

REVIVING THE *BATRACHOMYOMACHIA* IN THE RENAISSANCE: TRACING THREE MODES OF POEM RECEPTION IN LATIN LITERATURE

by

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ABSTRACT: This article explores the transmission of the *Batrachomyomachia* (*BM*) in the Renaissance Latin literature. The *BM* was attributed to Homer and spread through Latin translations by prominent figures such as Carlo Marsuppini and Johannes Reuchlin, as well as lesser-known poets. Translators often copied and corrected existing translations rather than translating directly from Greek. The journey of the poem was complicated, with the disappearance of the authorship of translations over time and the lack of knowledge of other existing versions. The *BM* endured in Latin literature and inspired a diverse range of reworkings, making it a testament to the lasting influence of Greek epics on European literature.

1. INTRODUCTION

The *Batrachomyomachia* (*BM*) is recognised as a classic example of mock epic poetry, combining epic form with playfully light content. Recently, scholars have portrayed it as a Hellenistic work, creating humour through intertextuality. This view is presented in works by Matthew HOSTY, Joel CHRISTENSEN and Erik ROBINSON, and various authors of recent papers¹. The *BM* has experienced a resurgence in research, but its popularity can be traced back much earlier, particularly because of its translation into Latin that spread throughout Europe during the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries. The only comprehensive analysis of this topic has been provided by Aäron VANSPAUWEN², along with historical works documenting subsequent editions³ and abandoned projects⁴. Isolated studies have

¹ See HOSTY 2020; CHRISTENSEN, ROBINSON 2018; also KELLY 2009 and 2014; HOSTY 2014; STICKER 2017; BAUER 2020.

² VANSPAUWEN 2017.

³ MAITTAIRE 1721.

⁴ Siniša JOVČIĆ and Petra MATOVIĆ (ŠOŠTARIĆ) embarked on a digitisation project and completed the transcriptions of the translations by Carlo Marsuppini, Joachim Münsinger and Francisco Xavier Alegre, but unfortunately, the initiative was not continued. See JOVČIĆ, ŠOŠTARIĆ 2018.