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Francesco Petrarca

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Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), one of the greatest of Italian poets, was also the leading spirit in the Renaissance movement to revive ancient Roman language and literature. Just as Petrarch's Latin epic *Africa* imitated Virgil and his compendium *On Illustrious Men* was inspired by Livy, so Petrarch's four *Invectives* were intended to revive the eloquence of the great Roman orator Cicero. The *Invectives* are directed against the cultural idols of the Middle Ages--against scholastic philosophy and medicine and the dominance of French culture in general. They defend the value of literary culture against obscurantism and provide a clear statement of the values of Renaissance humanism. This volume provides a new critical edition of the Latin text based on the two autograph copies, and the first English translation of three of the four invectives.

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