Contents

 In the World of Make-Believe Preliminary Remarks — 3
 Fictionality: Theoretical Considerations — 6 And All for Nothing! For Hecuba! — 6

Avatars of Fiction, Then and Now ---- 10

- Fictionality: Historical Circumstances 21
 The Ancient Quarrel (Greece) 21
 The Fictional Contract (Rome) 31
 The Cobweb and the Rainbow (Plutarch) 45
- 3 Late Antiquity 55 Periodization — 55 The Issue of Truth — 60 The Shadow of Creusa — 73

II Augustine: A Restless Farewell. Renouncing *Ficta* in Late Antiquity

Preliminary Remarks ----- 83

- 1 At the Window in Ostia 86 Plotinian/Pauline *Raptus* — 86 The Speech of the Heart — 93 Ineffability — 110
- Recycling the Classics 123
 Weeping for Dido 123
 The Liberal Arts 158
 The Wounds of Imagination 194
- 3 The Figures of the Spirit 207 The Speech of Creation — 207



The Bible: Tropes and Mysteries — 215 The Fact of Allegory — 240

- 4 In the Heat of the Battle 263 Orthodoxy and Heresy — 266 The Illusions of Culture — 278
- 5 "Set me free, O God, from that multitude of speech" ---- 292

III Oblique Speech: Implementations of Allegory in Late Roman Learned Culture

Preliminary Remarks ---- 303

- 1 Lactantius: Christian Eloquence 313 Pious infiltration — 313 Veiled Figuration — 320
- 2 Servius: The Grammarian's Gaze ---- 328 Allegorical Sense ---- 330 Poetic Licence ---- 335
- 3 Macrobius: Narratio fabulosa 346
 The Saturnalia 346
 The Commentary on the Dream of Scipio 354
- 4 Martianus Capella: A Hopeless Mess 369 Fabulous Festivities — 370 Showy Fiction, Naked Learning — 384
- 5 Fulgentius: Mythographer and Mythoclast 402 A Surprise Visit — 403 The Flirtatious Muse — 414 Adorning Greece — 425
- 6 Boethius: The Maieutics of Consolation 433 Philosophy Sets the Tone — 434 The Wings of Imagination — 451 The Limits of Imagination — 459

IV *Poeta Christianus*: From *Ficta* to *Facta* in Early Christian Poetry

Preliminary Remarks — 471

- 1 The Foam of Style ----- 477
- Paulinus and Proba: "A Greater Order" 487 The Lyre of Nola — 487 The Female Vates — 503
- 3 Prudentius: Dreams and Demons ----- 518

Biblical Epic Poetry: The Orthodoxy of Paraphrase ---- 544
 Juvencus: The Pioneer ---- 548
 Sedulius: The Food of Poetry ---- 555
 Avitus: Non-Fiction ----- 570
 Arator: Documenta ----- 584

V Epilogue: *Ecclesia Triumphans*. Fiction and Figuration on the Threshold of the Middle Ages

Preliminary Remarks — 605

- 1 The Old Dreams 608
- 2 The New Library ----- 615
- 3 The Glory of the Mirror 629

Appendix: Original Quotations ---- 633

Bibliography ---- 658 Primary Sources ---- 658 Secondary Sources ---- 666

Index — 691