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**Polyphony and the Active Method of Teaching Martial**

The polyphonic (usually biphonic) character of Martial's epigrams presents a challenging opportunity to his young contemporary readers. Instead of the traditional classroom translation which often leaves the point of the epigram unemphasized and the conflict leading to it undiscovered, an approach considering the epigram as a part of a dialogue will be conducive to the deeper understanding of the epigram. According to this approach, the epigram will be considered in its broader social and literary context, the reconstruction of which will be a part of grasping the meaning of the epigram. Thus, every epigram will be explicitly developed into a dialogue, which might have been initially implicit in it.

The epigram often presents a part of an unwritten dialogue. The dialogue might have begun before the writing of the epigram, or the epigram might be its starting part. The epigram might anticipate the answer of an unasked question or provide a question which will require an answer. There is an interaction between two voices in most of the epigrams; one is the poet's, the other, his addressee's. Sometimes a third voice might appear. Other times it is just a minidiologue, a combination of voices in the poet's consciousness. The monologue, under the influence of the anticipated words of the other, also becomes a dialogue. When inanimate object is talking (Books XIII and XIV), this talk may be considered as a playful invitation to a dialogue. The hidden dialogue leaves the text open, it leaves a loophole and with this an invitation for the text to be reworked.

Reading and understanding Martial will consist in leading students to discover the hidden dialogue, to write its unwritten parts, to ask the unasked questions, to find the invisible answers and make them visible. This work supposes much more thorough comprehension of the text than its simple translation. The dialogue will reconstruct the situation which gave the poet a motive to create; it will introduce characters usually mentioned only in vocative in the actual text; it will make explicit their implicit voice; it will reveal their points of view normally only alluded in the text. It will also make more obvious the dynamics of the serious and the funny (*spoudaiogeloion*) intertwined with the dialogical character of the epigrams.

A favorite author for beginners in studying Latin, Martial may actually lead the young students to a deeper familiarity with the language that could prove crucial in approaching more complicated writers.

This presentation will include the analysis of various types of dialogicality in Martial's epigrams and the possible reconstruction of the hidden dialogues.