
Микела Вендитти

Неаполь, Италия

Michela Venditti

Naples, Italy

Animal images are ubiquitous in Gavrila Derzhavin's poetry and can be found in works belonging to different stages of his career. This article studies issues connected with the functions that the world of fauna performs in his works and aims to find out whether it evolves over time. The image of the swan in his Horatian ode of the same name (1808) is considered a symbol of the poet's immortality, and unpublished poems on the death of a dog an expression of the burlesque direction in Derzhavin's work. With a view to determining the general typology of animals in Derzhavin's lyrical poetry (with the exception of fables and parables), the article proposes a general classification of animals in order to then turn to a detailed analysis of two little-studied works (*The Magnitude of God* (Rus. *Velichestvo Bozhie*) (1789) and *Morning* (Rus. *Utro*) (1800)). Together with the poems, the author examines the illustrations that accompany them in the Grot edition of Derzhavin's works. His poetic bestiary is very rich in comparison with those of other poets of his time, becoming more and more an integral part of his poetic landscape. According to Derzhavin's aesthetic concept, poetry should depict "shining and lively pictures, with nature-like views", including its inhabitants from the world of fauna. However, this function changes at different stages of the poet's work and varies depending on the genre chosen. Derzhavin refers to animal images for different purposes, from symbolic to humorous; the range of animal images corresponds to the idea of the poem and expresses different approaches to language. Due to an archaisation of his later poetry, animal images become more and more symbolic and myth-like. The variety