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978-0-521-62088-8 - Rumour and Renown: Representations of Fama in Western Literature
Philip Hardie
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1 Introduction

At a critical moment for Aeneas' career in Virgil's *Aeneid*, when the hero is in danger of being blown off course in his journey towards the far-distant fame and fate of his Roman descendants, a demonic creature bursts in on the narrative of the human actors to broadcast a tendentious account of the union of Dido and Aeneas in the cave (*Aen.* 4.173–97). *Fama* is the embodiment of the rumours and gossip that swirl around the glamorous royal couple, but this monster is far more than just that, containing in her expansive person distortions and refractions of other aspects of 'what is said', as it affects the individual's relationship to the group, whether that be his or her own society or the society of the future. Virgil's *Fama*, the most elaborate example of personification allegory in the *Aeneid*, has sometimes been seen as an excrescence, a self-indulgent ornament interrupting the proper business of the epic poet. Closer acquaintance reveals that she is central to that business, and that her power is closely related to the power of the poet's own words, and to the power of other kinds of words that are the subject of the poet's words. My own repeated reflection on Virgil's *Fama*, and on her antecedents and descendants, has over the years expanded into the present book.

This is a primarily literary study of an area where texts have a particularly heavy investment in the extratextual world, an area where the words that constitute texts describe and comment on the production and circulation of words outside texts, and where the boundary between the textual and extratextual is particularly porous. My subject, very broadly defined, is a cluster of aspects of the ordering (or disordering) of words as a means to exert control, or to impose a particular view of reality, or to construct a hierarchy of values. The (dis)order of words is a subject that especially concerns texts, which are themselves nothing but words in a certain ordering. An author's claim to authority in the world outside can only be staked on his or her power over words. Through those words the individual author seeks to regulate his or her reputation among a group, namely the readership, whether defined more or less narrowly in terms of spatial or temporal extent. More broadly, the relationship between an individual and society is an important part of what might be labelled the 'politics of the word'. Words are produced by

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individuals, but they are the chief means by which individual human beings construct and regulate the multiplicity of groupings that make up human society.

To descend somewhat from these large generalities, the range of phenomena subjected to scrutiny in this book largely coincides with the range of meanings of the Latin word *fama*, literally 'what is said', one of several nouns derived from the verb *fari* 'speak', and including *fatum* 'fate' and *fabula* 'story, tale' (both words which interact in various ways with *fama*).[1] The meanings of *fama* include 'fame', 'glory', 'reputation', good but also bad, 'infamy'; 'public opinion', 'rumour', 'gossip', 'tradition'. The modern English 'fame' (derived from the Latin word via French) has become restricted in sense to a small part of the meanings of *fama*. The range of meanings in Middle English and the early modern period remained wider; this is important for an understanding of Chaucer's *House of Fame*, probably the single most important work for the history of *fama* in English literature (see Ch. 15). I repeatedly use the Latin *fama* as a shorthand for the cluster of concepts that is the subject of the book, although the thesis that there is a complex dynamic of relationships between these concepts is not dependent on the linguistic accident whereby Latin uses one word to cover what in other languages is spread over a number of terms. My study begins with early Greek literature, although the Greek φήμη (derived from φημί 'I say') covers a narrower range of meanings than its Latin cognate *fama*.[2] Equally, the distribution of terms for aspects of *fama* in modern European languages does not coincide with the situation in Latin, although the reception of *fama* after antiquity is undoubtedly to some extent guided by awareness of the range of meanings contained in the single Latin word.[3] In particular, in literature and the visual arts, the two major personifications of *Fama*, in Book 4 of Virgil's *Aeneid* and Book 12 of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, helped to keep attention focussed on this network of relationships. In her incoherent

[1] Bettini 2008 argues that in Latin *fari* and *fama* denote a particularly powerful form of utterance, and develops an interesting thesis therefrom on the ambivalence concerning the credibility and authority of *fama*. Whether or not the etymological argument holds, that ambivalence, on which this book has much to say, is reinforced, if not determined, by a host of extralinguistic factors.

[2] For an analysis of a range of Greek words in the area of 'fame, glory, honour' see Greindl 1938. I have not seen Steinkopf 1937. For a classification of Greek, Latin and Hebrew terms in the field of *fama* see Boitani 1984: 24–31.

[3] Boitani 1984: 23 emphasizes the complexity of the notions covered by Chaucerian 'fame'. See also Fenster and Smail 2003: 1–2 on the wide range of meanings preserved by medieval *fama*: 'It retained and incorporated meanings that had been active in Latin-speaking cultures.' They also point to some intersections of *fama* with terms not discussed in this book, including status and witnessing.

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coherence the Virgilian and Ovidian *Fama* provides a commentary on the loose but essential connections that bind the various functions and qualities of the word which are included in the different senses of *fama*. Chapters 3 and 5 offer detailed analyses of the Virgilian and Ovidian *Fama* and her operations.

The duplicities of *fama*[4]

Through all of its complexities I perceive a constant tendency of *fama* to structure itself according to a series of contrasts or oppositions. But these oppositions are open to erosion or deconstruction, partly because at the end of the day the stuff of *fama* is always one and the same – (just) words. Some of these oppositions emerge clearly through consideration of the range of dictionary meanings of *fama*. There is an evaluative contrast between good and bad kinds of *fama*, in modern English 'fame' and 'infamy'. There is a contrast in temporal duration between proliferating but transient uses of the word – 'rumour', 'hearsay', 'gossip', Latin *rumor*, *sermones* (*TLL* s.v. *fama* I.A),[5] and also the potentially more reliable 'report', 'news' (*OLD* s.v. *fama* 1a) – and the word as that which fixes and preserves, tradition, the word as the repository of cultural memory, with the power to preserve and replicate ideologies and beliefs over generations (*TLL* I.B.i),[6] and also the word as preserving the immortal fame of individual great men. The contrast between rumour and tradition, or between rumour and fame, may be formulated as a contrast between process and product: rumour and gossip tend to be thought of as words in circulation, a series of exchanges,[7] whereas tradition implies a fixed corpus of words, whether written or spoken, and the literary monument is one of the safest ways to secure lasting fame (or so writers assure their *laudandi*).

But that contrast is unstable in various ways. The presentation of fame as a free-standing and lasting monument is a mystification of the fact that praise of outstanding men is itself part of a system of exchange.[8] What is

[4] The phrase *duplex fama* occurs in a prominent and programmatic position at the beginning of Livy's *History*, 1.1.6 (see Ch. 7 p. 244); also at 8.20.6, 29.21.1.

[5] For a wide-ranging and insightful literary and cultural history of rumour see Neubauer 1999.

[6] *fama* is used to refer to particular reports or traditions, the sum of which may be thought of as what we call 'tradition'.

[7] See Spacks 1986: 20–1 on gossip as exchange, dialogue. On 'positional trust', *in* gossip, *between* gossipers, see Gambetta 1994: 216. On gossip as 'a series of more or less calculated prestations or gifts' see Stewart and Strathern 2004: 37.

[8] For an economic model for the 'traffic in praise' in the Pindaric epinician see Kurke 1991.

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perceived as a fixed tradition may crystallize out of a more fluid circulation of words. Folklorists see no sharp distinction between rumour and legend: legend may be defined as a rumour that has become 'part of the verbal heritage of a people'.[9] On the other hand, the preservation of a tradition depends on the repeated reuse of words within a social group, whether in new instances of production, written or spoken, or of consumption on the part of audiences or readers, with the consequent possibility of the alteration of the material substance of the words of the tradition or text, and the certainty of the shifting reception of the same. As (just) verbal constructs, traditions are also contestable at the level of their truth-content, open to challenge from other orders of words. *fama* 'a report' may accurately preserve *facta* 'deeds', or it may be no more than a *fabula* 'fictional tale'. *fama* may be the clear expression of realities, or the cloudy distortion of the truth, or even a report or opinion completely detached from reality. The link between *fama* and opinion is more immediate in Greek than in Latin, since one of the chief words in Greek for fame or reputation is δόξα, which often means 'opinion' as opposed to 'truth'.[10] The Renaissance personification of Opinion is closely related to Fame.[11] Locutions of the kind *ut fama est* 'as report, tradition has it', *ut perhibent* 'as they relate', *fertur* 'it is said', the so-called 'Alexandrian footnote', are notoriously self-conscious of their equivocation between being a claim to the (very possibly unreliable) authority of previous tradition, and a licence for the poet to invent his own 'tradition'.[12]

Words, and the opinions that they convey, circulate and solidify among large and unaccountable groups of people: *fama* can mean 'public opinion' (*opinio*, *existimatio*), which in an aristocratic or oligarchic society may be belittled as worthless and fickle. At the same time the applause and praise, *laus*, of the many is sought as proof of the successful individual's standing and worth (based on substantial and praiseworthy achievements),

[9] Mullen 1972: 96–7; Allport and Postman 1947: 162 on legend as 'solidified rumour'; 163 n. 2 in Chinese *chuan* = both 'rumour' and 'legend'; Gambetta 1994: 211 (citing Stanislav Lec) 'myth is gossip grown old'. See also Spacks 1986: 77 'The analogy between published letters and gossip may remind us of gossip's value as an agent of preservation, even of glorification (turning lives into stories declares their importance) as well as of reification.'

[10] Dio Chrysostom's three orations Περὶ δόξης (66–8) address both 'reputation' and 'opinion'; the sixty-seventh starts with a philosophical distinction between δόξα and ἀλήθεια and proceeds to the philosopher's rejection of popular opinion in the form of honour and dishonour, praise and blame.

[11] See Ure 1951.

[12] On Virgil's use of these locutions see Horsfall 1991: Ch. 8 'È stato detto'; on the 'Alexandrian footnote' in general see Hinds 1998: 1–5; Clément-Tarantino 2006: Part III 'La Muse et le on-dit', a massive study of *ut fama est* and similar locutions.

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the 'fame' that is experienced as a solid and hopefully lasting possession, *fama* in the sense close to *honos* 'honour' or *gloria* 'glory'[13] (*TLL* s.v. *fama* III.B.i). This is also a double bind that traps the élite poet, dismissive of all but a fit and few readers, but greedy for the fame bestowed by a mass readership.[14] Pascal anatomizes the contradiction in the human desire for glory: 'Those who most despise men and put them on a level with the beasts, still wish to be admired and believed by them, and contradict themselves through their own feelings, since their nature, which is stronger than anything, convinces them of the greatness of mankind more strongly than their reason convinces them of its lowliness.'[15] A good or bad reputation (*fama* as either 'fame' or 'infamy') is felt as an important item of personal property,[16] or even as a core part of an individual's identity.[17] The opinion of the crowd is conveyed largely through the oral use of words, and through other transient forms of expression, but the great man hopes for the immortalization of fame in more permanent media, not least written memorials. Etymologically *fama* means the spoken word, but the written (and later printed) word is no less important a vehicle for *fama*.

The instabilities and tensions within the various manifestations of *fama* thus produce a constant tendency to self-division. *Fama*, it might be said, speaks with a forked tongue. In what is perhaps the earliest theorization of *fama* in Hesiod's *Works and Days* we find an implicit duality (good and bad, useful and detrimental reports) that is reflected in the structural

[13] On *gloria* see Lida de Malkiel 1968; Drexler 1962; Hellegouarc'h 1972: 369–83; Joukovsky 1969; Leeman 1949; Mazzoli 2004; Thomas 2002; Vermeulen 1956.

[14] See below p. 31 on Hor. *Ep.* 1.20; Gunn 1995: 37 (talking of France in the 1630s) 'The literary man's familiar paradox that he was at once contemptuous of the public's taste and eager for readers.' For Gunn this is relevant for contemporary politics also, and for the king's dependence on the opinion of the masses, 'the voices off-stage'.

[15] Sellier 1991: 504, no. 707.

[16] On a 'good name' as symbolic property (with reference to Bourdieu) see Rigney 1994: 55.

[17] *TLL* III.A, *fama* often conjoined with words relating to an individual's biological or social identity and security, *res, patrimonium, caput, salus.* Lendon 2001: 272–9 articulates 'The Latin and Greek Lexicon of Honour' (a field with significant overlap with the semantic field of *fama*) according to denotations of (i) the possession or accomplishment of honour, and (ii) the processes or sources of honour. Tacitean examples of *fama* and *uita* closely conjoined: Tac. *Hist.* 1.42.3 *huc potius eius uita famaque inclinat, ut conscius sceleris fuerit cuius causa erat*; 3.28; 4.7.1; *Ann.* 6.51.3 *egregium uita famaque quoad priuatus uel in imperiis sub Augusto fuit*; 15.50.3. In other contexts *fama* and *ipse* 'oneself' are opposed: Livy 28.24.1 *Scipio ipse graui morbo implicitus, grauiore tamen fama cum ad id quisque quod audierat insita hominibus libidine alendi de industria rumores adiceret aliquid*; Tac. *Ann.* 6.44 *Tiridates simul fama atque ipso Artabano perculsus.* On Morpheus' ironic contrast between *uagi rumores* and *ipse* at Ov. *Met.* 11.666–8 see Hardie 2002a: 238, 278. For Shakespearean identifications of honour or reputation and self see Ch. 3 n. 24.

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correspondence in the poem between the personifications of *Pheme* and of the two *Erides* 'Strifes', one good and one bad, which open the main body of the Hesiodic text (see Ch. 2 pp. 54–7). At a much later stage in the tradition, Erasmus begins his treatise on the abuses of the tongue, *Lingua*, with a moral dichotomy, the power of speech to produce both great benefit and great harm.[18] The fact that Fame is caught up in the agonistic culture typical particularly of ancient Greece may have contributed to the pervasive tendency in the classical tradition (and it is perhaps a universal tendency) for *fama* to operate between the poles of a Pythagorean table of opposites. I here tabulate what seem to me to be the major duplicities and dichotomies that characterize the structures and dynamics of *fama*:

- **Fame versus blame.** The opposition of praise and slander is deeply rooted in ancient culture, as is also the related opposition of glory or fame and envy. The values of the Homeric world (as of later periods) also point to the opposition of:
- **Fame versus shame.** Accordingly the fear of shame is a powerful stimulus to the preservation of a good name.
- **Fixity versus flux.** Words attempt to give shape to the flux of reality, and literary traditions in particular attempt to memorialize transient events, real or fictitious, in fixed texts. But the word is notoriously winged and evasive. This opposition also operates at the level of the reception of fixed orders of words: an author may ensure the accuracy of publication, but cannot predetermine the reception thereafter of his text. Other ways of formulating this dichotomy are:
  - **Order versus chaos,** sometimes with cosmological and cosmogonic overtones, even outside the Biblical traditions concerning the Word of God, *Logos*: the stormy opening of the *Aeneid* reflects the poet's attempt to construct his own order of words in the face of the threat of chaos (see Ch. 2 pp. 70–3).
  - **Atlantean versus protean, immutable versus mutable.** This is implied in the role of Atlas in the Virgilian *Fama* scene (see Ch. 3 p. 94).[19]

[18] See Fantham 1989; van Houdt 1999; Parker 1989: 446.

[19] For the Atlantean/protean contrast see Hardie 1999. Drexel 1634 reaches for the image of Proteus in his catalogue of vices of the tongue (*Ad lectorem*): *Vitiosam linguam instar Protei innumeras sibi formas aptare*. In the Roman historians *fama*-as-rumour and *fama*-as-report can be *multiplex* (Livy 5.18.9; cf. 4.5.6 *ferte sermonibus et multiplicate fama bella*) and *uaria* (Livy 25.17.4 *funeris quoque Gracchi uaria est fama*; Tac. *Ann.* 14.20.1 *uaria fama, ut cuncta ferme noua*; 1.4.2 *pars multo maxima imminentis dominos uariis rumoribus differebant*; 3.19.2 *Germanici morte . . . uario rumore iactata*; 11.23.1 *multus ea super re uariusque rumor*). Fulke Greville identifies another protean aspect of *fama* in *An Inquisition upon Fame, and Honor*

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- **Fate versus *fama*.** The shared derivation of Latin *fama* and *fatum* from *fari* points to an opposition between, on the one hand, an ideal fit between authoritative words and events unfolding in obedience to those words, and, on the other the unpredictability and indefinite proliferation of words, which may either distort the record of past events or stimulate the diversion of future events from a (verbally) preordained course. In the Latin epic tradition this opposition is classically presented in the Virgilian conflict between the word of Jupiter and the word of Juno. In so far as Juno draws on the powers of the underworld, this is also an opposition of:
  - **Heaven versus hell.** Virgil's *Fama* is a chthonic, hellish monster. Christian texts stage a more consistent opposition between divine and devilish uses of the word (see Chs. 11, 13 pp. 525–6).
- **Male versus female words.** The Jupiter v. Juno opposition is also an instance of a gendered opposition of wide currency. Men speak to the point in accordance with reason; women's speech is uncontrolled and expressive of emotion. Men speak the truth; old wives' tales are for women (see Ch. 10 p. 387).
- **One versus many.** The Virgilian Jupiter v. Juno opposition is furthermore a political opposition between the supreme ruler and his (many) subjects. Fate is the authoritative word of the Father, of the King, but is constantly threatened by the mutterings of the many-headed beast.[20] The hero, the king, the poet all strive to assert their own unique, individual fame, which, however, is always dependent for its propagation on the multiple tongues of the crowd, whose obedience cannot be guaranteed; so this may also be phrased as:
- **Individual (or the few) versus collective.**
  In psychological terms, crucial for the dynamics of the love of fame, where desire for the applause and approbation of others is at the same time a form of narcissism (see Ch. 9), this is also a dichotomy of

53–5 (a passage starting with reference to the Virgilian *Fama*, 'if Fame a monster be, | As Virgil doth describe her'), on the monstrous birth of Fame from 'peoples lust'; 54 'For what indeed more monstrouse, or more base, | Than these Chimeras of distempered mindes, | Born of opinion, not of vertues race . . . ' 55 ' . . . As Polypus with stones, so they with praise, | Change colours, and like Proteus their forme, | Followinge the peoples lust, who, like their cloths, | Still shifte conceit of truth and goodnesse both.'

[20] The many-headed beast is a famous Platonic image for the disorderly desiring part of the tripartite soul, *Rep.* 588c (πολυκέφαλον θηρίον), and later commonly used as a political image: early surviving examples are Ariston (probably of Chios) (*Gnomologium Vaticanum* Sternbach no. 121) πολυκέφαλον θηρίον εἶπε πάντα δῆμον; Hor. *Ep.* 1.1.76 (see below p. 30). The many-headed beast's many voices make it a monster of *fama*; for Shakespearean examples see Ch. 13 p. 511.

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- **Self versus other.**
  In terms of class this is a dichotomy between the
  - **Elite and the many.**
  This leads to the opposition of:
- ***fama*-as-fame versus *fama*-as-rumour or -gossip.** The former is focussed on the pre-eminent individual who is the recipient of fame, the latter on the nameless multitude who endlessly circulate words; the dichotomy tends to overlap with the fame v. blame dichotomy. Some genres place this opposition at their heart: e.g. Latin love elegy (see Ch. 9 pp. 361–71), and Martial's epigrams (see Ch. 8 pp. 321–9). In terms of the content of what is said, this also maps on to an
  - **Official versus unofficial knowledge** dichotomy.
- **Authority versus unreliability and uncertainty.** The word makes claims to authority, but, short of the guarantee of a transcendental source of the word (as in the Christian belief of a divinely originated *Logos*), that authority is always open to question. The difficulty of locating a sure criterion for the authoritativeness of a source is central to Maurizio Bettini's argument that, although the root of '*fari* represents a way of speaking that far surpasses other normal utterances in terms of its authority, efficacy, and credibility', nevertheless '*fari* also, rather paradoxically, always risks losing its trustworthiness and credibility'.[21] For Bettini this is because the ultimate and authoritative source for the utterance is transmitted through a less reliable vehicle. The god's prophet may be a charlatan.[22] The fact that rumour is shared and public lends it authenticity, but the absence of a source, in the form of an individual who can personally assume responsibility, discredits rumour.[23] An example in the literary sphere of authority flipping into uncertainty is the tradition of the poetic 'Alexandrian footnote', expressions of the type *ut fama est* (see above p. 4).[24]
- **Fact versus fiction.** Tradition, *fama*, is the authority for what happened in the past, but traditions are notoriously liable to invention. *fama* may represent the claim of words faithfully to record the past, but equally it stands for the power of words to create a world that has no extratextual reality. This results in a shifting relationship in Latin between the alliterating pair of:

[21] Bettini 2008: 314. [22] Bettini 2008: 361–3.
[23] Bettini 2008: 355; see also 363–8 'The ambiguities of *fabula*'.
[24] Discussed at length by Clément-Tarantino 2006: 560–88.

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- ***facta* and *fama*.** Because *fama* is such a volatile, windy, fickle thing, there is an urgent need to match *fama* to reality, *facta dictis exaequare*, in Sallust's words (*Catil.* 3.2). The ideal may be exemplified from the words of Jupiter to his son Hercules, that most famous man of action (and at the same time the *locus* of fabulous fictions),[25] at *Aen.* 10.468–9 *sed famam extendere factis,*[26] | *hoc uirtutis opus* 'but to extend the reach of one's fame through deeds, that is the job of virtue' (echoing another father's words to his son at 6.806 (Anchises to Aeneas) *et dubitamus adhuc uirtutem extendere factis* 'And do we still hesitate to extend the reach of virtue through deeds?').[27] Here *Fama*'s inherent expansiveness will be coextensive with actual deeds. At a closural moment Horace asserts the equivalence of word and actuality with reference to Augustus' refoundation of Roman power: *Odes* 4.15.12–16 *ueteres reuocauit artes,* ‖ *per quas Latinum* ***nomen*** *et Italae* | *creuere* ***uires***, ***fama****que et imperi* | *porrecta* ***maiestas*** *ad ortus* | *solis ab Hesperio cubili* 'he called back the ancient arts by which the Latin name and the strength of Italy grew great, and by which the fame and majesty of empire was extended to the rising of the sun from his bed in the west.' 'Name' and 'power' grow together, the 'greatness' of empire reaches to the ends of the earth together with *fama*.[28] The Tacitean Tiberius attempts to weld *fama* to *facta* in his request to the Romans that (*Ann.* 4.38.3) 'they may attend my actions and the reputation of my name with praise and benign recollections' (*cum laude et bonis recordationibus facta atque famam nominis mei prosequantur*); the historian ensures that he will not succeed (see Ch. 8 pp. 303–5).[29]

[25] In a Renaissance mythological treatise, Coluccio Salutati's *De laboribus Herculis*, Hercules, whose name is etymologized 'ab *eris, cleos*, id est litis gloria', is the emblem of the symbiotic relationship of virtue and glory, essence and name: see Ascoli 1987: 63–8.

[26] *famam extendere factis* is a much quoted and imitated tag: for Pliny's use of it in *Ep.* 5.8 see Ch. 8 p. 319.

[27] Cf. *Aen.* 9.194–5 *nam mihi facti* | *fama sat est.*

[28] The pairing of *fama* and *uires* (*uis*) is more usually disjunctive, e.g. Livy 33.8.5 *fama stetisse, non uiribus Macedoniae regnum*; Tac. *Hist.* 3.1.2 *Germanicarum legionum uim famamque extollebant*; 2.83.1 *Mucianus . . . gliscere famam ipso spatio sinebat, gnarus modicas uiris sibi et maiora credi de absentibus;* 5.1.1 *maiore tum ui famaque agebat*; *Ann.* 6.30.4 *reputante Tiberio . . . magisque fama quam ui stare res suas*; 13.19.1 *nihil rerum tam instabile ac fluxum est quam fama potentiae non sua ui nixae.*

[29] *fama* and *res* is another pair that can be used to express a greater or lesser fit between words and reality. Some examples from the historians: Livy 10.33.8 *quarum rerum fama, tumultuosior etiam quam res erant* (cf. 25.30.12); 21.29.7 *Alpesque, rem fama utique inexpertis horrendam*; 22.30.7 *ut est perlata fama rei gestae* (cf. 26.3.10); 21.53.8 *ingenium, fama prius, deinde re cognitum*; 25.38.8 *uiuunt uigentque fama rerum gestarum*; 37.58.7 *erant qui fama id maius bellum quam difficultate rei fuisse interpretarentur*; Tac. *Hist.* 3.8.1 *coloniam copiis ualidam auferre Vitellio in rem famamque uidebatur.*

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- **Immediacy versus indirectness, seeing versus hearing.** Words are just representations of things that happen elsewhere, but words have the power of *enargeia* to bring things and events, real or fictitious, vividly before the eyes of the mind. Ovid in particular delights in the resultant paradoxes.[30]
- **Life versus death.** Glory confers a kind of immortality.[31] Literary traditions attempt to immortalize, to create the illusion of continued life, even of physical presence, but they speak from the grave. By a common convention literary underworlds are the repositories of fame and tradition.[32] This opposition relates to the paradoxes of desire and fame (see p. 7 above). The opposition of life and death is further related to:
- **Presence versus absence.** *fama* is a powerful generator of absent presences.[33]
- **Fullness versus emptiness.** Rumours 'fill' cities, words 'fill' ears,[34] but fame is nothing but thin air, honour is but a word. The ambitious man measures success by the fulfilment of his (desire for) fame, but glory is vain. Ovid contrasts the ashes of Achilles, *nescioquid, paruam quod non bene compleat urnam* 'something that would not fill a small urn to the top', with the continuing life of a glory that fills the whole world, *at uiuit totum quae gloria compleat orbem* (*Met.* 12.616–17).[35] Abraham Cowley exposes the hollowness of such boasts: 'Life and fame' 18–21 'Some . . . by the Proofs of death pretend to Live. | Here lies the Great – False Marble, where? | Nothing but small and sordid Dust lies there'; and, speaking of Caesar, (32–9) 'He since that Toy his Death, | Does fill all Mouths, and breathes in all mens Breath. | 'Tis true, the two Immortal Syllables remain, | But, Oh ye learned men, explain, | What Essence, what Existence this, | What Substance, what Subsistence, what Hypostasis | In Six poor Letters is? | In those alone does the Great Cæsar live.' In the world of the living *fama* can be almost consubstantial with *caput* as one's civic and social personality (see above p. 5);[36] one relative, and near homonym, of *Fama* is *Fames* 'Hunger' (see Ch. 5 pp. 172–3).
- **Active versus passive.** One final, but important, opposition is that between the passive function of *fama*, coming after events to report and

[30] For Ovidian examples of the power of *f/Fama* to conjure up visions see Hardie 2002a: 236–8, 311–14. See also Laird 1999: 237–8, on the working of *Fama* at Petron. *Sat.* 123.210–16.
[31] Hellegouarc'h 1972: 377–80.
[32] See Most 1992; Hardie 1993a: 60–5; 2004. In Book 8 of Basinio da Parma's mid-fifteenth century epic *Hesperis* the hero, Sigismondo Malatesta, visits a Temple of *Fama* which is also the entrance to the underworld.
[33] See Hardie 2002a: index s.v. *fama*.
[34] See Joukovsky 1969: Section II, Ch. 1 'L'expansion'.
[35] See Hardie 2002a: 85–6.
[36] Although in Roman law *infamia* stops short of *deminutio capitis*: see Greenidge 1894: Ch. 1.

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