

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

Filologia Germanica – Germanic Philology is the first journal entirely devoted to Germanic philology and closely related subjects published so far in Italy. As luck would have it, it appears at a time when the Italian university system is going through a series of radical changes which will inevitably involve also this field of study. For reasons too complex to be discussed here, quite a number of scholarly disciplines that have existed so far will be dropped as such from university curricula and conflated, together with other (more or less) kindred disciplines, into larger and less specialized groups. This will also be, in all likelihood, the destiny of the subject 'Filologia germanica', with the somewhat paradoxical consequence that the name of the present journal – deliberately chosen by AIFG (Associazione Italiana di Filologia Germanica, or Italian Society for Germanic Philology), which is the sponsor of the journal – will no longer match with the specific teaching and research subject at Italian universities. Yet it is our firm conviction that, in spite of all the formal and official changes that may take place, Germanic philology, as a well defined and extended field of study, will continue to be cultivated, in Italy and elsewhere, in the future as intensely and competently as in the present. Actually, we hope – perhaps with a slight tinge of immodesty – that the presence of this journal may contribute in consolidating scholarly interest for this discipline. Therefore, in launching it, we are sure we are doing the right thing.

Although primarily intended for an Italian readership, the journal is open to contributions by scholars from all over the world (hence its bilingual title), and articles may be written in Italian as well as in English or in other languages of international use.

By decision of AIFG, each issue of the journal will be devoted to a specific theme. Thus, the first issue is devoted to 'Language and Culture of the Goths'; the second (scheduled for 2010) will be concerned with the relations between the early Germanic peoples and Italy, and so on. However, part of each issue might occasionally be allowed to contain articles on subjects different from the main theme.

The present volume is dedicated to the memory of Piergiuseppe Scardigli (13 October 1933 - 27 May 2008). He was not only one of the founders of Germanic philology in Italy – and no doubt, more than anyone else, he strove to make it a 'self-standing' academic subject, i.e. not subordinate to other discip-

lines, such as historical and comparative linguistics or German language and literature, from which it derived many decades ago – but also one the most eminent scholars of Gothic culture and literary tradition in the world. We all owe him eternal gratitude for that.

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Editor-in-chief