; A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four studies* (London etc. 1988); R. Nicolai, *La storiografia nell'educazione antica* (Pisa 1992) 31–176; C. S. Kraus/J. Marincola/Ch. Pelling (eds.), *Ancient Historiography and its Contexts: Studies in Honour of A. J. Woodman* (Oxford etc. 2010). L. Pernot, *Rhetoric in Antiquity*; translated by W. E. Higgins (Washington 2005) 120.

3 See on this and generally on the evolution of historiography as a *genre* M. Ledentu, *Stadium scribendi: recherches sur les statuts de l'écrivain et de l'écriture à Rome à la fin de la République* (Louvain etc. 2004) 33–46, 99–122, 199–248. See also D. Timpe, "Erwägungen zur jüngeren Annalistik", *Antike&Abendland* 25 (1979) 97–119 (esp. 97–105, 116–117); K.-E. Petzold, "Zur Geschichte der römischen Annalistik", in: W. Schuller (ed.), *Livius: Aspekte seines Werkes* (Konstanz 1993) 151–188; U. Walter, "Opfer ihrer Ungleichzeitigkeit: Die Gesamtgeschichten im ersten Jahrhundert v. Chr. und die fortdauernde Attraktivität des 'annalistischen Schemas'", in U. Eigler/U. Gotter/ N. Luraghi/ U. Walter (eds.),

communication: the audience,<sup>4</sup> i.e. the readers or hearers<sup>5</sup> of historical works. The same omission applies to Livy's preface<sup>6</sup>, although the close connection between rhetorical doctrines and prefaces to historical works has been brought to light.<sup>7</sup>

F. Delarue, J. Chaplin, D. Pausch and M. de Franchis take the audience of the preface into account, but their analyses are far from being a thorough investigation of Livy's rhetorical communication with his readers. F. Delarue reminds us that, according to all Roman rhetorical treatises, the *exordium* is expected to make the reader or audience benevolent (*beneuolum*), attentive (*adtentum*) and apt to learn (*docilem*). The opening phrase of the preface (*praef.* 1), where Livy assumes a posture of modesty, is read as an effort by Livy to capture the goodwill (*beneuolentia*) of his readers by arousing their sympathy. The scholar's intention is not, however, to explore the rhetorical means used by Livy to obtain the audience's *beneuolentia*. F. Delarue aims only to show that this modesty is pretentious, thus briefly sketching the way the *ego* of Livy emerges in contrast with the *tu* of the readers.<sup>8</sup>

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*Formen römischer Geschichtsschreibung von den Anfängen bis Livius* (Darmstadt 2003) 135–156. On the evolution of Roman annalistic tradition, described as “expansion of the past”, see S. P. Oakley, *A Commentary on Livy: Books VI–X, I Introduction and Book VI* (Oxford 1997) 72–75.

4 Cf. A. Momigliano, “The historians of the classical world and their audiences: some suggestions” (reprinted), in *idem*, *Sesto Contributo alla storia degli studi classici e del mondo antico* I (Roma 1980) 361–376; J. Marincola, “Ancient Audiences and Expectations”, in A. Feldherr (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians* (Cambridge/New York 2009) 11–23, who focus on the matter from a historical rather than a rhetorical perspective, by trying to deduce the identity of the audience of historical works.

5 On public readings (*recitationes*) of historical works, see Momigliano, *loc. cit.* (n. 4) 364–368; Wiseman, *loc. cit.* (n. 2) 384–387; Marincola, *loc. cit.* (n. 4) 13–14.

6 The scholarship on Livy's preface is extensive and deals with a variety of aspects. See among others L. Amundsen, “Notes to the preface of Livy”, *Symbolae Osloenses* 25 (1947) 31–35; L. Ferrero, “Attualità e tradizione nella *Praefatio* Liviana”, *Rivista di Filologia Classica* (1949) 1–47; H. Oppermann, “Die Einleitung zum Geschichtswerk des Livius” (reprinted), in E. Burck (ed.), *Wege zu Livius* (Darmstadt 1967) 169–180; M. Mazza, *Storia e ideologia in Livio: Per un'analisi storiografica della praefatio ai Libri ab Urbe condita* (Roma 1967); F. Delarue, “Sur la préface de Tite-Live”, *Vita Latina* 151 (1998) 44–58; J. Moles, “Livy's Preface”, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society* 39 (1993) 141–168; S. Koster, “*Tibi tuaeque rei publicae*: zur *praefatio* des Livius”, in Ch. Müller-Goldingen/K. Sier (eds.), *ΛΗΝΑΙΚΑ: Festschrift für Carl Werner Müller zum 65. Geburtstag am 28. Januar 1996* (Stuttgart 1996) 253–263; M. Seita, “Lettura della prefazione di Tito Livio”, *Paideia* 51 (1996) 3–22.

7 See G. Avenarius, *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Frankfurt am Main 1956) 113–118, on Luc., *Hist. conscr.* 52–54; T. Janson, *Latin Prose Prefaces: Studies in Literary Conventions* (Stockholm etc. 1964) 65–66; and E. Herkommer, *Die Topoi in den Proömien der römischen Geschichtswerke* (Stuttgart 1968) 13 sq. Ferrero, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 10–19, has focused on the way Livy's preface is related to the doctrines of the rhetoricians on *prooemium*.

8 See Delarue, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 44–46. See *ibid.* 46–47, on the way the rhetorical precepts of *adtentio* and *docilitas* are reflected in the preface. See also on the same point Ferrero *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 16–17. As far as *beneuolentia* is concerned, the critic only mentions that Livy's reference to the vast company of writers (*praef.* 3: *tanta scriptorum turba*) and to the infinite labour of his subject (*praef.* 4: *res est praeterea et immensi operis*) constitute a *laudatio officii sine adrogantia* (see *Rhet. Her.* 1.8; Cic., *Inu.* 1.22).

In J. Chaplin's analysis of the *praef.* 10, the notion of the "audience" is introduced, but without being applied to the rest of the preface. In this paragraph, Livy addresses each of his readers in the second person singular and exhorts him to imitate or avoid the *exempla* presented in his work. The use of the second person indicates that Livy expects each reader to take something away from these *exempla*. According to the critic, readers represent the "external" audience of those *exempla*, who have a somewhat broader overview by comparing each *exemplum* to others in the work, contrary to the "internal" contemporary audience of the *exempla*, whose scope is unavoidably limited.<sup>9</sup>

In his reading of the preface, D. Pausch focuses only on the historian's intention to show his readers how his historical method and content, as well as the narrative form adopted, differentiate him from the earlier tradition.<sup>10</sup> The researcher also stresses that Livy's reference in *praef.* 5 to the reward (*praemium*) he gained by dealing with Rome's early history may be a means of motivating the reader to engage in the reading of his work.<sup>11</sup> He then proceeds to the strategies employed by Livy to engage his readers' attention throughout the work, but following a narratological approach.<sup>12</sup>

M. de Franchis<sup>13</sup> recently insisted on Livy's effort to gain the goodwill of his audience, by trying to establish with each of them a personal bond throughout the preface. The critic does not focus, however, on the rhetorical means involved in the author's communication with readers, since she is, rather, interested in revealing that Livy's objective was to re-establish Rome's civic community, which now included all Roman citizens of Italy.

The aim of this paper is to complete all these readings dealing with Livy's communication with his audience, by providing a systematic rhetorical reading of the Livian preface, especially of its first part (*praef.* 1–4), as a *captatio benevolentiae* towards the prospective readers. It will be shown that Livy tries to capture the goodwill of his audience, not only through the particular use of the first and second person, but also, and more importantly, through rhetorical devices associated with *captatio benevolentiae* in rhetorical treatises.

Drawing a strict comparison between a historiographical preface and rhetorical precepts contained in treatises mostly pertaining to judicial eloquence might seem exaggerated, especially given that Cicero tends rather to model historiography on epideictic oratory.<sup>14</sup> Although Antonius, in his speech in Cicero's

<sup>9</sup> See J. D. Chaplin, *Livy's Exemplary History* (Oxford/New York 2000) 50 sq.

<sup>10</sup> See D. Pausch, *Livius und der Leser: narrative Strukturen in Ab urbe condita* (München 2011) 30, 33–34, 37, 52, 64, 67–68, 121, 133.

<sup>11</sup> See Pausch, *loc. cit.* (n. 10) 72.

<sup>12</sup> See Pausch *loc. cit.* (n. 10) 75 sq.

<sup>13</sup> M. de Franchis, "Pour qui écrit Tite-Live?", in J.-C. Julhe (ed.), *Pratiques latines de la dédicace: permanence et mutations, de l'Antiquité à la Renaissance* (Paris 2014) 189–213.

<sup>14</sup> See Cic. *Orat.* 11.37, 19.66, with Woodman, *loc. cit.* (n. 2) 95–96.

*De oratore*, takes for granted that a historian must be an orator,<sup>15</sup> the famous orator stresses, some paragraphs later, that the style used in Court is not suited to the writer of history.<sup>16</sup> This does not imply, however, that forensic oratory is completely discarded as a model of reference for the historiographer. Woodman convincingly pointed out that in the same discussion on historiographical style (Cic. *De orat.* 2.15.62 sq.), which should not be considered unrepresentative of Cicero's thought, Antonius analyses historiography in terms of judicial oratory, both having *narratio* as an integral part.<sup>17</sup> It would not thus be unexpected for a writer of history to use rhetorical devices apt to forensic eloquence. This assumption seems especially valid in the case of Livy's preface, which, as will be shown in the next few paragraphs, begins with a defensive statement of the author against possible accusations (Liv. *prae*f. 1–2).

In Livy's case, it is, of course, impossible to know whether the use of these techniques is due to the historians' direct knowledge of rhetorical treatises. It is generally admitted, however, that historians received a rhetorical education,<sup>18</sup> which makes possible not only Livy's familiarity with such treatises, but also the fact that a historian could decide to construct the preface according to a rhetorical category. Livy's particular interest in oratory is, besides, attested by Quintilian, who mentions that in a letter to his son, the historian recommends that he read Cicero and Demosthenes and then other orators who resembled them the most,<sup>19</sup> without clarifying whether Livy referred to judicial, epideictic or deliberative speeches of those orators.

The close juxtaposition of Livy's historiographical preface with specific texts drawn from rhetorical treatises is not meant to suggest that the historian modelled his prologue on these texts. The passages from treatises discussed here are invoked as a source for mainstream rhetorical devices of acquiring *benevolentia*, of which Livy was most probably aware, given his particular interest in oratory and his rhetorical education. The purpose will be to show how the historian adapted some well-known oratorical devices in historiography, in order to acquire the goodwill of his audience.

<sup>15</sup> Cic. *De orat.* 2.15.51.

<sup>16</sup> See Cic. *De orat.* 2.15.64; cf. Quint. 10.1.31 sq., for the reverse idea, with M. L. Clarke, *Rhetoric at Rome: A Historical Survey* (London/New York 1996) 122–123.

<sup>17</sup> Woodman, *loc. cit.* (n. 2) 95–98, 113.

<sup>18</sup> See among others Timpe, *loc. cit.* (n. 3) 116–117; Wiseman, *loc. cit.* (n. 2) 388–390; Nicolai, *loc. cit.* (n. 2) 156–176. On Livy's rhetorical education and acquaintance with theory of oratory, see P. G. Walsh, *Livy: His Historical Aims and Methods* (Cambridge 1961) 3, 219–244, focusing on the historian's use of rhetorical theory in the construction of his speeches.

<sup>19</sup> Quint., *Inst.* 10.1.39. Livy's *eloquentia*, especially in his speeches, was renowned: see Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.101; Sen. *Suas.* 6.22; Suet. *Dom.* 10. On Livy's interest in rhetoric, see also Sen. *Controu.* 9.2.26. M. de Franchis, "Tite-Live et l'habitant de Gadès (Plinie le Jeune, *Ep.* II, 3, 8)", in P. Hummel (ed.), *De Fama. Études sur la construction de la réputation et de la postérité* (Paris 2012) 28–32, who discusses many ancient references showing that Livy also became a model of oratorical performance.

On the basis of this analysis, it will be possible to determine, for the first time, how Livy's *captatio benevolentiae* is expected to function as a means of persuasion towards the readers, so that they are finally convinced to be engaged in the study of the *Ab Vrbe condita* (AVC). In this context, special attention will be given to Livy's attempt to define his readership as a learned and educated one, by excluding the majority of readers who only find pleasure in accounts of Rome's recent history (*praef.* 4). Far from adopting a first-level interpretation, which would be to take Livy's statements at face value and accept that the AVC was indeed addressed by the historian only to a restricted group of people belonging to an intellectual elite, this paper will argue that the historian's allusion to his prospective readers constitutes an indirect praising of the audience which was intended to gain its *benevolentia*. The author's aim would thus be not to limit, but to expand his prospective audience.<sup>20</sup>

## 2 *Captatio benevolentiae* in rhetoric and historiography

The theoretical framework of *captatio benevolentiae* should be taken into account before examining the concrete way it is applied in Livy's preface. According to Greek rhetorical theory, explained in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (§6), there are two kinds of Introduction: the Direct Opening (προοίμιον) and the Subtle Approach (ἐφοδος).<sup>21</sup> Following this classification, Livy's preface may be considered a προοίμιον, since it straightway prepares the "hearer" to attend to the "speech":

1. *Facturusne operae pretium sim, si a primordio urbis res populi Romani perscripserim, nec satis scio nec, si sciam, dicere ausim, 2. quippe qui cum ueterem tum uulgatam esse rem uideam, dum noui semper scriptores aut in rebus certius aliquid allatueros se aut scribendi arte rudem uetustatem superatueros credunt.* (*praef.* 1–2).

"1. Whether I am likely to accomplish anything worthy of the labour, if I record the achievements of the Roman people from the foundation of the city, I do not really know, nor if I knew would I dare to avouch it; 2. perceiving as I do that the theme is not only old but hackneyed, through the constant succession of new historians, who believe either that in their facts they can produce more authentic information, or that in their style they will prove better than the rude attempts of the ancients."<sup>22</sup>

Assuming the role of an accused person, the historian attempts to anticipate possible accusations, by opening his work with a defensive statement stressing the doubtful situation in which he is placed due to his decision to write history. It may be revealing that in analogous cases of causes of the doubtful kind in the Court, the preface should be built upon goodwill:

<sup>20</sup> De Franchis *loc. cit.* (n. 13) argues that Livy's audience did not include only a Roman elite, but was enlarged because of the extension of Roman citizenship in Italy.

<sup>21</sup> *Rhet. Her.* 1.6. See also Cic., *Inu.* 1.20.

<sup>22</sup> Transl. by B. O. Foster (Loeb, London/New York 1919), as well as all translations of Livy's preface.

*Si genus causae dubium habebimus, a benivolentia principium constituemus, ne quid illa turpitudinis pars nobis obesse possit. (Rhet. Her. 6).*

“If our cause is of the doubtful kind, we shall build the Direct Opening upon goodwill, so that the discreditable part of the cause cannot be prejudicial to us.”<sup>23</sup>

Cicero's theory in *De inuentione* follows the same lines: the orator should try to win the goodwill of the judge and the audience when dealing with a difficult (*admirabile*) or ambiguous (*anceps*) case, which seems partly honourable and partly discreditable.<sup>24</sup> In *praef.* 1–2, Livy presents his case as an ambiguous one by doubting the worthiness of his task. The use of *benevolentia* would thus be consistent with the Ciceronian theory on judicial oratory.

In the *De oratore*, Cicero refers in more detail to the function of this device. When the interlocutor Antonius comes to the presentation of how to gain the judges' goodwill (*De orat.* 2.178–216), he starts by explaining the psychological effect of *benevolentia*:

*nihil est enim in dicendo, Catule, maius, quam ut faueat oratori is, qui audiet, utique ipse sic moueatur, ut impetu quodam animi et perturbatione magis quam iudicio aut consilio regatur: plura enim multo homines iudicant odio aut amore aut cupiditate aut iracundia aut dolore aut laetitia aut spe aut timore aut errore aut aliqua permotione mentis quam ueritate aut praescripto aut iuris norma aliqua aut iudici formula aut legibus. (Cic., De orat. 2.178)*

“Now nothing in oratory, Catulus, is more important than **to win for the orator the favour** of his hearer, and to have the latter so affected as to be swayed by something resembling a mental impulse or emotion, rather than by judgement or deliberation. For men decide far more problems by hate, or love, or lust, or rage, or sorrow, or joy, or hope, or fear, or illusion, or some other inward emotion, than by reality, or authority, or any legal standard, or judicial precedent, or statute.”<sup>25</sup>

*Captatio benevolentiae* could thus be briefly defined as the art of influencing the rational judgements of the audience, by arousing their emotions.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, this rhetorical device functions as a means of persuasion, which is not based on the use of rational arguments (λόγος), but especially on the arousal of the emotions of the audience (πάθος) and on the appeal to the character of the speaker (ἥθος).<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Transl. by H. Caplan (Loeb, Cambridge 1954), as well as all translations of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.

<sup>24</sup> Cic., *Inu.* 1.21.

<sup>25</sup> Transl. by E. W. Sutton (Loeb, Cambridge 1942), as well as all translations of Cicero's *De oratore*.

<sup>26</sup> This definition is in line with Aristotle's theory in *Arist., Rh.* 2.1.7–8. Goodwill (εὖνοια) is included, along with friendship (φιλία) in his discussion of emotions (πάθη), briefly defined as all those affections which cause men to change their judgements. On the relationship between the Ciceronian theory of *conciliare* and Aristotelian persuasion through *ethos*, see E. Fantham, “Ciceronian *conciliare* and Aristotelian *ethos*”, *Phoenix* 27 (1973) 262–275; cf. W. W. Fortenbaugh, “*Benevolentiam conciliare* and *animos permovere*. Some remarks on Cicero's *De oratore* 2.178–16”, *Rhetorica* 6 (1988) 259–273.

<sup>27</sup> See *Arist. Rhet.* 1.1356a sqq. for a detailed examination of these three main means of persuasion. See also J. Wisse, *Ethos and pathos from Aristotle to Cicero* (Amsterdam 1989) 97–98, 209, 234, 237, 244,

According to Greek orators, *benevolentia* is one of the three main objectives of the *exordium*, along with *adtentio* and *docilitas*.<sup>28</sup> Cicero, for his part, accepts that *benevolentia*, along with *adtentio* and *docilitas*, can naturally belong to an *exordium*, whose subjects are drawn from the members of the court, but he warns that the orator should not abuse these techniques.<sup>29</sup>

Moderation in the use of *captatio benevolentiae* also appears as an important prerequisite of historical prefaces, if one takes Lucian's theory into account. In his controversial *De historia conscribenda*,<sup>30</sup> written in the second century A.D., but based on a rich earlier tradition,<sup>31</sup> the satirist goes so far as to affirm that historians should eliminate *captatio benevolentiae* (τὸ τῆς εὐνοίας) from prefaces. They should only try to attract the attention (προσοχή-*adtentio*) of their readers, by highlighting the importance and usefulness of their narration, and to make them understand (εὐμάθεια-*docilitas*) what follows by presenting the causes and the most important aspects of the facts.<sup>32</sup>

The importance and usefulness of the AVC and the causes and most important aspects of the facts included in the narrative are clearly stated in *praef.* 9–10. Nevertheless, Livy, far from eliminating *benevolentia* from his prologue, chooses instead to make moderate use of it, thus adapting Ciceronian precepts on rhetorical *exordia* to historiography.

### 3 The Livian appropriation of devices associated with *captatio benevolentiae* in *praef.* 1–4

Following H. Lausberg's classification, which relies on ancient rhetorical treatises such as the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and Cicero's *De inuentione*, *benevolentia* could

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on the relationship of *ethos* and *pathos* with *benevolentia*. The appeal to the character of the speakers is undertaken when *benevolentia* derives *ab nostra persona*. See *infra*.

28 Cic., *De orat.* 2.80; see also Cic., *Inu.* 1.20, 26.

29 See Cic., *De orat.* 2.322–324; cf. Cic., *De orat.* 2.310–312.

30 The serious and the satirical tone are combined in Lucian's treatise (see H. Homeyer, *Lukian: Wie man Geschichte schreiben soll* (Munich 1965) 16–29), which is written in the form of a letter addressed to his friend Philo. Some scholars focus on the satirical dimension of the work (see e.g. J. Hall, *Lucian's Satire* (New York 1981) 389–394; T. Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford 2001) 251), while others take Lucian's theory of history at face value (see e.g. M. Fox, "Dionysius, Lucian and the prejudice against rhetoric in history", *Journal of Roman Studies* 91 (2001) 76–93). This complex matter cannot be resolved in this paper, but I agree with M. Tamiolaki, "Satire and historiography: The reception of classical models and the construction of the author's persona in Lucian's *De historia conscribenda*", *Mnemosyne* 68 (2015) 918–919, that Lucian's treatise should be examined on its own merit as reflecting contemporary trends in historiography and that satire could be for Lucian a means not only of amusement, but also of persuasion.

31 See on this Avenarius, *loc. cit.* (n. 7); Herkommer, *loc. cit.* (n. 7) 15–17; Tamiolaki, *loc. cit.* (n. 30) 918.

32 Luc. *Hist. Conscr.* 53. See on this passage Herkommer, *loc. cit.* (n. 7) 14–17. See also Janson, *loc. cit.* (n. 7) 65–66.

be acquired from four quarters: a) from our own person (*ab nostra*), b) from the person of the opponents (*ab aduersariorum*), c) from the persons of the jury (*ab iudicum persona*), and d) from the case itself (*a causa*).<sup>33</sup> This grouping goes back to a long rhetorical tradition, since it already appears in Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, where, however, they are just described as the four most common forms of prologue and not as rhetorical devices to obtain goodwill; it is only the appeal to the audience which is intended to ensure goodwill.<sup>34</sup>

In Livy's *praef.* 2–4, the following four techniques can be identified as devices associated with three of the four “search formulae”, to repeat the term used by Lausberg, cited above as attached to *captatio beneuolentiae*: i) the attack on the adversaries (b – *ab aduersarium*), ii) the appeal to the *ethos* of the writer/orator (a – *ab nostra*), iii) the reference to the difficulty of his task (a – *ab nostra*), and iv) the praising of the audience (c – *ab iudicum persona*).<sup>35</sup> Device iv) will be examined separately, since it poses the question of the limits Livy sets on his audience.

Let us begin our investigation from “the attack on the adversaries” (i – b), which seems to be expressed in the most apparent way in the first lines of Livy's prologue; it will turn out, moreover, that the historian's opposition to his adversaries is closely attached to his attempt to present himself as deserving the audience's sympathy (device ii – a). In *praef.* 2, cited above, Livy, assuming a posture of modesty, expresses his embarrassment at the growing number of new writers (*dum noui semper scriptores*) who claim that they can surpass their predecessors in terms of content or style, and because of whom Livy's work could thus be considered futile. Despite the mild tone, the possibility cannot be dismissed that Livy's reference to the *noui scriptores* is an indirect attack. Scholars have identified Asinius Pollio and Sallust among the most likely targets.<sup>36</sup> Nevertheless, the rhetorical function of this critical reference has not been investigated.

In the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (§1.6), the attack on adversaries (*aduersarios criminando*) is included among the methods of capturing goodwill in the *exordium*, when the cause is of the discreditable kind (*turpe causae genus*). Livy's cause could be considered a discreditable one according to the definition provided: *Turpe genus intellegitur cum aut honesta res oppugnatur aut defenditur turpis*.<sup>37</sup> In *praef.* 1–2, Livy implies that his initiative to write history could even

<sup>33</sup> See H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study*, foreword by G. A. Kennedy; translated by M. T. Bliss, A. Jansen, D. E. Orton; edited by D. E. Orton & R. D. Anderson (Leiden 1998) §273–279; Cic. *Inu.* 1.22; *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.

<sup>34</sup> Arist., *Rh.* 3.14.7, 11.

<sup>35</sup> See Lausberg *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §276, 275a–β, and 277β, for more references respectively on the devices i, ii, and iv. The reference to the difficulty of the task undertaken (iii) is not mentioned by Lausberg as a rhetorical device associated with *captatio beneuolentiae*.

<sup>36</sup> See A. D. Leeman, “Are we fair to Livy?”, *Helikon* 1 (1961) 29–30; Mazza, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 72–75; Delarue, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 47–52.

<sup>37</sup> *Rhet. Her.* 1.5: “A cause is understood to be of the discreditable kind when something honourable is under attack or when something discreditable is being defended.”

be considered by other historians as harming his reputation, when he doubts the worthiness of his labour (*praef. 1: facturuse operae pretium sim ...*).

Following Roman rhetorical treatises, *benevolentia* can be obtained from the person of the opponents, if the orator brings them into hatred (*odium*), unpopularity (*invidia*), or contempt (*contemptio*).<sup>38</sup> The way Livy refers to his opponents seems to conform to Cicero's method of arousing the audience's *invidia* against the adversaries: *in invidiam, si uis eorum, potentia, diuitiae, cognatio, proferentur atque eorum usus arrogans et intolerabilis, ut his rebus magis uideantur quam causae suae confidere*.<sup>39</sup> When Livy refers to the authors who believe (*credunt*) that they can surpass their predecessors either in the information they provide or in their style (*praef. 2*), he seems to critically point out the arrogant way they promote some advantages of their work, so that they seem to rely on these aspects rather than on the importance of their work as such.

According to Cicero, the attack on the adversaries can be performed in parallel with the use of an appeal to the *ethos* of the writer/orator (device ii): in the *De oratore*, he adds that an important factor of success in trials is to win the goodwill of the tribunal not only towards the advocate's client, but also towards the advocate himself. The orator should try to ensure that the characters, principles, conduct and course of life, both of himself and his client, will be approved of, and conversely that those of their opponents will be condemned.<sup>40</sup> If Livy's preface is analysed following these rhetorical terms, it may be argued that Livy's historical *persona*, being aware of his place in the history of Roman historiography, functions as an advocate of the narrator Livy, who is ready to demonstrate his talent in the narrative. Livy's moderate tone seems in perfect harmony with the desirable attributes of the advocate enumerated by Cicero as apt to ensure *benevolentia* towards himself and his client:

*Sed haec adiuuant in oratore: lenitas uocis, uultus pudoris significatio, uerborum comitas; si quid persequare acrius, ut inuitus et coactus facere uideare. Facilitatis, liberalitatis, mansuetudinis, pietatis, grati animi, non appetentis, non auidi, signa proferri perutile est; eaque omnia, quae proborum, demissorum, non acrium, non pertinacium, non litigiosorum, non acerborum sunt, ualde benevolentiam conciliant abalienantque ab eis, in quibus haec non sunt; itaque eadem sunt in aduersarios ex contrario conferenda.* (Cic., *De orat.* 2.182)

"But attributes useful in an advocate are a mild tone, a countenance expressive of modesty, gentle language, and the faculty of seeming to be dealing reluctantly and under compulsion with something you are really anxious to prove. It is very helpful to display

<sup>38</sup> Cic., *Inu.* 1.22; *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.

<sup>39</sup> Cic., *Inu.* 1.22: "they will become unpopular if we present their power, political influence, wealth, family connexions, and their arrogant and intolerable use of these advantages, so that they seem to rely on these rather on the justice of their case." Transl. by H. M. Hubbell (Loeb, Cambridge 1949), as well as all translations of Cicero's *De inuentione*. See also along the same lines *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.

<sup>40</sup> Cic., *De orat.* 2.182.

the tokens of good-nature, kindness, calmness, loyalty and a disposition that is pleasing and not grasping or covetous, and all the qualities belonging to men who are upright, unassuming and not given to haste, stubbornness, strife or harshness, **are powerful in winning goodwill**, while the want of them estranges it from such as do not possess them; accordingly **the very opposites of these qualities must be ascribed to our opponents.**"

Livy perfectly fits this model of a moderate advocate, when he pretends to doubt the value of his work because of alleged feelings of inferiority to his predecessors. A reader having in mind rhetorical precepts according to which even a façade of modesty could function as a means of *benevolentia* can hardly accept the sincerity of Livy's alleged feelings: how could a writer with such an inferiority complex dare to undertake such a difficult task?<sup>41</sup> At the same time, in conformity with the Ciceronian premises (*in aduersarios ex contrario conferenda*), Livy critically alludes to the opposite quality, i.e. the arrogance, of his predecessors/adversaries, in order to gain his audience's goodwill.<sup>42</sup>

The historian's feigned modesty in *praef.* 1–2 prepares the even more explicit appeal to his moderate *ethos* (device ii), which pervades the following paragraph:

*utcumque erit, iuuabit tamen rerum gestarum memoriae principis terrarum populi pro uirili parte et ipsum consuluisse; et si in tanta scriptorum turba mea fama in obscuro sit, nobilitate ac magnitudine eorum me, qui nomini officient meo, consoler. (praef. 3)*

"Yet, however this shall be, it will be a satisfaction to have done myself as much as lies in me to commemorate the deeds of the foremost people of the world; and if in so vast a company of writers my own reputation should be obscure, my consolation would be the fame and greatness of those whose renown will throw mine into the shade."

Livy portrays himself as an author of moderate ambition who is not interested in obtaining personal glory from his work, and even finds consolation in others' success obscuring his own reputation. It is difficult to determine whether Livy's modest self-portrayal is sincere or not. It should not be overlooked, in any case, that Livy's statements are consistent with the Ciceronian rhetorical theory according to which the orator should assume a modest *persona*, in order to gain the judges' goodwill. This "technical" advice is clearly articulated in the above cited and analysed paragraph of the *De oratore*, but also in the *De inuentione*. Modesty is highlighted as the most important quality that the orator should embrace when using the *ab nostra* method of *benevolentia*:

<sup>41</sup> G. B. Miles, *Livy: Reconstructing Early Rome* (Ithaca 1995) 51–55, analyses Livy's modesty as a rhetorical strategy for self-preservation.

<sup>42</sup> Lausberg *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §275a, cites the first phrase of Liv. *praef.* 1 (*facturusne operae pretium sim*) as an example of *captatio benevolentia ab nostra persona* in literature, where the author portrays himself as a *uir bonus* who has undertaken his task for worthy motives.

*Ab nostra, si de nostris factis et officiis sine arrogantia dicemus; si crimina illata et aliquas minus honestas suspiciones iniectas diluemus; si, quae incommoda acciderint aut quae instant difficultates, proferemus; si prece et obsecratione humili ac supplici utemur.* (Cic., *Inu.* 1.22)<sup>43</sup>

“We shall win good-will from our own person if we refer to our own acts and services without arrogance; if we weaken the effect of charges that have been preferred, or of some suspicion of less honourable dealing which has been cast upon us; if we dilate on the misfortunes which have befallen us or the difficulties which still beset us; if we use prayers and entreaties with a humble and submissive spirit.”

In accordance with these precepts, Livy avoids arrogance, tries to dispel any suspicion of immoderate ambition and shows a humble and submissive spirit. It is important to note that Livy’s modest attitude does not adhere to the rule of historiographical prefaces, where historians more often adopt a posture of *aemulatio* towards their predecessors, by explaining why and in what sense their work will be of superior value and thus deserves to be read.<sup>44</sup> Livy seems conscious of this original aspect of his preface, since in *praef.* 2 he had critically alluded to those historians who claimed themselves capable of surpassing their predecessors. Instead of this approach, Livy chooses to practice *aemulatio* towards earlier historians, while pretending to avoid it. To this end, he assumes the role of a moderate advocate, thus breaking with historiographical tradition. By this method of *captatio benevolentiae*, drawn from rhetorical treatises, Livy tries to persuade the readers that his work has been accomplished by a humble spirit and is thus more deserving of study than the works of earlier and much more pretentious historians.

The historian’s reference, in the next lines, to his prospective achievements and the difficulty of his task could also function as another means of *benevolentia* (device iii) from the orator’s person (a – *ab nostra*):

*res est praeterea et immensi operis, ut quae supra septingentesimum annum repetatur et quae ab exiguis profecta initiis eo creuerit, ut iam magnitudine laboret sua ...* (*praef.* 4)

“Moreover, my subject involves infinite labour, seeing that it must be traced back above seven hundred years, and that proceeding from slender beginnings it has so increased as now to be burdened by its own magnitude ...”

By the phrase *immensi operis*, Livy stresses to his audience the hard task he has to accomplish, a difficulty only indirectly referred to in the first lines (*praef.* 1: *fac-*

<sup>43</sup> See along the same lines *Rhet. Her.* 1.8: *Ab nostra persona benivolentiam contrahemus si nostrum officium sine adrogantia laudabimus ...*; See also Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §275β.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Polyb. 1.1: Polybius states that, contrary to his predecessors, he will not make a praise of history, because the nature of the events recounted is in itself sufficient to stimulate the attention of readers. Sempronius Asellio (*Hist. fr.* 2 *FRHist.* = Gell. 5.18.9) explains that he has abandoned the annalistic form, in which his predecessors have written, because it is not apt to exhort people to defend their city or to turn them from evil. Tacitus (*Ann.* 1.1) advertises that he will relate the history of the reigns of Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero without bitterness or partiality, which were the main features of his predecessor’s narratives. See also Tac., *Hist.* 1.1.

turusne operae pretium sim ...). This device is recommended to orators in the above cited passage of the *De inuentione* (§1.22: *Ab nostra ... si, quae incommoda acciderint aut quae instant difficultates, proferemus*), but also in more detail in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*:

*Ab nostra persona beniuolentiam contrahemus si nostrum officium sine adrogantia laudabimus [...] item si nostra incommoda proferemus, inopiam, solitudinem, calamitatem, et si orabimus ut nobis sint auxilio, et simul ostendemus nos in aliis noluisse spem habere. (Rhet. Her. 1.8).*

“From the discussion of our own person we shall secure goodwill by praising our services without arrogance [...] likewise by setting forth our disabilities, need, loneliness, and misfortune, and pleading for our hearers’ aid, and at the same time showing that we have been unwilling to place our hope in anyone else.”

The structure of Livy’s *praef.* 4 reflects the advice given in *Rhet.* 1.8: after pointing out the difficulties of his task (*nostra incommoda proferemus ...*) in the above passage, the historian will turn his attention to his audience (*si orabimus ... spem habere*). Nevertheless, Livy does not demand his audience’s cooperation by desperately pleading for their aid; he chooses instead to indirectly praise his prospective readers, which can be analysed as the fourth and most important technique of *beneuolentia*.

#### 4 The portrayal of Livy’s readers as intellectually superior

Quintilian notes that the very first phrase of Livy’s preface (*facturusne operae pretium sim*) corresponds to the first half of a hexameter.<sup>45</sup> This sophisticated *initium* might be indicative of Livy’s attempt to acquire the goodwill of his audience by providing pleasure (*delectatio*). This technique is described in rhetorical tradition as a means of *beneuolentia ab iudicum (auditorum) persona* (device c), “achieved by a refined style which is, however, restrained in the proem (*elocutio*)”.<sup>46</sup> Rhythm is not precisely discussed as a method of *delectatio*. Nevertheless, the use of a skilled *oratorius numerus*, an artful sequence of long and short syllables, standing between arbitrary *numerous* and poetic *metrum*,<sup>47</sup> is included among the techniques associated with *ornatus*, which in its turn conveys *delectatio*.<sup>48</sup> Although Quintilian cites Livy’s

<sup>45</sup> See Quint. 9.4.74: the author stresses that the version *facturusne operae pretium sim*, which is the reading of the manuscript tradition and had already gained currency in Quintilian’s age, is a useless correction. Livy had written the text to match a dactylic opening. See also on this G. Weissenborn/M. Müller, *Titii Livi Ab urbe condita libri* (Lipsiae 1915) and R. M. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy Books I–V* (Oxford 1965), *ad loc.*

<sup>46</sup> See Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §277β, who refers to Quint. *Inst.* 4.1.57–60; Hor. *Ars* 14, 136.

<sup>47</sup> See Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §977–1054 on *numerus*, esp. §977–979, on the skilled *oratorius numerus*. See also Martin 323–328.

<sup>48</sup> On *ornatus* see Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §538–1054; on *ornatus* conveying *delectatio*, see Quint. *Inst.* 8.3.5; 4.2.119; 8.6.67, with Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §538.

opening phrase as an example illustrating that the opening feet of a verse are not suited to the opening phrases of prose,<sup>49</sup> the historian's option still illustrates the author's care for the *initium*, which is consistent with rhetorical premises.<sup>50</sup>

The choice of a hexameter seems hardly accidental: this metre of epic poetry is known as a *heroicus uersus*,<sup>51</sup> apt for exalted diction (*magniloquentia*),<sup>52</sup> and inappropriate for non-elevated contexts.<sup>53</sup> It has been rightly argued that the historian's intention to stress the connection between history and epic poetry is confirmed by the expression *operae pretium* echoing Ennius' *Annales*.<sup>54</sup> According to J. Moles and M. de Franchis,<sup>55</sup> this allusion establishes an ideal connection between Livy and his readers, by pointing to the complementarity of both parts' expectations from the work, especially given that *operae pretium* could also be read as an intertextual allusion to Sallust (*Catil.* 12.3). It should be underlined, however, that Livy offers *delectatio* to his audience, thus attempting to make them *beneuolos*, but makes clear from the beginning<sup>56</sup> that he will make no aesthetic concessions. He shows in this way that his audience could find pleasure in the *AVC*, but should know, at the same time, how to appreciate a serious, elaborate creation.

The historian's concern about his readers' response to a work demanding refined taste is explicitly stated in *praef.* 4–5. Livy involves the readers in an indirect apostrophe by which he challenges their intellectual preferences and contrasts them to his own. Contrary to the majority of the readers who will not find pleasure in Rome's early history, preferring to study the turbulent recent history of civil wars, the author views the study of Rome's remote past as a consolation from civil wars:

4. ... et legentium plerisque haud dubito quin primae origines proximaque originibus minus praebitura uoluptatis sint festinantibus ad haec noua, quibus iam pridem praeualentis populi uires se ipsae conficiunt; 5. ego contra hoc quoque laboris praemium petam, ut me a conspectu malorum, quae nostra tot per annos uidit aetas, tantisper certe, dum prisca illa tota mente repeto, auertam, omnis expers curae, quae scribentis animum etsi non flectere a uero, sollicitum tamen efficere posset. (*praef.* 4–5)

<sup>49</sup> See Quint. 9.4.74, with Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §991–992, 1053, and J. Martin, *Antike Rhetorik: Technik und Methode* (München 1974) 325, on the antimetrical principle which requires the avoidance of a verse-opening for *initia*, but tolerates them for *clausulae*.

<sup>50</sup> See Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §1053.

<sup>51</sup> See Cic. *De orat.* 3.49.191, 50.194; *Orat.* 57.191; *Leg.* 2.68.

<sup>52</sup> See Cic. *Orat.* 57.191.

<sup>53</sup> See Lucil. fr. 252–253 W (= 228–229 M): *seruorum est festus dies hic, quem plane hexametro uersu non dicere possis*.

<sup>54</sup> Enn. *Ann.* fr. 494–495 Skutsch = 502–503 Flores: *Audire est operae pretium procedere recte / qui rem Romanam Latiumque augescere uoltis*.

<sup>55</sup> See Moles, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 51–54; and De Franchis, *loc. cit.* (n. 13) 200–201, who analyses Livy's connection with his readers through intertextual references as a *captatio beneuolentiae*.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. De Franchis, *loc. cit.* (n. 13) 201, who suggests that Livy's ideal relationship with his readers is disturbed in *praef.* 4.

“4. ... and at the same time I doubt not that to most readers the earliest origins and the period immediately succeeding them will give little pleasure, for they will be in haste to reach these modern times, in which the might of a people which has long been very powerful is working its own undoing. 5. I myself, on the contrary, shall seek in this an additional reward for my toil, that I may avert my gaze from the troubles which our age has been witnessing for so many years, so long at least as I am absorbed in the recollection of the brave days of old, free from every care which, even if it could not divert the historian's mind from the truth, might nevertheless cause it anxiety.”

The passage could be read as a kind way for Livy to adopt a different stance to Cicero: in *De legibus*, we are informed that Cicero was exhorted by his friends to write history, a project actually never undertaken by the orator, but that, contrary to the opinion of his brother Quintus and in agreement with Atticus, Cicero would prefer to deal with Rome's recent history, in which he had taken part, rather than with its earliest history.<sup>57</sup>

Moreover, Livy's comment against those who are in haste to reach Rome's modern history (*ad haec noua*) may concern not only Roman readers but also historians, those *noui scriptores*, like Sallust,<sup>58</sup> who choose this subject, thus pandering to their readers' low tastes. Livy might assume a standpoint similar to that already advanced by Polybius, who castigates his Hellenistic predecessor Phylarchus because he presents vivid dramatic scenes, in order to stir his readers' hearts to pity; Polybius stresses that a historian's goal should not be to amaze his readers, as a tragic poet would be allowed to do, but to reconstruct what actually happened.<sup>59</sup>

The most striking similarity to Livy's standpoint can be spotted in Polybius' preface of his ninth book (Polyb. 9.1.2–5), where he acknowledges that his somewhat austere style and content of writing is by no means attractive to the majority of readers (Polyb. 9.1.5: τῷ δὲ πλείονι μέρει τῶν ἀκροατῶν ἀψυχαγώγητον παρεσκευάκαμεν τὴν ἀνάγνωσιν). Contrary to his predecessors, who tried to attract as many readers as possible by including in their narratives many branches of history (genealogical, antiquarian, political), Polybius has decided to devote his narrative solely to chronicling political actions. When the historian comes to the actual reasons for writing a history of actions, he declares himself indifferent to providing pleasure (τέρψις) to his readers; benefit (ὠφέλεια) to serious students (φιλομαθοῦντας) who pay attention to such studies (τῶν προσεχόντων)<sup>60</sup> is pre-

<sup>57</sup> See Cic., *Leg.* 1.8.

<sup>58</sup> Oppermann, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 171, suggests more precisely that the above-cited passage is an implicit allusion to Sallust's *Histories*, published some ten years before the first books of Livy.

<sup>59</sup> See Polyb. 2.56.7–12. On the distinction between history and tragedy in Polybius, see F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius, I Commentary on Books I–VI* (Oxford 1957) *ad loc.*

<sup>60</sup> See also Polyb. 3.21.9–10, 11.19a2, where Polybius expresses his special interest in serious students of history (φιλομαθοῦντες).

sented by the historian as being the only legitimate purpose of history.<sup>61</sup> Polybius thus seems much more concerned with distinguishing the purposes of history and drama and distancing himself from the practices of his Hellenistic predecessors, rather than with attracting the goodwill of his prospective readers.

Could a similar analysis apply to Livy's preface?<sup>62</sup> As already mentioned, D. Pausch suggests that Livy's allusion to the readers, and especially the emphasis placed on the reward (*praemium*) he gains from his work, could be a means employed by the author to motivate his prospective readers to read it.<sup>63</sup> In *praef.* 5, it is clearly stated that the study of early Roman history provides pleasure to the author, since it allows him to avert his gaze from the troubles of civil wars. Contrary to Polybius, Livy thus seems far from indifferent to attracting his readers' interest and goodwill.

It is not only the reference to the pleasure Livy takes in his activity which could captivate the *benevolentia* and the *adtentio* of the audience, but also the crafty way in which he portrays those readers who will finally study the narrative of early history and even find pleasure in it, as the author himself does. Already from the first lines (*praef.* 2), Livy had expressed his concern about the fact that history writing has become a widely used or even banal activity (*uulgatam rem*),<sup>64</sup> which made him doubt the usefulness of his work. It has been suggested that by choosing to follow the annalistic tradition and deal with *cum ueterem tum uulgatam rem*, Livy opposes himself to the elitist literary tradition despising the crowd.<sup>65</sup> However, if this reading is accepted, Livy would appear to be undermining his own work by pointing to its unoriginal character.

The phrase *quippe qui cum ueterem tum uulgatam esse rem uideam* requires a closer examination. This causal relative clause is expressed with a subjunctive (*uideam*) showing that the reason stated is that of another and not that of the speaker in the context of an implied indirect discourse. The overloading of the phrase with alliterations<sup>66</sup> may also point to the historian's wish to distance himself from this opinion about his material. *Homoeprophoron*, the frequent

<sup>61</sup> See Polyb. 9.2.4–6; cf. Polyb. 7.7.8, 15.36.3, 31.30.1, where pleasure does not seem to be excluded by Polybius' work.

<sup>62</sup> See in this sense Seita, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 5 (with n. 13), who refers to Polyb. 3.57.7–9, 9.1–2, 15.36.3–10, 36.1.7, 38.4(6).8, 38.5 (39.1).4–9.

<sup>63</sup> Pausch *loc. cit.* (n. 10) 72–73.

<sup>64</sup> See OLD, s.u. *uulgatus* 2b, 3, on these meanings of the participle.

<sup>65</sup> See Delarue, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 48–49, who refers to Callim., *Epigr.* 28.1–4; Verg., *Georg.* 3.292–293; Hor., *Carm.* 3.1.1: *odi profanum uulgus et arceo*.

<sup>66</sup> See generally on alliteration, among others, Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §1246, s.v. alliteration; T. Peck, "Alliteration in Latin", *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 15 (1884) 58–65; cf. W. M. Clarke, "Intentional Alliteration in Vergil and Ovid", *Latomus* 35.2 (1976) 276–300, and N. A. Greenberg, "Aspects of Alliteration: A Statistical Study", *Latomus* 39.3 (1980) 585–611, who focuses on alliteration in Augustan poetry.

repetition of the same consonant, although sometimes used by Cicero,<sup>67</sup> was considered by some theorists of rhetoric an error of *elocutio* to be avoided.<sup>68</sup> In the Livian phrase, beyond the repetition of the initial consonants *u* (*ueterem ... uulgatam ... uideam*)<sup>69</sup> and *qu-* (*quippe qui*), most of the words end in an *-m*; the syllables *qui-* and *-um* are also repeated (*quipped qui ... cum ... tum*). The historian may have chosen this repetitive wording as a format for “quoting” in this implied indirect discourse the possible accusation of his prospective accusers, in order to illustrate their obsessional and exaggerated tone.

Livy seems to adopt in this passage the stance of the accused responding to the criticism of his adversaries. The historian implicitly asserts that despite adhering to the old and seemingly overused annalist tradition, his work is intended to differentiate itself from the *uulgus* of writers and their preferences, who, by the way, more often prefer to deal with Rome's recent rather than its ancient history. By the use of the participle *uulgatam*, Livy does not, therefore, accept that his work is produced by or addressed to the *uulgus*, but he rather anticipates such accusations, which he will definitely refute in *praef.* 4.

By stating there (*praef.* 4) that the majority of readers (*legentium pleris*) cannot appreciate this narrative, Livy implies that the few who will finally read and enjoy the first books are on a higher intellectual level. One should not lose sight of the fact that antiquarianism acquires increasing prestige in the late Republic.<sup>70</sup> Antiquarianism has replaced the authority of the *nobilitas*, which is being progressively deprived of the holding of memory, i.e. one of the traditional domains of her dominance.<sup>71</sup> Consequently, the antiquarian, or more broadly speaking, the person who studies Roman Antiquity, becomes a specialist whose intellectual capacities are not only acknowledged but actually considered superior to those of others.

The high esteem in which the study of history, especially ancient history of Rome, is held by Roman men of letters is particularly evident in Cicero. In *De Legibus* (§1.9), the philosopher apologises for not having accomplished the task

<sup>67</sup> See Cic. *Brut.* 38.142 (*figit format flectit*); *Cat.* 1.10 (*patent portae; profiscere*); *Sull.* 19 (*cum caedes, cum civium cruor, cum cinis patriae ... coeperat*).

<sup>68</sup> See *Rhet. Her.* 4.12.18; Mart. Cap. 33, with Lausberg, *loc. cit.* (n. 33) §974–975.

<sup>69</sup> Weissenborn/Müller, *loc. cit.* (n. 45) and Ogilvie, *loc. cit.* (n. 45) *ad loc.*, mention that the same alliteration appears in Plaut. *Epid.* 350: *Nihil moror uetera et uolgata uerba*.

<sup>70</sup> See on the burst of antiquarian activity in the late Republic, E. Rawson, *Intellectual Life in the Late Roman Republic* (London 1985) 233–249, and B. Bravo, “Antiquarianism and History”, in J. Marincola (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography II*, (Malden/Oxford/Victoria 2007) 523–524, who stresses the elevated level of antiquarian activity and the great prestige it enjoyed. See also Pausch, *loc. cit.* (n. 10) 24–37. For the fresh impetus received by annalistic history in late Republic, see also Walter, *loc. cit.* (n. 3) 143–155; for the changing landscape of the annalistic tradition, see *supra*, n. 3.

<sup>71</sup> See A. Wallace-Hadrill, *Rome's Cultural Revolution* (Cambridge 2008) 213–258 (esp. 235 sq.); according to Pausch, *loc. cit.* (n. 10) 29–30, there was a conflict between the new and the old holders of memory, which can be deduced from Cic., *Att.* 6.1.17; *Fam.* 9.21.2–3 and from Marius' speech in Sall., *Jug.* 85.

of writing history, by stressing that, contrary to other genres, a historical work demands more time and effort. In this way, he recognises the study of the past, recent or remote, to be an intellectually demanding activity.<sup>72</sup> Crassus, in *De oratore* (§192–194), values the antiquarian study of ancient sources of law, which offers a complete picture of the olden times (*plurima antiquitatis effigies*), as a source of knowledge for many branches of life. Intellectuals engaged in the study of Antiquity during the late Republic, especially Varro, were therefore also appreciated for their eminent intellectual qualities which are often described as superior to those of most people, not only in Cicero, but also in later authors like Suetonius and Quintilian.<sup>73</sup>

Livy's portrayal of his readers could be seen within this context of the renovated interest and the increasing prestige of the study of Antiquity. Taking into account the *topos* of Antiquity as a noble object of study and of antiquarians as eminent intellectuals, Livy could suggest that his work was intended to be studied by readers of superior educational status, who could thus understand the usefulness of the study of Antiquity. The historian would thus indirectly praise his audience, which can be viewed as another technique of *captatio benevolentiae ab auditorum/iudicum persona*, also drawn on rhetorical treatises:

*Ab auditorum persona benivolentia colligitur, si res eorum fortiter, sapienter, mansuete, magnifice iudicatas proferemus; et si, quae de iis existimatio, quae iudicii expectatio sit, aperiemus. (Rhet. Her. 1.8)*

“From the discussion of the person of our hearers goodwill is secured if we set forth the courage, wisdom, humanity, and nobility of past judgements they have rendered, and if we reveal what esteem they enjoy and with what interest their decision is awaited.”

*ab auditorum persona benivolentia captabitur, si res ab iis fortiter, sapienter, mansuete gestae proferentur, ut ne qua assentatio nimia significetur, si de iis quam honesta existimatio quantaque eorum iudicii et auctoritatis exspectatio sit ostendetur. (Cic., Inu. 1.22)*

“Good-will will be sought from the persons of the auditors if an account is given of acts which they have performed with courage, wisdom, and mercy, but so as not to

72 Cic., *Leg.* 1.9: *Historia uero nec institui potest nisi praeparato otio, nec exiguo tempore absolui ...* Cicero's statement seems to apply to both ancient and contemporary history, since it follows a discussion between Atticus and Quintus regarding the period with which Cicero should deal (*Leg.* 1.8).

73 See Cic., *Brut.* 205: L. Aelius and Varro were described in rather praising tones. L. Aelius was an eminent (*uir egregius*) and very educated man (*eruditissimus et Graecis litteris et Latinis*). Varro was also a man of superior capacity and wider learning (*uir ingenio praestans omnique doctrina*). Cf. Cic., *Ac.* 1.9: Cicero praises the antiquarian activity of Varro and underlines its necessity (*Tum ego, "Sunt," inquam, "ista, Varro; nam nos in nostra urbe peregrinantis errantisque tamquam hospites tui libri quasi domum reducerunt, ut possemus aliquando qui et ubi essemus agnoscere.*). See also Quint., *Inst.* 10.1.95: Varro is qualified as the most learned of all Romans (*uir Romanorum eruditissimus*), also because of his extraordinary knowledge of Greek and Roman history and Antiquity; Suet., *Gramm.* 20.1: the Greek grammarian of the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. Cornelius Alexander was called by many people *Polyhistor* (much-knowing) due to his knowledge of the past.

show excessive flattery: and if it is shown in what honourable esteem they are held and how eagerly their judgement and opinion are awaited.”

The conventions of the judicial genre require the flattering of the judges, by alluding to past decisions or exploits performed by them with courage, wisdom or humanity.<sup>74</sup> In the case of a historical work, there is no concrete decision to be taken by the hearers or readers, except whether it deserves to be read or listened to or not. It would be impossible to refer to past reading choices of a more or less unknown prospective audience. Livy therefore chooses to favourably predispose his audience, by indirectly suggesting that those interested in his narrative will thereby prove their high intellectual level.<sup>75</sup>

The analysis of the first paragraphs of the preface as an attempt of the author to define his audience as an educated one may be further strengthened by a piece of information reported by the *Suda*: contrary to the rich and uneducated historian Cornutus, to whose *recitationes* people flocked to hear him, hoping to gain some material profit, Livy's *recitationes* had a small audience, which was, however, composed of people pursuing profit for their souls and eloquence.<sup>76</sup> This *testimonium* should not lead us to the conclusion that the *AVC* had not reached or was not intended to reach a larger audience in its age. The following famous anecdote found in Pliny seems, on the contrary, to take the success of Livy's work for granted: a man from Gades, in Spain, was so fired by the name and glory of Livy that he came from the remotest corner of the world to see him, and returned the moment he had set eyes on him.<sup>77</sup> Despite Pliny's possible exaggerations,<sup>78</sup> this anecdote still shows that the *AVC* was widely spread and read. The lemma from the *Suda* may reflect the fact that Livy's audience during public readings in Rome was relatively limited, when compared to that of other authors, but it can say nothing about the number of “silent” readers of the *AVC* throughout the Empire.<sup>79</sup> The information reported from the *Suda* should rather be exploited as a *testimonium* not so much on the number as on the targeted intellectual, and not necessarily social, level of Livy's audience. It is difficult to identify the ultimate ancient source of the lexicographer, but it

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Arist., *Rh.* 3.14.11: praising the audience is described as a device associated with *captatio benevolentiae* in epideictic exordia.

<sup>75</sup> Seita, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 5, suggests that Livy does not enter into a polemic with readers who pay attention to *delectatio*, but shows himself conscious of having to deal with a heterogeneous or even low-level readership who are usually looking for pleasure (*uoluptas*) rather than usefulness (*utilitas*). See in this respect Cic., *Fin.* 5.52.

<sup>76</sup> *Suda*, s.u. Κορνοῦτος: ... τοῦ γε μὴν Λιβίου ὀλίγους, ἀλλὰ ὧν τι ὄφελος ἦν καὶ ἐν κάλλει ψυχῆς καὶ ἐν εὐλογίᾳ.

<sup>77</sup> See Plin. *Epist.* 2.3.8, with De Franchis, *loc. cit.* (n. 19).

<sup>78</sup> See De Franchis, *loc. cit.* (n. 19) 27–28, on the context of the anecdote.

<sup>79</sup> See on this point De Franchis, *loc. cit.* (n. 19) 39, who argues that Livy seems to have been more famous outside Rome rather than within it, by associating the different success of Cornutus' and Livy's *recitationes* to their different social status.

cannot be ruled out that this description of Livy's audience, although much later in date, might derive indirectly from Livy himself; it might reflect the way the historian attempted to qualify his audience within his work and during the *recitationes*.

Livy would not be the first author who attempts to define the educational level of the public he desires. It has already been explained that Polybius expressed his special interest in serious students of history (*φιλομαθοῦντες*), who would be able and willing to profit from his narrative.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the exclusion of audience groups according to their educational level is a *topos* in Roman satirists who explicitly restrict (or pretend to restrict) their readers to a group of *pauci* who are intellectually capable of understanding their poetry.<sup>81</sup>

It must be underlined, however, that in Livy's case, the author does not attempt any exclusion of readers; on the contrary, he expresses his concern about the majority of readers who will unfortunately not be able or willing to devote themselves to the study of Rome's ancient history.<sup>82</sup> The audience (receiver) is expected to reject the text (message) and its author (sender), and not vice-versa. The author only judges in advance that those who will finally accept his message will belong to a minority of a higher intellectual level. Instead of excluding readers, Livy uses a "reverse psychology" technique of *benevolentia*, which consists in implicitly exhorting all people to belie the author's expectations by finally reading the narrative, so that they can claim to be a part of an intellectually privileged minority which will find advantage (*praemium*) in it. Far from restricting his audience to an elite of extremely educated people, Livy attempts, through *captatio benevolentiae*, to reach as large an audience as possible and to thus make accessible to a wider public a domain considered a privilege of the intellectually superior few.

<sup>80</sup> See Polyb. 9.2.4–6, 3.21.9–10, 11.19a2.

<sup>81</sup> S. Tzounakas, "Persius on His Predecessors: A Re-examination", *Classical Quarterly* 55.2 (2005) 570–571, gives the following references: Lucilius (Lucil. 632–635 W = 592–593, 595–596 M) excludes the very learned and the very uneducated, claiming an average audience; Horace restricts his readers to friends (Hor., *Sat.* 1.4.71–78) and to a group of a few eminent writers and literary patrons (*ibid.* 1.10.74–91); Persius (1.2–3, 126–134) clearly distances himself from the crowd, by stating that he expects few readers, if any at all, and by giving a satirical description of the readers he disclaims because of their low educational standards.

<sup>82</sup> Moles, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 151, notes: "It is true that the phrase used of Livy's readers, *legentium plerisque*, allows for the possibility of a select minority which does share Livy's tastes, but this implication is relatively trivial: Livy is not proclaiming a Callimachean elitism: he is concerned to achieve a large readership (*praef.* 9)."

## 5 Livy's communication with the "educated" audience in *praef.* 5–13

It has been argued so far that the immediate purpose of the construction of Livy's preface as a *captatio benevolentiae* addressed to educated readers was to persuade as many readers as possible to be interested in the study of the *AVC*. The examination of the rest of the *exordium* (*praef.* 5–13) is important, in order to investigate whether and in what way Livy's method of persuasion is extended to and determines the interpretation of the last part of the prologue, in which the historian prepares the readers for the narrative. It will thus be shown that Livy's persuasion devices in *praef.* 1–4 are also related with the author's agenda for *praef.* 5–13: the historian intends to urge and convince the audience, already favourably predisposed to engage in the study of the work, to do so in an active way.

Livy continues to view himself and his audience in rhetorical terms as, respectively, the sender and the receivers of a message. This is reflected in his persistent use of the first person singular (*ego*) to refer to himself, the second person singular (*tu*) to refer to his reader, and the third person singular (*quisque*) and the first person plural (*nos*) to refer both to himself and to his reader. The last nine paragraphs can be divided into three parts, depending on the grammatical person involved in each part:<sup>83</sup> (a) *praef.* 5–8, where the first person singular prevails, since Livy is expounding on his method; (b) *praef.* 9–10: the historian switches from the first to the third and second person singular, when he refers to the central theme of his work and to the exemplary function of the history; and (c) *praef.* 11–13: Livy uses the first person singular and plural, in order to share some general conclusions on Rome's moral history and to conclude his preface.

Having in mind the reading of *praef.* 1–4 as a *captatio benevolentiae* and Livy's portrayal of his audience as an educated one, it can be argued that the historian exploits this switch of grammatical persons as a means of blurring the boundaries between himself and his educated readers, who are thus invited to become involved, with the author, in the study of Roman history. The engaged reader, *a priori* qualified as educated in *praef.* 1–4, would be expected to share Livy's escapism through the study of Antiquity in part (a) (*praef.* 5–8):

*ego contra hoc quoque laboris praemium petam, ut me a conspectu malorum quae nostra tot per annos uidit aetas, tantisper certe dum prisca illa tota mente repeto, auertam ... (praef. 5)*<sup>84</sup>

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Koster *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 253–263, who suggests that the three parts of the preface (*praef.* 1–5, 6–10, 11–13) correspond to different stages of composition of the preface. The present analysis will attempt to show that the whole preface finds its cohesion in the theme of *captatio benevolentiae*.

<sup>84</sup> On the Sallustian reminiscences of Livy's escapism, see C. S. Kraus/A. J. Woodman, *Latin Historians* (Oxford 1997) 52; cf. Herkommer, *loc. cit.* (n. 7) 37–38; A. Vasaly, *Livy's Political Philosophy: Power and Personality in Early Rome* (New York 2015) 23–24.

“I myself, on the contrary, shall seek in this an additional reward for my toil, that I may avert my gaze from the troubles which our age has been witnessing for so many years, so long at least as I am absorbed in the recollection of the brave days of old ...”

The use of the first person plural (*nostra aetas*) is in line with Livy’s project to involve the audience in a common interpretation of Roman history. The *ego* of the author and the *ego* of the reader or hearer, especially the educated one, are blurred in a joint interpretation of Rome’s recent and remote history. The educated reader should also identify with the method chosen by Livy:

6. *Quae ante conditam condendamue urbem poeticis magis decora fabulis quam incorruptis rerum gestarum monumentis traduntur, ea nec adfirmare nec refellere in animo est. [...] 8. sed haec et his similia, utcumque animaduversa aut existimata erunt, haud in magno equidem ponam discrimine.* (praef. 6–8).

“6. Such traditions as belong to the time before the city was founded, or rather was presently to be founded, and are rather adorned with poetic legends than based upon trustworthy historical proofs, I purpose neither to affirm nor to refute. [...] 8. But to such legends as these, however they shall be regarded and judged, I shall, for my own part, attach no great importance.”

Livy finds it necessary to refer to the methodological precautions to be observed in the study of legendary traditions belonging to the times before or around Rome’s foundation: a sophisticated investigator of the past should attempt neither to confirm nor to deny these poetic legends (*poeticis fabulis*).<sup>85</sup> The reader, already indirectly portrayed as educated, would be expected to share the author’s mind (*in animo*) in this respect, and to attach (*ponam*), along with the author, no great importance to such legends. Livy clarifies in part (b) the themes to which particular attention should be paid:

*ad illa mihi pro se quisque acriter intendat animum, quae uita, qui mores fuerint, per quos uiros quibusque artibus domi militiaeque et partum et auctum imperium sit; labente deinde paulatim disciplina uelut desidentis primo mores sequatur animo, deinde ut magis magisque lapsi sint, tum ire coeperint praecipites, donec ad haec tempora, quibus nec uitia nostra nec remedia pati possumus, peruentum est.* (praef. 9)

“Here are the questions to which I would have every reader give his close attention – what life and morals were like; through what men and by what policies, in peace and in war, empire was established and enlarged; then let him note how, with the gradual relaxation of discipline, morals first gave way, as it were, then sank lower and lower, and finally began the downward plunge which has brought us to the present time, when we can endure neither our vices nor their cure.”

The first person pronoun *mihi*, functioning as a dative of person judging, is used to clarify the historian’s personal opinion on what should be the focus of an investiga-

<sup>85</sup> See G. Forsythe, *Livy and Early Rome: A Study in Historical Method and Judgement* (Stuttgart 1999) 40–51, on the way Livy’s method is reflected in the first decade. Vasaly, *loc. cit.* (n. 84) 29, also discusses the exact meaning and the philosophical background of this method.

tor of the Roman past.<sup>86</sup> By switching to the third person singular within the same sentence, the author attempts to engage his reader or hearer in his opinion: the indefinite pronoun *quisque* could refer to both the author and the reader; the author's mind (*sequatur animo*) is blurred with the reader's. The learned writer and reader or hearer should both turn their attention to Rome's progress and decline, which is announced as the major subject of the *AVC*.<sup>87</sup> Livy then chooses to make a direct apostrophe to his reader through the use of second person singular in *praef.* 10.<sup>88</sup> By switching from the first (*mihi*) to the third (*quisque, intendat, sequatur animo*) and then to second person singular (*te, tibi tuaeque, uites*), the author attributes a gradually increasing role to the audience in the study of the past:

*Hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod uites. (praef. 10)*

"What chiefly makes the study of history wholesome and profitable is this, that you behold the lessons of every kind of experience set forth as on a conspicuous monument; from these you may choose for yourself and for your own state what to imitate, from these mark for avoidance what is shameful in the conception and shameful in the result."

Scholars more often comment on the way Livy deals here with the *topos* of the exemplary function of history.<sup>89</sup> Consistently with the portrayal of his expected audience in *praef.* 4, Livy makes clearer in *praef.* 10 that he conceives the reader who will finally decide and manage to go through the work to be a person of a relatively high intellectual level, since he should be able to do the work of distinguishing between good and bad examples and of exploiting these *exempla* in a profitable way for his *res publica*.<sup>90</sup> *Exempla* can be useful only because they are addressed to such a re-

<sup>86</sup> Seita, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 16–17, notes that *mihi* employed before *pro se quisque* shows that Livy writes for himself, but simultaneously wants to share his thoughts on Rome's progress and decline with his readers.

<sup>87</sup> Livy's description of the progress and gradual decadence of the *res publica* in *praef.* 9, 11–12, is often taken to recall Sallust (esp. *Hist. fr.* 1.16 M). See Amundsen, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 33–35; Leeman, *loc. cit.* (n. 36) 31; Ogilvie, *loc. cit.* (n. 45) *ad loc.*; Mazza, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 69–71; M. Paschalis, *Livy's praefatio and Sallust*, PhD dissertation (Ohio State Univ. Columbus, 1980) 122–124; cf. Moles, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 155–156; Seita, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 16 sq.; P. J. Burton, "Livy's preface and its historical context", *Scholia: Studies in Classical Antiquity* 17 (2008) 70–91.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Seita, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 16–17, who suggests that the second person singular creates a somewhat stronger link between Livy and his reader, but it should not be given too much importance, since the passage expresses a banal idea. Cf. also Koster, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 253–263, who interprets the second person as an apostrophe to Augustus.

<sup>89</sup> See, among others, Leeman, *loc. cit.* (n. 36) 30–31; Paschalis, *loc. cit.* (n. 87) 127–132; Moles, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 167–168; Kraus/Woodman, *loc. cit.* (n. 84) 53–56; Chaplin, *loc. cit.* (n. 9) 1 sq., 50 sq. On the *topos* of the usefulness of history, see Janson, *loc. cit.* (n. 7) 66–67; Herkommer, *loc. cit.* (n. 7) 12–137.

<sup>90</sup> De Franchis, *loc. cit.* (n. 13) 201–203, argues that the different tastes of the author and the audience, the reference to which in *praef.* 4 is unexpected in the context of a *captatio benevolentiae*, are reconciled in *praef.* 9–10, when Livy refers to the necessary research for common utility. On Livy con-

ceiver. Livy continues his attempt to gain the goodwill of his readers by indirectly pointing out his high esteem for them.

Livy switches again to the first person in the closing part (c) (*praef.* 11–13). In *praef.* 11–12, he presents some general conclusions on the relatively recent introduction of *avaritia* and *luxuria* to Rome. The use of the personal pronoun *me* conveys a personal tone in Livy's conclusions, which are the result of his survey of the Roman past:

11. *Ceterum aut me amor negotii suscepti fallit, aut nulla unquam res publica nec maior nec sanctor nec bonis exemplis ditior fuit, nec in quam ciuitatem tam serae avaritia luxuriaque immigrauerint [...]* 12. *nuper diuitiae avaritiam et abundantes uoluptates desiderium per luxum atque libidinem pereundi perdendique omnia inuexere.* (*praef.* 11–12)

“11. For the rest, either love of the task I have set myself deceives me, or no state was ever greater, none more righteous or richer in good examples, none ever was where avarice and luxury came into the social order so late [...] 12. Of late, riches have brought in avarice, and excessive pleasures the longing to carry wantonness and licence to the point of ruin for oneself and of universal destruction.”

Placed after the direct apostrophe to the readers, this statement is intended to persuade the audience that the survey of *exempla* is worth undertaking because of the high moral standards which prevailed for centuries in Rome. The assurance, given through the use of the first person singular *me*, that this is a personal conclusion, functions as a means of persuasion on the author's part, who expects his reader to reach the same conclusion after having studied the *AVC*. The pronoun *me* would then refer to each reader's point of view as well. The perspective of such a joint (between author and reader) interpretation of Roman history is reflected in the use of the first person plural in the last lines of the prologue. Livy attempts to dispel the complaints about Rome's decline before beginning his narrative:

*Sed querellae, ne tum quidem gratae futurae cum forsitan necessariae erunt, ab initio certe tantae ordiendae rei absint.* 13. *cum bonis potius ominibus uotisque et precationibus deorum dearumque, si, ut poetis, nobis quoque mos esset, libentius inciperemus, ut orsis tantum operis successus prosperus darent.* (*praef.* 12–13).

“But complaints are sure to be disagreeable, even when they shall perhaps be necessary; let the beginning, at all events, of so great an enterprise have none. 13. With good omens rather would we begin, and, if historians had the same custom which

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structuring an alert reader, see M. Jaeger, *Livy's Written Rome* (Ann Arbor 1997) 27–28; Chaplin, *loc. cit.* (n. 9) 50–104; *idem*, “Livy's Use of *exempla*”, in B. Mineo (ed.), *A Companion to Livy* (Malden/Oxford 2015) 102–113. Cf. C. S. Kraus, *Livy: Ab Vrbe Condita, Book VI* (Cambridge/New York/Oakleigh 1994) 14: “There is a direct, personal relationship between the *ego* of the text and this *tu*: history is understood – even made – in the space between them. The reader's job is to observe closely (*intueri*) not only the results (displayed in L.'s *illustre monumentum* as in a diorama) but also the workings of history.” See also Kraus/Woodman, *loc. cit.* (n. 84) 55–56.

poets have, with prayers and entreaties to the gods and goddesses, that they might grant us to bring to a successful issue the great task we have undertaken.”

The pronoun *nobis*, juxtaposed to *poetis*, can, of course, be taken to refer to historians.<sup>91</sup> The interpretation of *praef.* 1–4 as a *captatio benevolentiae* and of the rest of the preface as the author's attempt to blur the boundaries between his own and his favourably disposed readers' *ego* allows, however, a complementary reading: the use of the first person plural could be viewed as referring to both the author and the readers of the work, who are about to invest their education and time in the common task of investigating the Roman past. The successful outcome of this great task (*tantum operis successus prosperus*) does not depend on the gods, but on the joint effort of the author and the readers or hearers, who should dispel any complaints (*querellae*) before beginning their common effort.

## 6 Conclusions

The first part of Livy's preface (*praef.* 1–4) is constructed as a *captatio benevolentiae*. The rhetorical devices by which the author attempts to acquire the goodwill of his audience are among those suggested to orators in the preserved rhetorical treatises of the late Republic: the attack on the adversaries, the appeal to the *ethos* of the writer/orator, the reference to the difficulty of his task and, more importantly, the praising of the audience. Livy tries to persuade as many people as possible to read or hear his work, by portraying in advance those who will finally decide to accomplish such a task as intellectually superior. This portrayal is particularly important, since it provides the basis for a coherent interpretation of the whole preface: having gained in *praef.* 1–4 the *benevolentia* of his readers, Livy is moving, in *praef.* 5–13, to the next step, which is to ask them to use their eminent qualities, in order to cooperate with the author in a common method of study and a joint interpretation of Roman history.

The reasons for which Livy conceived his prologue as a *captatio benevolentiae* in an attempt to reach as wide a public as possible, may be sought in the changing status of Roman historians and the audience of historical works. A comprehensive solution to this question, which needs to be further investigated, cannot be provided in this paper. It seems, however, to be no coincidence that Livy appears as one of the most representative successors of those annalists of the younger generation who chose to write history, an activity traditionally reserved for Romans of the senatorial class, although they had held no public office.<sup>92</sup> It would thus be important for the author to ensure the goodwill of

<sup>91</sup> For the poetic influences of this closing, see Oppermann, *loc. cit.* (n. 6) 179; Ogilvie, *loc. cit.* (n. 45) *ad loc.*; cf. Paschalis, *loc. cit.* (n. 87) 15–17.

<sup>92</sup> See on this aspect Walter; *loc. cit.* (n. 3) 143–155; Ledentu, *loc. cit.* (n. 3) 99–103, 121–122, 200–209; D. S. Levene, “Roman Historiography in the Late Republic”, in: J. Marincola, *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* I (Malden/Oxford/Victoria 2007) 277–280; Marincola, *loc. cit.* (n. 4) 11–12; cf.

the audience, which should be convinced that the *AVC* is worth reading and that it does not fall into the same category as all those works produced by a mob of writers (*turba scriptorum*).

Moreover, Marincola has pointed out that, beyond the elite which figures as the primary audience of history works, the history of Rome has started to become of interest to all Romans during the late Republic.<sup>93</sup> The increasing number of prospective readers provided an opportunity for Livy – as for every historian – who would logically be interested in promoting his work to as large an audience as possible. A purely commercial motivation cannot be proved, but also should not be excluded, especially given that there is no information or hint that Livy had any other means of livelihood.<sup>94</sup> Notwithstanding his desire to promote his work, the historian needed at the same time to demonstrate that his history was intended to be studied by an intellectual elite, in order to ensure that the *nobiles*, still the primary prospective readership, would not be excluded. Livy tries to combine these rather contradictory goals by constructing his preface as a *captatio benevolentiae* addressed to all those who consider themselves members of an intellectually privileged elite.

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Timpe, *loc. cit.* (n. 3) 107–111, who insists on the patronage relationship between Valerius Antias and Claudius Quadrigarius and the senatorial class.

<sup>93</sup> See Marincola, *loc. cit.* (n. 4) 13–14, who is based on Polyb. 6.53.2–3; Cic., *Fin.* 5.51: even craftsmen were delighted in history; cf. Plin., *Epist.* 5.8.4; Cic., *Hort.* fr. 13 Grilli. See also Timpe, *loc. cit.* (n. 3) 115; De Franchis 2014, 192–197.

<sup>94</sup> The complex question of the book market in ancient Rome cannot even be resumed in this paper. See on this aspect Momigliano, *loc. cit.* (n. 4) 369–370; and Pausch, *loc. cit.* (n. 10) 65–71. More generally on the circulation of books in the Roman world, see R. J. Starr, “The Circulation of Literary Texts in the Roman World”, *Classical Quarterly* 37 (1987) 213–223.