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Edited by David West and Tony Woodman

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EDITED BY

DAVID WEST &

TONY WOODMAN

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## PROLOGUE

This book is a sequel to *Quality and pleasure in Latin poetry* but has a narrower focus. At the suggestion of one of our contributors it is devoted to literary imitation, a subject so fundamental to Latin literature that it seemed to deserve a study to itself.

After an introductory survey of the ancient view of *imitatio*, each contributor has analysed a passage in detailed comparison with its literary antecedent(s). As in our previous volume, contributors have been left free to choose their own passages and to devise their own approach. The result is again a varied collection of essays. Some have compared Latin poetry with Greek antecedents, some with Latin antecedents; some have investigated self-imitation, some the relationship between English poetry and Latin – for we should remember that other literatures were inspired by Latin in much the same way as Latin itself was inspired by Greek.

Contributors have tried to make their essays as wide as possible in their appeal, useful to both students and scholars alike: they have freely referred to other discussions and critiques where appropriate, and technical terms, except the most common, have been explained.

We as editors have again tried to summarize in an epilogue the issues raised by the contributors. We hope that these essays will help readers to apprehend the richness, impetus and creative originality of this literary process. *Imitatio* is neither plagiarism nor a flaw in the constitution of Latin literature. It is a dynamic law of its existence.

D.A.W., A.J.W.