

## **BELLARIA**



*Saturnalia*, Antoine-Francois Callet, 1783

*'Bellaria' means 'sweets, dainties', and in these hard times Classics for All will try to lighten the mood and put a spring in the step by posting delicious extracts from ancient literature, the original text followed by a translation or translations, and very occasionally with explanatory notes.*

Auberon Waugh, then editor of *Literary Review*, invented the now famous annual 'Bad Sex' Award 'to draw attention to the crude, tasteless, often perfunctory use of redundant passages of sexual description in the modern novel, and to discourage it'. The first winner (1993) was Melvyn Bragg with his *A Time to Dance*, but the (dis)honour has had regrettably little effect on the literary world, actually spurring on some scribblers with their fast-flowing biros to try to win the Award.

Well: whatever the modern world can do, the ancient can obviously do far better. Given that C-19 means we are all apparently doomed, it is the socially responsible thing to encourage the population's philoprogenitive urges. With so many more people staying at home, and therefore with maximum opportunity to propagate, this is where *Classics for All* can play its part on behalf of the nation.

*Classics for All's* series of *Bellaria* will therefore start with five scenes which would (probably) have won an ancient 'Good Sex' award, though in this first instance it is perhaps Pope's riotous imagination which takes the prize. Anthony Verity's version accurately translates the Greek.

### GOOD SEX AWARD (1)



*Jupiter and Juno on Mount Ida* by James Barry, 1773, City Art Galleries, Sheffield,

### ***Nature responds as Zeus makes love to his wife Hera***

τὴν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς:  
“Ἥρη, μήτε θεῶν τό γε δείδιθι μήτέ τιν' ἀνδρῶν  
ὄψεσθαι: τοῖόν τοι ἐγὼ νέφος ἀμφικαλύψω  
χρῦσεον: οὐδ' ἂν νῶϊ διαδράκοι Ἥελιός περ,  
345 οὗτε καὶ ὀξύτατον πέλεται φάος εἰσοράασθαι.”  
ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἀγκὰς ἔμαρπτε Κρόνου παῖς ἦν παράκοιτιν:  
τοῖσι δ' ὑπὸ χθῶν διὰ φύεν νεοθηλέα ποίην,  
λωτόν θ' ἐρσήεντα ἰδὲ κρόκον ἠδ' ὑάκινθον  
πυκνὸν καὶ μαλακόν, ὃς ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὑψὸς ἔεργε.  
350 τῷ ἔνι λεξάσθην, ἐπὶ δὲ νεφέλην ἔσσαντο  
καλὴν χρυσεῖην: στιλπναὶ δ' ἀπέπιπτον ἔερσαι.  
ὣς ὁ μὲν ἀτρέμας εὐδε πατὴρ ἀνὰ Γαργάρω ἄκρῳ,

ὑπνω καὶ φιλότῃτι δαμείς, ἔχε δ' ἀγκὰς ἄκοιτιν...

**Homer, *Iliad* 14.341ff.**

**Translated by Anthony Verity**

In answer Zeus who gathers the clouds addressed her:

‘Hera, do not be afraid on that account, that some god or man will see us;

I shall wrap a golden cloud around us,

such that not even the Sun could see us through it,

345 he whose light gives him the keenest sight of all.’

So the son of Cronus spoke, and clasped his wife in

his arms;

and beneath them the bright earth put forth fresh-

growing grass

and dew-drenched clover and crocus and hyacinth,

thick and soft, which kept them raised above the ground.

350 On this the two of them lay, wrapped in a beautiful

golden cloud; and from it fell drops of glistening dew.

So the father slept, motionless on the height of Gargarus,

overcome by sleep and love, clasping his wife in his arms.

**Homer *The Iliad: A New Translation* (Oxford 2011)**

**Translated (and gloriously expanded) by Alexander Pope (1720)**

[She ceased: and smiling with superior love,]

Thus answered mild the cloud-compelling Jove:

“Not god nor mortal shall our joys behold,

Shaded with clouds, and circumfused in gold;

Not e’en the sun, who darts through heaven his rays,

345 And whose broad eye the extended earth surveys.”

Gazing he spoke, and, kindling at the view,

His eager arms around the goddess threw.

Glad Earth perceives, and from her bosom pours

Unbidden herbs, and voluntary flowers;

Thick new-born violets a soft carpet spread,

And clustering lotos swelled the rising bed,

And sudden hyacinths the turf bestrow,

And flamy crocus made the mountain glow.

350 There golden clouds conceal the heavenly pair,

Steeped in soft joys, and circumfused with air;

Celestial dews, descending o’er the ground,

Perfume the mount, and breathe ambrosia round.

At length with love and sleep’s soft power oppressed,

The panting Thunderer nods, and sinks to rest.

## GOOD SEX AWARD (2)

*Responding to Literary Review's annual 'Bad Sex' Awards, Classics for All responds with 'Good Sex' awards – good for Ovid, anyway, in this case. Obviously Corinna was up for it, and it is nice to be appreciated, but was that it? Note Marlowe said that he kissed her (l. 25). Not in the Latin she didn't. Even he noticed something missing.*

### **An Afternoon with Ovid**

aestus erat, mediamque dies exegerat horam;  
adposui medio membra levanda toro.  
pars adaperita fuit, pars altera clausa  
fenestrae,  
quale fere silvae lumen habere solent,  
5 qualia sublucent fugiente crepuscula  
Phoebo,  
aut ubi nox abiit, nec tamen orta dies.  
illa verecundis lux est praebenda puellis,  
qua timidus latebras speret habere pudor.  
ecce, Corinna venit, tunica velata recincta,  
10 candida dividua colla tegente coma,  
qualiter in thalamos famosa Semiramis isse  
dicitur, et multis Lais amata viris.  
deripui tunicam; nec multum rara nocebat,  
pugnabat tunica sed tamen illa tegi;  
15 quae cum ita pugnaret, tamquam quae vincere nollet,  
victa est non aegre prodicione sua.  
ut stetit ante oculos posito velamine nostros,  
in toto nusquam corpore menda fuit:  
quos umeros, quales vidi tetigique lacertos!  
20 forma papillarum quam fuit apta premi!  
quam castigato planus sub pectore venter!  
quantum et quale latus! quam iuvenale femur!  
singula quid referam? nil non laudabile vidi,  
et nudam pressi corpus ad usque meum.  
25 cetera quis nescit? lassique quiescimus ambo.  
proveniant medii sic mihi saepe dies.

**Ovid Amores 1.5**



*North Wall fresco, Triclinium of Casti Amanti, Pompeii*

**Translated by Christopher Marlowe (1582)**

In summer's heat and mid-time of the day  
To rest my limbs upon a bed I lay,  
One window shut, the other open stood,  
Which gave such light as twinkles in a wood,  
5 Like twilight glimpse at setting of the sun  
Or night being past, and yet not day begun.  
Such light to shamefaced maidens must be shown,  
Where they may sport, and seem to be unknown.  
Then came Corinna in a long loose gown,  
10 Her white neck hid with tresses hanging down:  
Resembling fair Semiramis going to bed  
Or Laïs of a thousand wooers sped.  
I snatched her gown, being thin, the harm was small,  
Yet strived she to be covered therewithal.  
15 And striving thus as one that would be cast,  
Betrayed herself, and yielded at the last.  
Stark naked as she stood before mine eye,  
Not one wen in her body could I spy.  
What arms and shoulders did I touch and see,  
20 How apt her breasts were to be pressed by me?  
How smooth a belly under her waist saw I?  
How large a leg, and what a lusty thigh?  
To leave the rest, all liked me passing well.  
I clinged her naked body, down she fell.  
25 Judge you the rest: being tired she bad me kiss.  
Jove send me more such afternoons as this.

### **GOOD SEX AWARD (3)**

*Here Propertius (c. 50-15 BC), in a sort of post-coital haze, moves from monologue to dialogue and back again, shifting between past and present, hope and desire, as he recalls and reflects on a night of love-making.*

*Cynthia certainly plays an active part in it all (contrast Bellaria II). Note the Catullan touch at 23-4 and the play on night-day and light-dark throughout. The call to enjoy the fruits of life, contrasted with that of withered garlands floating on cups of wine when the party is over (49-52), hints at a 'gather ye rosebuds' moment. Does the last couplet rather undercut that conclusion?*



*A scene from the lupanar in Pompeii*

### ***A night with Cynthia***

o me felicem! o nox mihi candida! et o tu,  
lectule, deliciis facte beate meis.  
quam multa apposita narramus verba lucerna,  
quantaque sublato lumine rixa fuit!  
5 nam modo nudatis mecum est luctata papillis,  
interdum tunica duxit operta moram.  
illa meos somno lapsos patefecit ocellos  
ore suo et dixit, "Sicine, lente, iaces?"  
quam vario amplexu mutamus bracchia! quantum  
10 oscula sunt labris nostra morata tuis.  
non iuvat in caeco Venerem corrumpere motu:  
si nescis, oculi sunt in amore duces.

*[He instructs her always to come to bed naked]*

23 dum nos fata sinunt, oculos satiemus amore:  
nox tibi longa venit, nec reditura dies.  
25 atque utinam haerentis sic nos vincire catena  
velles, ut numquam solveret ulla dies!  
exemplo iunctae tibi sint in amore columbae,  
masculus et totum femina coniugium.  
errat, qui finem vesani quaerit amoris:  
30 verus amor nullum novit habere modum.

*[Nature might do odd things, but Cynthia will always be the one: "I'll be hers, alive or dead"]*

37 quod mihi secum talis concedere noctes  
illa velit, vitae longus et annus erit.  
si dabit haec multas, fiam immortalis in illis:  
40 nocte una quivis vel deus esse potest.

*[If we just drank and love ruled the world, there would be no war. So]*

49 tu modo, dum lucet, fructum ne desere vitae!

50 omnia si dederis oscula, pauca dabis.

ac veluti folia arentis liquere corollas,

quae passim calathis strata natate vides,

sic nobis, qui nunc magnum spiramus amantes,

forsitan includet crastina fata dies.

**Propertius *Elegies* 2.15**

**Translated by A.E. Watts**

O luck indeed! O radiant, rapturous night!

O blessed bed, my heaven of sweet delight!

What talk we had, while yet the lamp burned on!

What rough-and-tumble, when the light was gone!

5 Now with bared breasts she met me in the fray;

Now drew her wrap, to tease me with delay;

Now when my drowsy eyelids drooped, she said,

(Lipping them open): "Wake up, sleepy head!"

How variously with shifting arms we clung!

10 How long upon your lips my kisses hung!

It spoils the sport to see not what we do.

*[He instructs her to come to bed naked]*

Let's glut our eyes with love, while yet we may:

A long night comes, with no return of day.

25 Oh may a chain so bind us, by your grace,

That no day ever loose our locked embrace.

Let doves, by passion linked, your pattern be,

Wedlock inseparable, the He and She.

Folly to ask what end to love is found:

30 True love runs mad, and has, and knows, no bound.

*[Nature might do odd things, but Cynthia will always be the one: "I'll be hers, alive or dead"]*

Oh would she by her side ungrudging give

Such nights to me, a year were long to live.

Give many—I'll transcend the mortal span:

40 One night might make a god of any man.

*[If love ruled the world, there would be no war]*

49 Cling to life's joys, while daylight lasts for you:  
50 Your kisses—give them all—will be but few.  
And as you see, when chaplet roses wilt,  
The floating petals in the wine-cups spilt,  
So we, now drawing love's impassioned breath,  
With dawn perhaps will end our span in death.  
***The Poems of Propertius (Penguin, 1966)***

### **GOOD SEX AWARD (4)**

*Here is a magnificent single stanza poem from Petronius' Satyricon, which is not what it seems.*

#### ***Mortality's Eclipse***

qualis nox fuit illa, di deaeque,  
quam mollis torus! haesimus calentes  
et transfudimus hinc et hinc labellis  
errantes animas. valete, curae  
5 mortales ...

**Petronius Arbiter, *Satyricon* 79**

#### **Translated by Helen Waddell**

Ah God, ah God, that night when we two clung  
So close, our hungry lips  
Transfused each into each our hovering souls,  
Mortality's eclipse ...

***Mediaeval Latin Lyrics (Penguin, 1952)***

But Helen Waddell omitted the conclusion of the last line. It ends *ego sic perire coepi* ('so began my end'). The reason is that the speaker Encolpius, who then fell asleep, woke up to find that his youthful male lover (Giton) was now in the arms of his friend Ascyltus!

There is nothing surprising here. Ancient literature is full of magnificent love poems written by males, as many extolling the beauty, desirability and faithlessness of a boy as of a woman, and Petronius, the *arbiter elegantiae*, is showing he can play



the game as well as anyone. Shakespeare explored its possibilities with 126 poems to his 'fair youth', his 'master-mistress'.



*The Warren Cup (1st C AD), named after its original owner (an American art collector) and now in the British Museum. Scientific tests demonstrate its authenticity.*

1. 3 *et transfudimus*...draws on famous couplet, one among eighteen falsely attributed to Plato:

τὴν ψυχὴν, Ἀγάθωνα φιλῶν, ἐπὶ χεῖλεσιν ἔσχον.  
ἦλθε γὰρ ἡ τλήμων ὡς διαβησομένη.  
**Palatine Anthology 5.78**

Kissing Agathon, I held back my soul on my lips.  
It had come, poor thing, to cross over.

Encolpius was happy 'to pour [his soul] into' (*transfundo*) Giton; 'Plato' was less keen to do so with Agathon.

### **GOOD SEX AWARD (5)**

*Ausonius' wife was Sabina. They had three children. Iuvenis and puella (l. 4) are the language of love-poetry. In ll. 5-6 Ausonius envisages them growing old together (note the subjunctives, expressing possibility). His hopes of a long marriage were not fulfilled. Sabina died aged 27.*

### **Married Love**

#### **To his wife**

uxor, vivamus quod viximus, et teneamus

nomina quae primo sumpsimus in thalamo,  
nec ferat ulla dies ut commutemur in aevo,  
quin tibi sim iuvenis, tuque puella mihi.

5 Nestore sim quamvis provector, aemulaque annis  
vincas Cumanam tu quoque Deiphoben,  
nos ignoremus quid sit matura senectus:  
scire aevi meritum, non numerare decet.

**Ausonius (AD 310-394), Epigram 20**



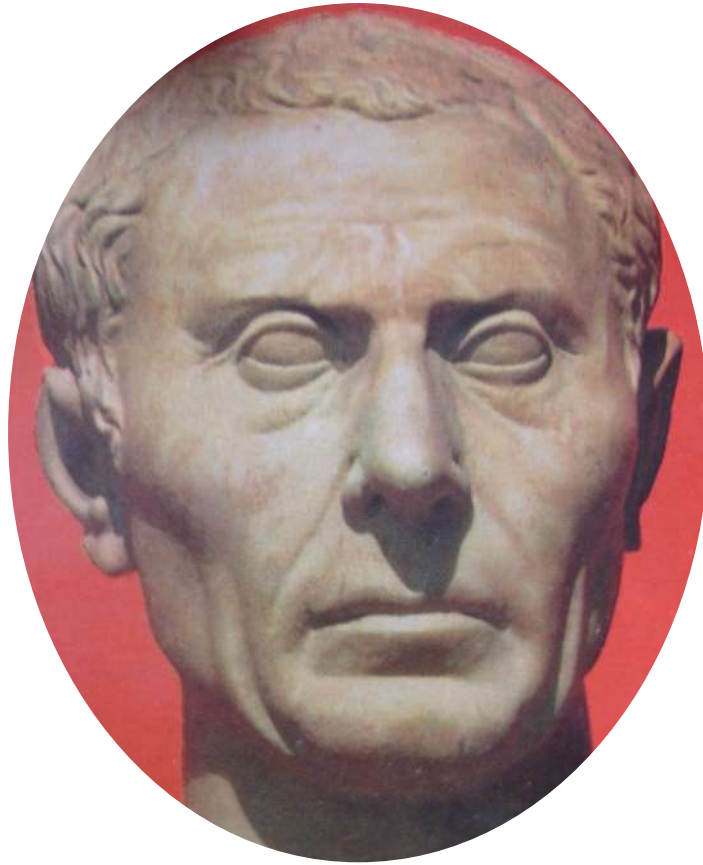
*Roman couple*

Dear wife, let's live as we have lived, and hold on to those names  
We called each on the night of our first nuptial games;  
And may it never come, that day, when we'll no longer be  
I, to you, your 'Lover-boy' and you 'My girl' to me.

5 Though I'd outstrip old Nestor, and you, in rivalry,  
Would surely also overtake Cumae's Deiphobe,  
To debates about 'Mature Old Age', let's never give a thought:  
It's right to know time's real rewards, and count the years as nought.

### **Notes**

1.5 Nestor is the hero, famed for his years, in Homer's Iliad. Deiphobe (Day-iff-obb-bee) is an ageless Sibyl, a Greek prophetess who lived in Cumae, near Naples.



*Suetonius AD 69-after AD 122*

*Horace declared that books combining utile dulci won everyone's vote (punctum). Since pleasure is the most useful thing in the world, that is no surprise, but Horace was clearly distinguishing the two. So in this case, 'useful to whom?' This run of Bellaria answers as follows: the historian Tom Holland.*

*Tom is currently translating Suetonius' de vita Caesarum for Penguin Classics. Like Suetonius, he is thoroughly in favour of Classics for All, and would be delighted if CfA were to run the rule over his first draft (he is currently up to Vespasian). So the next five Bellaria will feature scenes from Suetonius in Tom's translation. One of his stated aims is to keep as close as possible to Suetonius' word-order.*

## SCENES FROM SUETONIUS (1)



*Julius Caesar and the crossing of the Rubicon, Francesco Granacci, 1493-4, Victoria & Albert Museum*

### **Caesar crosses the Rubicon**

One of the joys of Suetonius, who in his various secretarial roles to the emperors Trajan and Hadrian (AD 112-122) had access to all the lies and smears, is that he lets you into the stories behind the stories. In his *Bellum Civile*, Caesar never even mentions the Rubicon, let alone crossing it. As Suetonius' account makes, that is no surprise. It is one of Caesar's less masterful moments (though it is still the case that no one is absolutely certain where the Rubicon is).

*On January 7 49 BC, the senate finally dismissed the effective plea of the pro-Caesar tribunes that he should be immune from prosecution when he returned from his consular province (after his Gallic campaigns) back into Italy. Caesar was awaiting the answer in Ravenna.*

[31] cum ergo sublatam tribunorum intercessionem ipsosque urbe cecidisse nuntiatum esset, praemissis confestim clam cohortibus, ne qua suspicio moueretur, et spectaculo publico per dissimulationem interfuit et formam, qua ludum gladiatorium erat aedificaturus, consideravit, et ex consuetudine conuiuio se frequenti dedit. dein, post solis occasum, mulis e proximo pistrino ad uehiculum iunctis, occultissimum iter modico comitatu ingressus est; et cum, luminibus extinctis, decessisset uia, diu errabundus tandem ad lucem, duce reperto, per angustissimos tramites pedibus euasit. consecutusque cohortis ad Rubiconem flumen, qui prouinciae eius finis erat, paulum constitit, ac reputans quantum moliretur, conuersus ad proximos: 'etiam nunc,' inquit, 'regredi possumus; quod si ponticulum transierimus, omnia armis agenda erunt.'

[32] cunctanti ostentum tale factum est: quidam eximia magnitudine et forma, in proximo sedens, repente apparuit, harundine canens; ad quem audiendum, cum (praeter pastores) plurimi etiam ex stationibus milites concurrissent, interque eos et aeneatores, rapta ab uno tuba, prosiliuit ad flumen et ingenti spiritu, classicum exorsus, pertendit ad alteram ripam. tunc Caesar: 'eatur,' inquit, 'quo deorum ostenta et inimicorum iniquitas vocat. iacta alea est,' inquit.

[33] atque ita traiecto exercitu, adhibitis tribunis plebis, qui pulsi supervenerant, pro contione fidem militum flens, ac veste a pectore discissa, invocavit. existimatur etiam equestres census pollicitus singulis; quod accidit opinione falsa. nam cum, in adloquendo adhortandoque, saepius digitum laevae manus ostentans, adfirmaret se, ad satis faciendum omnibus per quos dignitatem suam defensurus esset, anulum quoque aequo animo detracturum sibi, extrema contio, cui facilius erat videre contionantem quam audire, pro dicto accepit, quod visu suspicabatur; promissumque ius anulorum cum milibus quadringenis fama distulit.

### **Suetonius, Life of Julius Caesar 31-33**

[31] So it was, the moment news reached him that the tribunes' veto had been overridden and the tribunes themselves had fled the city, he ordered his cohorts to advance, but under cover, so as not to rouse suspicion; meanwhile, keeping his own intentions disguised, he attended a public festival, inspected the plans for a gladiator school which he was planning to have built, and hosted a well-attended dinner-party, as he invariably did. Then, after the sun had set, and mules taken from a nearby mill had been harnessed to his carriage, he set out in the utmost secrecy, with only a modest retinue as company; for a while—because his torches had gone out, and he had lost his way—he wandered here and there, until, as the sky began to lighten, he located a guide, who led him along narrow footpaths back to the road; catching up with his cohorts on the banks of the Rubicon, the river which marked the frontier of his province, he paused for a while, revolving in his mind the sheer enormity of what he was contemplating, before turning to those nearest to him, and saying: 'Even now we could turn back. But once we have crossed that tiny bridge, everything must be decided by war.'

[32] Then, as he was hesitating, a wondrous thing happened: nearby him, a figure of remarkable size and beauty abruptly appeared, sitting and playing on a pipe; and when some of his soldiers—trumpeters among them—abandoned their posts to join the large number of shepherds who had run to listen to the music, the apparition snatched a trumpet from one of the trumpeters, leapt into the river, sounded the advance with a mighty blast, and crossed over to the far bank. Then Caesar spoke. 'Let us go where we are summoned both by divinely-authored signs and by the wrongs our foes have done us. The die is cast.'

[33] And so his army crossed the Rubicon; and he welcomed the tribunes who, following their expulsion from Rome, had come to join him, summoned the soldiers to an assembly, and then, weeping and tearing the garments from his breast, called on them to pledge him their loyalty. Some have thought that he went so far as to promise each and every one of them equestrian status—but this is incorrect. What actually happened is that, while he was giving his rallying cry to the troops, he would point again and again to a finger on his left hand, insisting that he would gladly tear the ring from it if only it would provide to those who were backing him in defence of his honour commensurate reward; but because those on the margins of the assembly—who could see him better than they could hear him—based their understanding of what he was saying on his gestures rather than on his words, the story spread that he had promised them all the right to an equestrian ring, plus four hundred thousand sesterces each.

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**

### ***SCENES FROM SUETONIUS (2)***



*A gold coin of Augustus minted by Trajan, AD 107*

*Suetonius, who wrote widely on literary and grammatical topics, here summaries his findings from examining Augustus' formal and informal literary style, handwriting and spelling. Such topics were of great interest to the Roman elite, the purpose of whose education was to produce men steeped in the history of Rome, schooled in stylistic, grammatical and linguistic 'correctness' and masters of the written and spoken word. Augustus clearly had strong views on the subject—which he did not shrink from making known to his subordinates—as well as a number of quirky personal preferences.*

### ***Augustus' linguistic and literary preferences***

#### **Suetonius, Life of Augustus 86-88**

[86] *genus eloquendi secutus est elegans et temperatum, uitatis sententiarum ineptiis atque concinnitate et 'reconditorum uerborum,' ut ipse dicit, 'fetoribus';*

praecipuamque curam duxit sensum animi quam apertissime exprimere. quod quo facilius efficeret aut necubi lectorem uel auditorem obturbaret ac moraretur, neque praepositiones urbibus addere neque coniunctiones saepius iterare dubitauit, quae detractae afferunt aliquid obscuritatis, etsi gratiam augent. cacozelos et antiquarios, ut diuerso genere uitiosos, pari fastidio spreuit, exagitabatque nonnumquam—in primis Maecenatem suum, cuius ‘myrobrechis,’ ut ait, ‘cincinnos’ usquequaque persequitur et imitando per iocum irridet ...

He cultivated a precise and measured style of speaking, one that avoided the absurdity of flowery language and epigrams, and ‘the reek,’ as he put it, ‘of arcane language’—for his principal concern was to express his opinions as clearly as possible. To facilitate this, and to ensure that his readers or his listeners would not be confused and given pause, he never hesitated to put prepositions before the names of cities, nor—on those occasions when elegance of style might require the omission of conjunctions, despite a resulting risk of confusion—to deploy conjunctions repeatedly. He was critical both of those who were forever coining new phrases and those who affected an antique style, despising both equally, albeit for opposing reasons, and would sometimes attack them openly; a particular target was his friend Maecenas, whose ‘perfumed ringlets,’ as he described them, he would repeatedly make the object of his banter, and whose style he loved to parody...



*The famous ‘birthday letter’ of Vindolanda from Claudia Severa to Sulpicia Lepidina. British Museum, AD 97-105*

[87] cotidiano sermone, quaedam frequentius et notabiliter usurpasse eum litterae ipsius autographae ostentant, in quibus identidem, cum aliquos numquam soluturos significare uult, ‘ad Kal. Graecas soluturos’ ait; et cum hortatur ferenda esse praesentia, qualiacumque sint: ‘contenti simus hoc Catone’; et ad exprimendam festinatae rei uelocitatem: ‘celerius quam asparagi cocuntur’; ponit assidue et pro stulto ‘baceolum’ et pro pullo ‘pulleiaceum’ et pro cerrito ‘uacerrosum’ et ‘uapide’ se habere pro male et ‘betizare’ pro languere, quod uulgo ‘lachanizare’ dicitur; item ‘simus’ pro sumus et ‘domos’ genetiuo casu singulari pro domus. nec umquam aliter haec duo, ne quis mendam magis quam consuetudinem putet. notauit et in chirographo eius illa praecipue: non diuidit uerba nec ab extrema parte uersuum abundantis litteras in alterum transfert, sed ibidem statim subicit circumducitque.

It is evident from letters in his own handwriting that there were certain distinctive expressions he dropped into daily conversation on a regular basis: when, for instance, he wishes to convey that certain people will never pay their debts, he invariably says, ‘They will pay on the Greek Kalends’†; when he urges people to put up with their current circumstances, he says, ‘Let us be satisfied with the Cato we have’\*; when he wishes to express the speed of something done fast, he says, ‘Quicker than you can boil asparagus’. He consistently says *baceolus* [idiotic] rather than *stultus* [stupid], *pulleiaceus* [chick] rather than *pullus* [chicken] and *uacerrosus* [blockheaded] rather than *cerritus* [mad]; he talks of feeling *uapide* [poorly] rather than *male* [ill], and says *betizare* [be limp like a beet] rather than *languere* [be weak] or—the more colloquial word—*lachinzare* [be limp]; he uses *simus* rather than *sumus* [we are], and *domos* for the genitive singular of *domus* [house] rather than *domuos* (he deployed these last two usages consistently, to ensure that no one would mistake for errors what ranked as his settled practice). His handwriting—which I have personally inspected—also exhibits peculiarities: he does not leave gaps between his words, for instance, and, whenever he runs out of space writing a line, he does not run the letters of the word on to the next line but instead writes them directly underneath the word in a loop. † i.e. never. The *Kalendae* (cf. ‘calendar’), the first of the month, were a feature of the Roman, not Greek, dating systems

\*i.e. if you think Cato the Younger is bad, at least he’s not Cato the Elder

[88] orthographiam, id est formulam rationemque scribendi a grammaticis institutam, non adeo custodit ac uidetur eorum potius sequi opinionem, qui perinde scribendum ac loquamur existiment. nam quod saepe non litteras modo sed syllabas aut permutat aut praeterit, communis hominum error est. nec ego id notarem, nisi mihi mirum uideretur tradidisse aliquos, legato eum consulari successorem dedisse ut rudi et indocto, cuius manu ‘ixi’ pro ‘ipsi’ scriptum animaduernerit. quotiens autem per notas scribit, B pro A, C pro B ac deinceps eadem ratione sequentis litteras ponit; pro X autem duplex A.

He never had much time for orthography (that is, the proper framework for spelling, as laid down by grammarians), and seems instead to have been a student of those who advise writing down words as they are spoken. He frequently transposes or omits letters, and even syllables—but then again, that is the kind of slip that anybody can make. Indeed, I would not even have drawn attention to it, were it not that some have made what seems to me the astonishing claim that he replaced a governor of consular rank for a lack of breeding and education after noticing that the man had spelt *ipsi* as *ixi*. Whenever he writes in code, he substitutes ‘B’ for ‘A’, ‘C’ for ‘B’, and so on, right the way through the alphabet—though ‘X’ he replaces with a double ‘A’.

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**



### SCENES FROM SUETONIUS (3)

*Suetonius pulled no punches about the imperial family's horrified sense of shame at Claudius' physical condition (cerebral palsy? Dystonia?). Immediately before this passage, the historian recounted how his mother Antonia described him as 'a monstrosity of a human being, begun by Nature but only half-finished ...; his grandmother Augusta always treated him with the utmost contempt; ... his sister Livilla, on hearing that he was to have the rule of the empire, did not mince her words when she openly expressed her horror that such a cruel and unmerited fate should have befallen the Roman people.'*



*Bronze head of Tiberius Claudius Nero, Roman emperor AD 41-54, originally sat atop a life-size statue, British Museum, # 1965,1201.1*

#### **Claudius in the eyes of his great-uncle Augustus**

*In this passage Suetonius, who had full access to the imperial library and its archives, quotes directly from three of Augustus's letters on the matter to his wife Livia. While Augustus is absolutely frank about the practical problem that Claudius (aged 21 at the time) presents for the imperial family, there is a touching humanity about his feelings for his great nephew.*

*The Greek in this passage is not uncommon in Roman letters. Part of the reason for it here is that Greek was often used to describe medical conditions (the Roman language of medicine is derived from the Greeks); but it is also used here to emphasise the unique problem that Claudius presented.*

### Suetonius, Life of Claudius 3-4

[3] nam auunculus maior Augustus, quid de eo in utramque partem opinatus sit, quo certius cognoscatur, capita ex ipsius epistulis posui.

As for the opinion held of him by his great-uncle Augustus, both good and bad, I here append some extracts from his letters, so that no one be in any doubt on that score.

[4] ‘collocutus sum cum Tiberio, ut mandasti, mea Livia, quid nepoti tuo Tiberio faciendum esset ludis Martialibus. consentit autem uterque nostrum semel nobis esse statuendum, quod consilium in illo sequamur. nam si est artius, ut ita dicam, holocleros, quid est quod dubitemus, quin per eosdem articulos et gradus producendus sit, per quos frater eius productus sit? sin autem ἡλατῶσθαι sentimus eum, et βεβλάφθαι καὶ εἰς τὴν τοῦ σώματος καὶ εἰς τὴν τῆς ψυχῆς ἀρτιότητα, praebenda materia deridendi et illum et nos non est hominibus τὰ τοιαῦτα σκώπτειν καὶ μυκτηρίζειν εἰωθόσιν. nam semper aestuabimus, si de singulis articulis temporum deliberabimus, μὴ προὔποκειμένου ἡμῖν posse arbitremur eum gerere honores necne.’

‘As you requested, my darling Livia, I have spoken to Tiberius\* about what is to be done with your grandson Tiberius [i.e. Claudius] at the Games of Mars‡. We are agreed that we need to decide once and for all the approach we should be taking in his case. After all, if he is essentially sound and, as it were, ‘all there’‡, then surely there can be no doubt that he should be promoted step by step and office by office just as his brother† has been? If, on the other hand, we feel him to be—as the Greeks might put it—a moron, and not just mentally unsound but physically so as well, then we must on no account give the kind of people who jeer and laugh at such things the chance to make him (and us!) objects of mockery. This is a quandary we are repeatedly going to find ourselves facing if, rather than deciding once and for all whether he is capable of holding public office, we do it on a case by case basis.’

*\*Livia’s son, Augustus’s successor*

*‡ ‘Mars the Avenger’, celebrated in AD 12*

*‡ ‘sound’ and ‘all there’ are Greek words transliterated into Latin*

*† Germanicus*

‘in praesentia tamen quibus de rebus consulis, curare eum ludis Martialibus triclinium sacerdotum non displicet nobis, si est passurus se ab Siluani filio, homine sibi affini, admoneri, ne quid faciat quod conspici et derideri possit. spectare eum circenses ex puluinari non placet nobis; expositus enim in fronte prima spectaculorum conspicietur. in Albanum montem ire eum non placet nobis, aut esse Romae Latinarum diebus. cur enim non praeficitur urbi, si potest sequi fratrem suum in montem?’

‘habes nostras, mea Livia, sententias, quibus placet semel de tota re aliquid constitui, ne semper inter spem et metum fluctuemur. licebit autem, si uoles, Antoniae quoque nostrae des hanc partem epistulae huius legendam.’

‘Nevertheless, since the issue you have raised with me is a pressing one, I think that giving him responsibility for the priests’ banquet at the Games of Mars is something I can live with—provided, that is, he is willing to be monitored by Silvanus’ son, his brother-in-law, and does not do anything that will render him conspicuous or an object of laughter. What I do not think acceptable, however, is for him to watch the circus games from my box, since there, exposed as he will be to the gaze of everyone in the stands above, there will be no hiding him. Nor would I be happy for him to go to the Alban Mount or to remain in Rome on the day of the Latin festival. After all, if he is capable of accompanying his brother to the Alban Mount, then why should he not be made prefect of the city?\*

‘So there, my darling Livia, you have my views: I want us to settle this matter once and for all, so that we are not forever veering between our hopes for the best and our fears of the worst. You may, if you wish, give this section of my letter to our Antonia to read.’

*\*City officials went to the Latin festival 14 miles away at the Alban Mount. A city prefect, often from the imperial family, was appointed to cover for their absence.*

rursus alteris litteris: ‘Tiberium adulescentem ego uero, dum tu aberis, cotidie inuitabo ad cenam, ne solus cenet cum suo Sulpicio et Athenodoro. qui uellem diligentius et minus μετεώρως deligeret sibi aliquem, cuius motum et habitum et incessum imitaretur. misellus ἀτυχεῖ—nam ἐν τοῖς σπουδαίοις, ubi non aberrauit eius animus, satis apparet ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ εὐγένεια.’

Again, in a second letter to Livia, Augustus wrote: ‘While you are away, I shall certainly invite young Tiberius to supper every day, to ensure that he is not dining alone with his friends Sulpicius and Athenodorus. Rather than have him copy just anyone, I would like him to consider more carefully whose manners, posture and behaviour he should properly be imitating. The poor boy has been cheated by fortune—for in significant matters, when he can hold his concentration, the nobility of his spirit is evident enough.’

item tertiis litteris: ‘Tiberium nepotem tuum placere mihi declamantem potuisse, peream nisi, mea Livia, admiror. nam qui tam ἀσαφῶς loquatur, qui possit cum declamat σαφῶς dicere quae dicenda sunt, non uideo.’

Then, in a third letter: ‘I’ll be damned, my dear Livia, if it’s not the most surprising thing—I actually find myself admiring your grandson Tiberius’ talent for declamation! How anyone who in his conversation talks such gibberish can possibly talk such sense when giving a speech is beyond me.’

*In the event, Claudius featured nowhere in the imperial plans outlined in Augustus' will (AD 14) and was left a small legacy of 800,000 sesterces. The best laid plans, however ...*

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**

### **SCENES FROM SUETONIUS (4)**



*Nero, emperor AD 54-68, Cesares de Roma project*

#### **Good and bad emperors (i): Augustus (27 BC-AD 14)**

*Suetonius makes it clear that one important criterion of the 'good emperor' was the care he lavished on the city and people Rome, and another the moderation he exemplified in his own personal life. Augustus came out top in both...*

*'As for Rome, which lacked the adornments appropriate to the majesty of its empire, and was vulnerable to flooding and fire, he so improved the city that he could justifiably boast of having found it made of brick and leaving it made of marble; also, to the degree that human planning can ever make provision for the future, he boosted its defences against natural disasters.'*

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**

*urbem neque pro maiestate imperii ornatam et inundationibus incendiisque obnoxiam excoluit adeo, ut iure sit gloriatus marmoream se relinquere, quam latericiam accepisset. tutam uero, quantum prouideri humana ratione potuit, etiam in posterum praestitit.*

**Suetonius, Divus Augustus 28**

‘In other aspects of his life, however, there is a general consensus that he behaved with great moderation—so much so that he was never even suspected of failings’.

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**

*in ceteris partibus uitae continentissimum constat ac sine suspicione ullius uitii.*

**Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 72**

### **Good and bad emperors (ii): Nero (emperor AD 54-68)**

Grandiose projects enhancing the image of Rome were ‘good’, and there is no doubt that Nero’s vast Golden House, a 300-room palace (no bedrooms: it was for entertainment) fitted that bill precisely. Built on the ruins of Rome’s fire of AD 64 and located within a carefully designed ‘natural’ landscape covering anything up to possibly 300 acres, it was a ground-breaking architectural, artistic and engineering masterpiece. The problem was that it seemed to have been built not for Rome’s glory but Nero’s personal pleasure.

Suetonius described—and judged—it thus:

[31] ‘Nothing, however, proved a more ruinous waste of money than his construction of a house that stretched from the Palatine to the Esquiline: initially he called this the “Passageway House”, but then, when it was rebuilt after burning down in the fire, he renamed it the “Golden House”. The following details should be sufficient to convey a sense of its scale and splendour. It had an entrance hall so high that it was able to enclose a colossal statue of the emperor himself, a hundred and twenty feet tall, and so long that its triple colonnade stretched for a mile; it also had a lake like a sea, together with structures built to convey a sense of cities along its shore, and a park which featured a range of fields and vineyards, pastureland and woods, and large numbers of every kind of animal, both domestic and wild.

[2] In the rest of the house everything was overlaid with gold and decorated with jewels and mother-of-pearl; the banqueting halls had coffered ceilings with panels made of ivory that could be made to rotate and drop flowers, and spray guests with perfume from pipes; the main banqueting hall had a dome which revolved continuously day and night, like the cosmos itself; the baths were supplied with running water both from the sea and a sulphur spring. Once the entire house had been brought to completion in this style, and he had dedicated it, his only expression of approval was to declare: “Now at last I have begun to live like a human being.”

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**



Part of the Golden House

[31] *non in alia re tamen damnosior quam in aedificando domum a Palatio Esquilias usque fecit, quam primo transitoriam, mox incendio absumptam restitutamque auream nominavit. de cuius spatio atque cultu suffecerit haec rettulisse. vestibulum eius fuit, in quo colossus CXX pedum staret ipsius effigie; tanta laxitas, ut porticus triplices miliarias haberet; item stagnum maris instar, circumsaeptum aedificiis ad urbium speciem; rura insuper arvis atque uinetis et pascuis silisque uaria, cum multitudine omnis generis pecudum ac ferarum.*

[2] *in ceteris partibus cuncta auro lita, distincta gemmis unionumque conchis erant; cenationes laqueatae tabulis eburneis uersatilibus, ut flores, fistulatis, ut unguenta desuper spargerentur; praecipua cenationum rotunda, quae perpetuo diebus ac noctibus uice mundi circumageretur; balineae marinis et albulis fluentes aquis. eius modi domum cum absolutam dedicaret, hactenus comprobavit, ut se diceret quasi hominem tandem habitare coepisse.*

**Suetonius, *Life of Nero* 31**

### **Good and bad emperors (iii): Vespasian (AD 69-79) and Titus (AD 79-81)**

The poet Martial celebrated the fact that later emperors undid all Nero's work, and whereas once 'there was only one house in the whole of Rome', now 'Rome has been restored to herself and under your rule, Caesar (= Titus), the delights that belonged to the overlord (=Nero) now belong to the people.'

*reddita Roma sibi est et sunt, te praeside, Caesar,  
deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini.*

## Martial, *de spectaculis* 2.10-11



*Titus*

Vespasian drained Nero's lake and began building the Colosseum on it. His son Titus finished it, and showed 'the devotion of a father' to his people during fire, plague, and eruption, as Suetonius explained. This was what being an emperor should be all about:

[8] Some appalling disasters took place during his principate: among them the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in Campania, a fire in Rome which lasted for three days and nights, and a plague of a severity rarely witnessed before. In the face of calamities on such a terrible scale he showed not only the concern proper to a princeps but the devotion that a father uniquely can provide: now furnishing consolation by means of his edicts, and now straining his resources to their absolute limits so as to provide aid. He appointed officials chosen by lot from among former consuls to lead the reconstruction of Campania, and allocated the property of those who had lost their lives in the Vesuvius disaster and had no surviving heirs to the reconstruction of the damaged cities. He made no public pronouncement on the fire at Rome, beyond declaring that the loss was all his own: in proof of which he set aside the ornaments from his country estates to assist with the public monuments and temples, and put a number of men from the equestrian order in charge of the work to ensure that it would be completed faster. As for the plague, he spared no resource, either divine or human, in his attempt to counter its impact and to nurse people back to health: every kind of sacrifice, every kind of medicine was tried.

**Tom Holland (first draft, 2020)**

[8] *quaedam sub eo fortuita ac tristia acciderunt, ut conflagratio Vesuuii montis in Campania, et incendium Romae per triduum totidemque noctes, item pestilentia quanta non temere alias. in iis tot aduersis ac talibus non modo principis sollicitudinem sed et parentis affectum unicum praestitit, nunc consolando per edicta, nunc opitulando quatenus suppeteret facultas. curatores restituendae Campaniae consularium numero sorte duxit; bona oppressorum in Vesuuio, quorum heredes non exstabant, restitutioni afflictarum ciuitatum attribuit. urbis incendio nihil publice nisi*

*perisse testatus, cuncta praetorium suorum ornamenta operibus ac templis destinavit praeposuitque complures ex equestri ordine, quo quaeque maturius paragerentur. medendae ualitudini leniendisque morbis nullam diuinam humanamque opem non adhibuit, inquisito omni sacrificiorum remediorumque genere.*

**Suetonius, *Life of Titus* 8**

### **SCENES FROM SUETONIUS (5)**



*Domitian, emperor AD 81-96*

*This is the last of the extracts from Tom Holland's first drafts of his forthcoming translation for Penguin. Classics for All is extremely grateful to Tom for allowing our supporters to peep into this work in progress and much looks forward to the finished article (summer 2021).*

Each of Suetonius' *Lives of the Emperors* follows a roughly similar pattern: birth and ancestry, early life and career, good and bad features, conduct, political, military and other achievements, death, other minor details, all decorated with copious illustrative anecdotes. The lack of clear chronology and of any sense of the person as a whole creates serious problems for the historian.

The following passages come immediately after the description of Domitian's death at the hands of members of his internal staff, and are followed by the announcement of senatorial *damnatio memoriae*. The paranoid Domitian has indeed been known as one of the cruellest of emperors, in contrast to his brother Titus and father Vespasian. But the sheer banality of the details here reminds one of Hannah Arendt's description of the 'terrifying normality' of Adolph Eichmann.

#### **Appearance**

[18] He was a tall man, and had the appearance of a modest one, prone as he was to blushing; his eyes were large but his vision was poor; additionally, although very good-looking and well-proportioned, especially when young, he was let down by his



feet, which had toes that curled in a bit—nor, as he grew older, did this remain his only physical defect, for he also lost his hair and sprouted a protruding belly, while his legs, which had weakened over the course of a lengthy illness, were spindly. So alert was he to the advantages that accrued to him from his natural modesty of expression that he once boasted to the senate, ‘Up until now, at any rate, there can be no doubting that you have thought well of both my character and my looks.’

So sensitive was he about his baldness that he would take it as a personal insult should anyone else who had lost his hair be mocked or jeered for it—although, in a small book he wrote for a friend on the theme of hair and its maintenance, he did attempt to console both himself and his friend by including the following passage: ‘Do you not see how fair I am too, and tall?’† Young though I am, yet I bear with fortitude the thinning of my hair‡: for I know the fate it suffers is the fate that awaits me too. Know, then, that there is nothing more delightful than beauty—and nothing more fleeting either.’

† Iliad 21.108, said by Achilles

‡ Martial, who dedicated some of his books of poetry to Domitian, composed scathing epigrams on those who tried to cover up their bald patches; one poem mocking a man with a bald patch specifically mentioned the emperor.

[18] *statura fuit procera, uultu modesto ruborisque pleno, grandibus oculis, uerum acie hebetiore; pulcher ac decens, maxime in iuuenta, et quidem toto corpore, exceptis pedibus, quorum digitos restrictiores habebat; postea caluitio quoque deformis et obesitate uentris et crurum gracilitate, quae tamen ei ualitudine longa remacruerant. commendari se uerecundia oris adeo sentiebat, ut apud senatum sic quondam iactauerit: ‘usque adhuc certe et animum meum probastis et uultum.’*

*caluitio ita offendebatur, ut in contumeliam suam traheret, si cui alii ioco uel iurgio obiectaretur; quamuis libello, quem de cura capillorum ad amicum edidit, haec etiam, simul illum seque consolans, inseruerit: ‘οὐχ ὀράας, οἷος καὶ γὰρ καλός τε μέγας τε; eadem me tamen manent capillorum fata, et forti animo fero comam in adulescentia senescentem. scias nec gratius quicquam decore nec breuius.’*

### Suetonius, *Life of Domitian* 18



Portrait Head of a Balding Man, Roman, ~ A.D. 240.

Marble, Paul Getty Museum, 85.AA.112



Archers from Trajan's column

### Physical skills

[19] He was not a great one for exercise: in Rome he rarely went anywhere on foot, while in the field, whether on the march or fighting a battle, he much preferred being carried in a litter to sitting in the saddle. He had no interest in practising with the weapons used by regular soldiers,† but was a great enthusiast for archery.\* Indeed, at his retreat among the Alban hills, large numbers of people would gather to watch him fell a hundred animals of every kind—and sometimes, targeting the heads of his victims with a pair of arrows, he would make it seem that the creatures had sprouted horns. Sometimes as well he would have a slave-boy stand at a distance holding up a right hand with the fingers outspread to serve him as a target, and so skilfully could he fire his arrows that they would land safely in the gaps between the fingers.‡

*†None of this is very complimentary for an emperor, especially when contrasted with his brother Titus (whom he disliked) and father Vespasian, both of course much admired*

*‡Titus too was skilled with the bow: we are told he killed twelve of the defenders during the attack on Jerusalem*

### Tom Holland (first draft 2020)

[19] *laboris impatiens, pedibus per urbem non temere ambulavit, in expeditione et agmine equo rarius, lectica assidue uectus est. armorum nullo, sagittarum uel praecipuo studio tenebatur. centenas uarii generis feras saepe in Albano secessu conficientem spectauere plerique, atque etiam ex industria ita quarundam capita figentem, ut duobus ictibus quasi cornus efficeret. nonnumquam in pueri procul stantis, praebentisque (pro scopulo) dispansam dexterae manus palmam, sagittas tanta arte derexit, ut omnes per interualla digitorum innocue euaderent.*

### Suetonius, *Life of Domitian* 19



## Education

[20] He had no time for the liberal arts when he first became emperor, although he did take care to restore at enormous expense some libraries that had been destroyed in a fire, searching for copies of the lost works all over the place, and sending agents to Alexandria to transcribe those texts that had gone up in flames and to correct the damaged ones. Even so, he never made any effort to familiarise himself with the basics of written style required of an emperor,† let alone history or poetry; nor—with the sole exception of the memoirs and decrees of Tiberius Caesar—did he ever read anything more than once, and always, if he had letters, or speeches, or edicts that needed writing, would rely on the

talents of others.

That said, his conversation did not lack for a certain elegance, and on occasion he might even say something memorable: ‘I only wish that I

*‘I think I’ll use my dictaphone’*

*The ‘Virgil Mosaic’,  
Virgil holding Aeneid  
flanked by Clio &  
Melpomene (cropped),  
c 3<sup>rd</sup> c.AD, Bardo  
National Museum*

were as handsome as Maecius thinks he is’, for instance, or the time he described the head of a man whose reddish hair was turning white as resembling ‘mead poured out onto snow’.

[21] ‘How wretched,’ he used to say, ‘is the lot of a princeps, for the only time that people believe him when he reports the uncovering of a conspiracy is if he ends up actually murdered.’

*†Or rather ‘the [technical] writing that his duties demanded’; cf. ‘needed writing’ in the next sentence*

[20] *liberalia studia imperii initio neglexit, quamquam bibliothecas incendio absumptas impensissime reparare curasset, exemplaribus undique petitis, missisque Alexandream qui describerent emendarentque. numquam tamen aut historiae carminibusque noscendis operam ullam aut stilo uel necessario dedit. praeter commentarios et acta Tiberii Caesaris nihil lectitabat; epistolas orationesque et edicta alieno formabat ingenio. sermonis tamen nec inelegantis, dictorum interdum etiam notabilium, ‘uellem,’ inquit, ‘tam formosus esse, quam Maetius sibi uidetur’; et cuiusdam caput uarietate capilli subrutilum et incanum, ‘perfusam niuem mulso’ dixit.*  
[21] *condicionem principum miserrimam aiebat, quibus de coniuratione comperta non crederetur nisi occisis.*

## Suetonius, *Life of Domitian* 20-21



Wall painting depicting still life, *The House of Julia Felix*, pre-AD 79, Pompeii

### Relaxation

[21] Whenever he had the time he would amuse himself by playing dice<sup>†</sup> (even if it were a normal working day or in the early hours of the morning); baths he would take during the course of the day, and lunches<sup>‡</sup> he would enjoy until his stomach was full, so that often, at dinner, he would have nothing more than a Matian apple\* and a drink of wine from a tiny flask. He regularly hosted lavish dinner parties, but these rarely went on late (certainly never past sunset), nor were they followed by drinking games. Instead, you see, he never did anything before retiring to bed except walk in some secluded spot, alone.

<sup>†</sup> *Gambling was technically illegal, even if many of the emperors enjoyed it*

<sup>‡</sup> *It was normal to take prandium at the sixth hour after sunrise, then bathe, and take cena at the ninth or tenth*

\**Gaius Matius, a friend of Augustus, wrote three books on cookery as well as developing this variety of apple*

### Tom Holland (first draft 2020)

[21] *quotiens otium esset, alea se oblectabat, etiam profestis diebus matutinisque horis, ac lauabat de die, prandebatque ad satietatem, ut non temere super cenam praeter Matianum malum et modicam in ampulla potiunculam sumeret. conuiuabatur frequenter ac large, sed paene raptim; certe non ultra solis occasum, nec ut postea comisaretur. nam ad horam somni nihil aliud quam solus secreto deambulabat.*

## Suetonius, *Life of Domitian* 21



*Morpheus, god of sleep and dreams, by Jean-Bernard (appropriately) Restout (1732-1791)*

*Anyone in the ancient world who felt they had 'seen' (as they put it) a dream which they felt might be somehow significant could be offered an interpretative explanation. The biblical story of the fat and lean kine and Penelope's dream of her geese killed by*

*an eagle in the Odyssey provide well-known literary examples. For the man in the street, professional interpreters were available who would charge a fee for their services. Artemidorus from Daldis, near Ephesus, writing c. AD 200, was one such. He composed his Interpretation of Dreams (henceforth ID, Oneirokritika in Greek) in five books, showing the beginner how it should be done.*

*This run of Bellaria will introduce supporters of Classics for All to this enthusiastic hero of the genre. By kind permission of Martin Hammond, we shall be using his fine new translation Artemidorus: ID (Oxford World's Classics, 2020), with notes by Peter Thonemann (Wadham College, Oxford), whose superb An Ancient Dream Manual (Oxford 2020) gives a full and fascinating account of Artemidorus' mighty opus.*

*I express here my gratitude to Martin Hammond, Professor Daniel Harris-McCoy (Hawaii), who composed a text, translation and commentary on ID for Oxford (2012), for providing a digitised Greek text of Books 1-3, and to Peter Thonemann for help with other matters, including digitised Greek passages from Books 4 and 5.*

## **ARTEMIDORUS: THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (1)**

### **Artemidorus: an Introduction**

Artemidorus began his work by describing the breadth and depth of his researches and the time and travel he devoted to them, in contrast to the incoherent and random re-hashings of his predecessors:

### **My in-depth research into dream interpretation**

I, on the other hand, have not only been at great pains to acquire every book there is on dream-interpretation, but over many years I have also spent time with the much-maligned diviners of the marketplace, paying no attention to the disparagement of those po-faced eyebrow-knitters who call them beggars, frauds, and parasites. In Greece, both city by city and at the great religious festivals, in Asia, in Italy, and in the largest and most populous of the islands, I have patiently listened to accounts of historical dreams and their outcomes: there was no other way to get practice in these matters.

### **Hammond ID Preface 4**

ἐγὼ δὲ—τοῦτο μὲν οὐκ ἔστιν ὃ τι βιβλίον οὐκ ἐκτησάμην ὄνειροκριτικόν (πολλὴν εἰς τοῦτο φιλοτιμίαν ἔχων), τοῦτο δὲ καὶ σφόδρα διαβεβλημένων τῶν ἐν ἀγορᾷ μάντεων (οὓς δὴ προΐκτας καὶ γόητας καὶ βωμολόχους ἀποκαλοῦσιν οἱ σεμνοπροσωποῦντες καὶ τὰς ὀφρῦς ἀνεσπακότες)—καταφρονήσας τῆς διαβολῆς ἔτεσι πολλοῖς ὠμίλησα, καὶ ἐν Ἑλλάδι κατὰ πόλεις καὶ πανηγύρεις, καὶ ἐν Ἀσίᾳ καὶ ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ καὶ τῶν νήσων ἐν ταῖς μεγίσταις καὶ πολυανθρωποτάταις ὑπομένων ἀκούειν παλαιούς ὄνειρους καὶ τούτων τὰς ἀποβάσεις· οὐ γὰρ ἦν ἄλλως χρήσασθαι τῇ κατὰ ταῦτα γυμνασίᾳ . . .

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά Preface 4**

Artemidorus then went on to distinguish between two main sorts of dream: those that predicted future events and those that did not. He is the first person we know of to make this particular semantic distinction, though he does not always stick to it:

### Two types of dream

The difference between two types of dream, the *enhyption* and the *oneiros*, is an important distinction which I have already made elsewhere, but I think it as well to begin again from this same point, since otherwise my treatise could strike you as an unsystematic piece of work not generated, so to speak, from first principles. An *oneiros* differs from an *enhyption* in that the significance of the former relates to future events, and of the latter to present events.

#### Hammond *ID* 1.1.1

περὶ μὲν οὖν ἐνυπνίου καὶ ὄνειρου διαφορᾶς τῆς πρὸς ἄλληλα διαίρεσις οὐκ ὀλίγη καὶ ἐν ἄλλοις γέγραπταί μοι, καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἄκοσμον καὶ ὡσπερ οὐκ ἀπ' ἀρχῆς γενόμενον φανεῖται σοι τὸ σύγγραμμα, καὶ νῦν ἀπ' αὐτῶν τούτων ἄρξασθαι καλῶς ἔχον εἶναι μοι δοκεῖ. ταύτη γὰρ ὄνειρος ἐνυπνίου διαφέρει, ἣ συμβέβηκε τῷ μὲν εἶναι σημαντικῶ τῶν μελλόντων, τῷ δὲ τῶν ὄντων.

#### Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.1.1



*A seated, sleeping black man (5th C BC, British Museum)*

Artemidorus dismissed *enhyption* as uninteresting because they simply reflected the dreamer's existing concerns and vanished as soon as s/he woke up. Not, however, the *oneiroi*, those dreams that predicted the future. These predictive dream he distinguished as follows:

## Two types of *oneiroi*

Next, in the category of **predictive dreams** (*oneiroi*), some are theorematic and others allegorical. **Theorematic** dreams are those where the outcome corresponds literally to the vision. For example, a man out at sea dreamt that he was shipwrecked, and he did find himself in that situation: when sleep left him, the ship sank and was lost, and he barely managed to survive along with a few others . . . **Allegorical** dreams, on the other hand, are those which signify something by means of something else: here the mind is characteristically speaking in riddles.

### Hammond *ID* 1.2.1

ἔτι τῶν ὀνείρων οἱ μὲν εἰσι θεωρηματικοί, οἱ δὲ ἀλληγορικοί. καὶ θεωρηματικοὶ μὲν οἱ τῇ ἑαυτῶν θέα προσεικότες, οἷον πλέων τις ἔδοξε ναυαγεῖν καὶ διατεθεὶς ἔτυχεν οὕτως. ἐπεὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν ἀνήκεν ὁ ὕπνος, καταποθὲν ἀπώλετο τὸ σκάφος, αὐτὸς δὲ σὺν ὀλίγοις μόγις ἐσώθη . . . ἀλληγορικοί δὲ οἱ δι' ἄλλων ἄλλα σημαίνοντες, αἰνισσομένης ἐν αὐτοῖς φυσικῶς τι τῆς ψυχῆς.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.2.1

It is the allegorical to which he exclusively devotes himself.

## An early dream interpreter

To give some idea of that allegorical tradition within which Artemidorus was working, here is an example of a dream interpretation which he quoted from one Antiphon (5th C BC), the earliest interpreter of dreams (he might or might not be the same person as the famous Athenian orator and/or sophist). Artemidorus was discussing the messages that dreaming about creatures such as the octopus might be sending to their recipients:



*Mosaic from Pompeii with octopus and cuttlefish*

**Boneless marine animals** are only advantageous for criminals, as these creatures too camouflage themselves, blend in to their surroundings, and lurk unseen. For others



they signify obstacles and delays because of their adhesive grip, and they predict many slumps in business affairs because they have no bones—and bone is what gives strength to a body. These animals are the octopus, squid, sea anemone, nautilus, musk polypus, purple polypus, and cuttlefish. This last is the only one to benefit those trying to run away, because of the ink which it often employs to make its own escape. Antiphon of Athens also notes this dream.

### **Hammond, ID 2.14.6**

οἱ δὲ μαλακοὶ τῶν ἰχθύων μόνοις τοῖς πανούργοις συμφέρουσι· καὶ γὰρ αὐτοὶ μεταβάλλοντες τὰ χρώματα καὶ ὁμοιούμενοι τοῖς τόποις, ἐν οἷς ἂν γένωνται, λανθάνουσι. τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς ἐμπόδια καὶ κατοχὰς σημαίνουσι διὰ τὸ καθεκτικὸν καὶ ἰξῶδες, καὶ ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν ἀτονίας πολλὰς προαγορεύουσι διὰ τὸ μὴ ὄστέα ἔχειν· ἰσχυρὸς γὰρ σώματος ὄστέον. εἰσὶ δὲ οἶδε, πολύπους τευθὶς ἀκαλήφη ναυτίλος ἐλεδώνη πορφυρίων σηπία. αὕτη δὲ μόνη καὶ τοὺς ἀποδρᾶναι πειρωμένους ὠφελεῖ διὰ τὸν θολόν, ᾧ χρωμένη πολλάκις φεύγει. μέμνηται δὲ τούτου τοῦ ὀνείρου καὶ Ἀντιφῶν ὁ Ἀθηναῖος.

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.14.6**

Readers will now have some idea what to expect!

### **Dreams and their outcomes: the statistics**

The category of ‘boneless marine animals’ is but one of about 1,400 possible dream-subjects which Artemidorus analyses, stretching from tripods to lawyers, from mud to combing one’s hair, and from juggling to bird-lime, stealing stars, a foul-smelling navel and (inevitably) many varieties of sexual encounters. There are also about 3,000 outcomes, because the same dream will have different meanings for different classes of people. Be assured that a judicious selection will be made.

Aristodemus’ methodology deeply impressed Sigmund Freud. In his *Die Traumdeutung* (1899) he said ‘Here not only the content of the dream but also the personality and the circumstances of the dreamer are taken into account so that the same element in the dream has a different meaning for the rich man, the married man, or the orator from the meaning it has for the poor man, the unmarried man, or, say, a merchant’.

Next week we shall begin to look in detail at the principles of interpretation advocated by Artemidorus and what was at stake in them.

## **ARTEMIDORUS: THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (2)**

*Here Artemidorus describes the subjects of the dreams discussed in the first two of his (eventually) five books.*

**Note: 'Hammond ID'** refers to Martin Hammond, *The Interpretation of Dreams* (Oxford World's Classics, 2020). For grateful acknowledgement of all the sources of this Bellaria sequence, see Bellaria XI.



*Greeting*

*Athletics: a pankratiast surrenders*



*Fishing*



*Harvesting*

### ***The Interpretation of Dreams* Books 1-2: contents**

**1.10.1** We shall move on now to address the question of how the dreams should be interpreted, arranging our treatment in this rough order. We shall not follow the old authorities in beginning with the gods, however impious that might seem to some, but with regard to the natural sequence of things we shall begin first with birth, then deal next with upbringing, next with the body and the parts of the body (dreams about parts added or lost, growing or diminishing in size, changing shape or substance), then education in all manner of trades, manual work, and professions, then early manhood, physical exercise of all types, athletic games, the baths and washing in general, all kinds of food, wet or dry, perfumes and garlands, sexual intercourse, and sleep. This will be the content of our **first book**.

**2** The **second book** will deal with waking up, greeting people, all forms of male and female clothing, the weather and related issues, hunting, fishing, sailing, farming, legal matters, public administration and liturgies, military service, divine worship and the gods themselves, death, and anything else prompted in the course of the discussion.

### **Hammond ID 1.10.1-2**

**1.10.1** ἔξῃς ὑποθησόμεθα πῶς δεῖ κρίνειν τοὺς ὄνειρους. ἔξει δὲ τάξιν ἢ πραγματεία τοιαύτην. οὐχ ὥσπερ οἱ παλαιοὶ ἀπὸ θεῶν ἀρξόμεθα, κὰν ἀσεβεῖν τινὶ δοκῶμεν, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸ ἀναγκαῖον τῆς ἀκολουθίας ἀποβλέποντες ἀρξόμεθα, πρῶτον ἀπὸ τοῦ γεννᾶσθαι, ἔπειτα ἀνατρέφεσθαι, ἔξῃς περὶ σώματος καὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ σώματι μερῶν—προσγινομένων τε καὶ ἀπογινομένων καὶ ἀυξανομένων καὶ μειουμένων καὶ ἀλλοιουμένων εἰς μορφήν ἑτέραν ἢ εἰς ὕλην—εἶτα περὶ διδασκαλίας τεχνῶν παντοδαπῶν καὶ ἔργων καὶ ἐπιτηδευμάτων, εἶτα περὶ ἐφηβίας, περὶ γυμνασίων κατ' εἶδος, περὶ ἀγῶνων, περὶ βαλανείου καὶ λουτροῦ παντοδαποῦ, περὶ τροφῆς πάσης ὑγρᾶς τε καὶ ξηρᾶς, περὶ μύρων καὶ στεφάνων, περὶ ἀφροδισίων συνουσίας, περὶ ὕπνου. ταῦτα μὲν περιέξει ἡ πρώτη βίβλος·

**2** ἡ δὲ δευτέρα περὶ ἐγρηγόρσεως, ἀσπασμάτων, κόσμου παντὸς ἀνδρείου καὶ γυναικείου, ἀέρος καὶ τῶν περὶ ἀέρα, περὶ κυνηγεσίας, περὶ ἀλιείας, περὶ πλοῦ, περὶ γεωργίας, περὶ δίκης, ἀρχῆς δημοσίας καὶ λειτουργίας, στρατείας, θεῶν τιμῆς καὶ περὶ θεῶν, περὶ θανάτου, καὶ εἴ τι ἄλλο προῖον ὁ λόγος ὑπομνήσει.

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.10.1-2**

The reason why Artemidorus did not, in time-honoured fashion, ‘begin with the gods’ is that he did not believe dreams emanated from them. So they took their place in his chosen structure: in Book 1 from birth to the body and its exercise and care (including food and decoration) sex and sleep; in Book 2 looking out to the wider world, to human interaction and dress, the weather, the animal kingdom and natural world, human society, gods, death and other odds and ends (pots and pans, eggs, flying etc.).

### **Cause (but *not* effect)**

Artemidorus was keen to stress that his work was the result of years of experience and research. By the same token, he was aware that simply saying to your client ‘Your dream of competing in the pentathlon means you will travel abroad’ might well invite the question ‘Why?’, and to answer ‘Don’t ask me, squire, it just does, that’ll be two obols,† NEXT’ might affect one’s professional reputation. His answer: keep the punter happy and *make something up*. It did not matter what, as long as it sounded plausible: it was the predicted outcome, which was not affected by the ‘cause’, that counted.

† Evidently the charge for a dream-interpretation in late 5th C BC Athens (Aristophanes *Wasps* 52). At that time two obols was one third of a day’s pay for a skilled craftsman, and fees were probably at about the same level in Artemidorus’ day (c. AD 180-210). We can only guess at how long a consultation lasted.

Here, in the first of two later books [4 and 5] addressed to his son, a trainee dream-interpreter, Artemidorus explains:

**4.20.1** You should always try to assign a **cause** and accompany any interpretation with a stated reason and some credible explanations: otherwise, even if you are quite accurate in your interpretation, giving a bare declaration of the outcome stripped of all its surrounding material will make you seem less professional. But you must not let yourself be misled into thinking that the causes you assign do actually determine the outcomes. Some people have frequent dreams with the same outcome, and we know that there is some logical pattern to these outcomes from the fact that they always turn out the same, but we cannot find the causes why that outcome is as it is. That is why it is our opinion that outcomes are arrived at on the basis of practical experience, but explanations of their causes are simply the best that each of us can come up with from his own resources.

**Hammond ID 4.20.1**

**4.20.1** πειρῶ δὲ πάντα μὲν αἰτιολογεῖν καὶ προσάπτειν ἐκάστῳ λόγον καὶ πιθανὰς τινὰς ἀποδείξεις, ὡς εἰ καὶ πάνυ ἀληθῆ λέγοις, ψιλὰ καὶ περιλελεπισμένα ἀποτελέσματα λέγων ἥττον εἶναι δόξεις ἔμπειρος· αὐτὸς δὲ μὴ ἐξαπατηθῆς ὡς τῆς αἰτιολογίας κυρίας τῶν ἀποτελεσμάτων οὔσης· πολλὰ γὰρ ἀποβαίνει συνεχῶς ἐνίοις, καὶ ὅτι μὲν κατὰ λόγον ἀποβαίνει ἴσμεν ἐκ τοῦ πάντοτε ὁμοίως ἀποβαίνειν, τὰς δὲ αἰτίας, δι' ἃς οὕτως ἀποβαίνει, εὐρεῖν οὐ δυνάμεθα. ὅθεν ἠγούμεθα τὰς μὲν ἀποβάσεις ἀπὸ τῆς πείρας εὐρῆσθαι, τὰς δὲ αἰτιολογίας ἀπὸ ἡμῶν αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐκάστου δύναμιν.

**Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.20.1**

Here are some examples of Artemidorus' causal observations (underlined). One has to admire his imagination:

**a. Learning to read and write**



*Possibly Orbilius? From Benevento Cathedral: note the raised hand*

**1.53. 1** If an illiterate man dreams of learning **to read and write**, that signifies that something good is coming for the dreamer, though there will be toil and terror along the way: pupils have a hard time and live in terror of their masters, but they learn to their ultimate advantage†. For a literate man to dream of learning his letters all over again must be considered malign and unnatural, as learning to read is what children do. For that reason it signifies unemployment as well as the toil and terror ...

† The poet Horace described his teacher Lucius Orbilius Pupillus, who came from Beneventum and was then about 60, as *plagosus* 'flogger'

### **Hammond ID 1.53.1**

**1.53. 1** γράμματα μανθάνειν μὴ εἰδότα ἀγαθόν τι μετὰ πόνου καὶ φόβου τῷ ἰδόντι ἐσόμενον προαγορεύει· φοβοῦνται γὰρ ἅμα καὶ πονοῦσιν οἱ μανθάνοντες, πλὴν ἐπὶ τῷ συμφέροντι μανθάνουσιν. εἰ δέ τις εἰδὼς γράμματα πάλιν μανθάνοι, πονηρὸν καὶ ἄτοπον νομίζειν χρή· παιδαριῶδες γὰρ τὸ μανθάνειν. διὸ ἀπραξίας ἅμα τοῖς φόβοις καὶ πόνοις σημαίνει ...

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.53.1**

## **b. Decapitation**



*Decapitated Roman skeleton*

**1.35. 1** To dream of being **beheaded**, either through judicial execution or by bandits or in gladiatorial combat, or in any way whatsoever (it makes no difference), is malign

for anyone with parents or children. The head is like parents, as the source of one's life; and like children, because of the facial resemblance. After this dream people have before now lost a wife, a friend, or a good steward, and been left with no figure to keep an eye on their property ...

**3** For bankers, money-lenders, presidents of an eranos,<sup>†</sup> shipowners, merchants, and all who accumulate money, the dream signifies the loss of their capital, because 'capital' (kephalaion) comes from the word for 'head' (kephalē). For debtors, by parity of reasoning, the dream is auspicious.

**4** Anyone who is in a foreign country will return to his own, and anyone in a lawsuit concerning land will win his case. This is because when the head is removed from the body it falls to the earth and stays there, and ensures that the rest of the body will feel no more pain.

<sup>†</sup> A sort of 'friendly society'

**Hammond ID 1.35.1, 3-4**

**1.35.1** ἀφηρησθαι δὲ δοκεῖν τῆς κεφαλῆς εἴτε ἐκ καταδίκης εἴτε ὑπὸ ληστῶν εἴτε ἐν μονομαχίᾳ εἴτε οἰωδῆποτε τρόπῳ (οὐ γὰρ διαφέρει) πονηρὸν τῷ γονεῖς ἔχοντι καὶ τῷ τέκνῳ· γονεῦσι μὲν γὰρ ἔοικεν ἢ κεφαλὴ διὰ τὸ τοῦ ζῆν αἰτίαν εἶναι· τέκνοις δὲ διὰ τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ τὴν εἰκόνα. ἤδη δὲ τινες καὶ γυναικὸς καὶ φίλου καὶ οἰκονόμου ἀγαθοῦ ἐπὶ τούτῳ τῷ ὄνειρῳ ἐστερήθησαν καὶ οὐκέτι ἔσχον τὸ ἐπιβλέπον τὰ κτήματα πρόσωπον ...

**3** τραπεζίταις δὲ καὶ δανεισταῖς καὶ ἐρανάρχαις καὶ ναυκλήροις καὶ ἐμπόροις καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς χρήματα συνάγουσιν ἀπώλειαν τῶν κεφαλαίων διὰ τὸ ὁμόνυμον σημαίνει. ἀγαθὸν δὲ καταχρέοις διὰ τὰ αὐτά.

**4** ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ ξένης ὦν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κατέλθοι ἄν, καὶ ὁ περὶ γῆς δίκην ἔχων νικήσει· ἀφαιρεθεῖσα γὰρ ἢ κεφαλὴ εἰς τὴν γῆν πίπτει καὶ ἐν αὐτῇ μένει καὶ τῷ λοιπῷ σώματι παρέχει τὸ μηκέτι λυπεῖσθαι.

**Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.35.1, 3-4**

## **ARTEMIDORUS: THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (3)**

### **The six elements**

*The big question that faced the person presenting a dream to the interpreter was whether the dream predicted a favourable or unfavourable outcome. One can imagine the client sweating over what the possible significance might be of dreaming about a donkey or a sideboard, a red mullet or teeth.*

*But for Artemidorus there was much more to a dream than its actual subject. The circumstances of a dream, and their alignment, whatever the subject, with any one of his six stoicheia ('elements, characteristics') were of high importance: a dream in accordance with them was auspicious, otherwise it was bad news.*

*Here are the six stoicheia:*

So we have a common principle, that all dream-visions which are in accordance with **nature, law, custom, art, names, or time** are auspicious, and those which go against these elements are malign or unprofitable.

**Hammond ID 4.2.7**

κοινὸς μὲν οὖν λόγος ἐστίν, ὅτι πάντα τὰ κατὰ φύσιν ἢ νόμον ἢ ἔθος ἢ τέχνην ἢ ὀνόματα ἢ χρόνον βλεπόμενα ἀγαθὰ, τὰ δὲ ἐναντία τούτοις πονηρὰ καὶ ἀλυσιτελῆ.  
**Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.2.7**

*Here are some examples of stoicheia at work:*

### **(i) Nature and custom**

To drink **cold water** is auspicious for all. But **hot water** signifies illness or lack of success for all except those habituated to hot drinks, as drinking hot water is not natural.

**Hammond ID 1.66.1**

πίνειν ὕδωρ ψυχρὸν ἀγαθὸν πᾶσι· θερμὸν δὲ ὕδωρ νόσους ἢ ἀπραξίας σημαίνει πᾶσι, χωρὶς τῶν ἔθος ἐχόντων θερμοποτεῖν· οὐ γὰρ κατὰ φύσιν ἔχει τὸ θερμὸν ὕδωρ.  
**Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.66.1**



*Horace's fons Bandusiae?*

### **(ii) Time**

**Figs** in their proper season are auspicious (and white figs are sweeter than black), but if they appear in a dream out of their season they foretell calumnies and insults—the ancients spoke of insulting someone as ‘defigging’<sup>†</sup> him.

<sup>†</sup>The association between figs (suka), sycophancy and denouncing or insulting people was as lost on the ancients as it is on us

**Hammond ID 1.73.3**

σῦκα δὲ κατὰ μὲν τὴν ὥραν τὴν ἰδίαν ἀγαθὰ, (καὶ τούτων τὰ λευκὰ ἡδίονα τῶν μελάνων), παρὰ δὲ τὸν καιρὸν φαινόμενα, συκοφαντίας καὶ ἐπηρείας προαγορεύει· ‘συκάζειν’ γὰρ καὶ τὸ ἐπηρεάζειν ἔλεγον οἱ παλαιοί.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.73.3

#### (iii) Name

**Artemis** is auspicious for those who are afraid of something: because of the meaning of the word *artemēs*, which is 'safe and sound', she keeps them free from fear.

#### Hammond ID 2.35.3

Ἄρτεμις τοῖς φοβουμένοις ἀγαθή· διὰ γὰρ τὸ ἀρτεμές, ὅπερ ἐστὶν ὑγιές, ἀφόβους αὐτοὺς διαφυλάττει.

#### Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.35.3

#### Warning signs

*But Artemidorus also made it clear that any stoicheion might on the face of it look as if it should have led to the one conclusion, but could in fact lead to the other:*

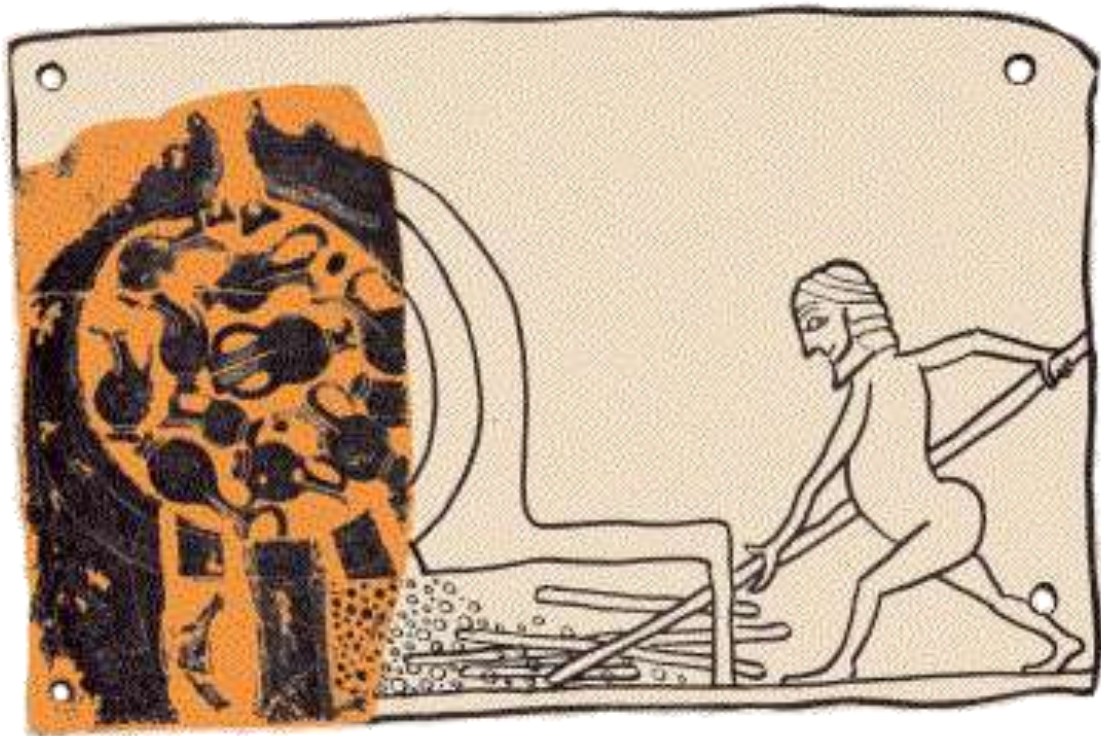
#### (i) The law

For example, someone imagined that he was beating his mother. This was something contrary to law, but even so he profited from it. He happened to be a potter. We call earth our mother, and a potter works by kneading the clay of earth. As a result he produced an extensive output.

#### Hammond ID 4.2.7

οἷον ἔδοξε τις τὴν μητέρα τύπτειν. ἦν μὲν οὖν παράνομον, ἀλλ' οὐδὲν ἤττον ἐλυσιτέλησεν αὐτῷ, ἐπειδὴ κεραμεὺς ἔτυχεν ὧν· μητέρα δὲ τὴν γῆν καλοῦμεν, ἦν ὁ κεραμεὺς τύπτων ἐργάζεται. τοιγαροῦν εἰργάσατο πολλά.

#### Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.2.7





## (ii) Custom

*Here the stoicheion was 'custom, habit'. In this case it looked auspicious, but turned out to be the reverse:*

Remember that, when two sorts of **custom** are involved, the more widely observed custom prevails over the less. An example is the case of Aristides the lawyer.

Although it was his habit to wear white in public, when he fell ill he had a dream in which he was dressed in white clothes. The fact that this was already his own habit was of no help to him, and he died not long afterwards. The influencing factor was the more widely observed custom of dressing dead bodies in white when they are carried out for burial.

### Hammond ID 4.2.8

μέμνησο δὲ ὅτι μείζον ἔθος μικροτέρου κρατεῖ. ὡς Ἀριστείδης ὁ νομικός, καίτοι ἔθος ἔχων ἐν λευκοῖς προΐεναι, νοσῶν ἔδοξε λευκὰ φορεῖν ἱμάτια, καὶ οὐδὲν ἀπώνατο τοῦ ἔθους· οὐ γὰρ εἰς μακρὰν ἀπέθανεν· ἦν γὰρ μείζον ἔθος τὸ ἐπειγόν, καθ' ὃ οἱ νεκροὶ ἐν λευκοῖς ἐκφέρονται.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.2.8

## (iii) Art

*A final example of a stoicheion not turning out quite as expected was taken from an example relating to 'art', or skill:*

Among the **arts**, those which have similar effect, even if their means of operation are different, result in the same outcomes. An example is that of Apollonides the surgeon. After imagining himself in a dream as a player in a Homeric re-enactment and wounding many, he then had many patients to treat. The point is that actors in Homeric scenes inflict wounds and shed blood, but without any intention to kill: and the same is true of a surgeon.

### Hammond ID 4.2.9

καὶ τῶν τεχνῶν δὲ αἱ δυνάμεις ὅμοιαι, καὶ εἰ τῇ ἐνεργείᾳ εἶεν ἀνόμοιοι, εἰς ταῦτὸν ἀποβαίνουσιν. ὡς Ἀπολλωνίδης ὁ χειρουργός, ὁμηρίζειν νομίσας καὶ πολλοὺς τιτρώσκειν, πολλοὺς ἐχείρισε. καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὁμηριστὰι τιτρώσκουσι μὲν καὶ αἱμάσσουσιν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἀποκτεῖναί γε βούλονται· οὕτω δὲ καὶ ὁ χειρουργός.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.2.9



Surgical instruments

## The numbers game

Ancients took the view that there was something magical about numbers, especially 3, 7 and 9. Writing to his grandson Gaius, Augustus remarked that he was relieved to have reached the age of 64 'since I have now passed the most dangerous point of my life, common to all older men—the sixty-third year.' Do the sums: 63 is  $7 \times 3 \times 3$ . Forty-nine ( $7 \times 7$ ) and eighty-one ( $9 \times 9$ ) were equally suspect.

For Artemidorus, number theory went far further, because each letter of the alphabet also stood for a number, and so had a numerical value too, as follows:

a (α)	β (β)	γ (γ)	δ (δ)	ε (ε)	ς (ς)	ζ (ζ)	η (ê)	θ (th)	ι (i)
1	2	3	4	5	6†	7	8	9	10

† The letter representing 6 is ς stigma, not final sigma. It was a name given in the Middle Ages to the squiggle which replaced the original sixth letter of the Greek alphabet Ϝ [digamma]). That squiggle continued to be called digamma in the ancient world. The result is that stigma meaning 'six' does not appear in the Ancient Greek Lexicon!

	κ (k)	λ (l)	μ (m)	ν (n)	ξ (x)	ο (o)	π (p)	ρ †	ρ (r)
	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100

† this symbol is koppa (Latin q), placed in early Greek alphabets between p and r, and replaced by κ

	σ (s)	τ (t)	υ (u)	φ (ph)	χ (ch)	ψ (ps)	ω (ô)	ϝ †	
	200	300	400	500	600	700	800	900	

† this symbol is sampi. It represented a sibilant sound and was placed after omega. The name is a medieval invention. We do not know its classical name.

Note: numbers greater than ten were put together by adding, e.g.  $55 = 50 + 5 = \nu\epsilon$ ,  $639 = 600 + 30 + 9 = \chi\lambda\theta$ . So: what is the numerical value of αγαθος (agathos), the Greek word for 'good'?  $1 + 3 + 1 + 9 + 70 + 200 = 284$ .

Artemidorus regarded words of equal numerical value as very significant. Dream of a γραυς (graus), 'old woman' (704) and you could be for the chop because η εκφορα (ê ekphora) 'the cortege' also came to 704; if you were planning to travel by foot or by boat and dreamed of rho (100), that had the same value as πεζη (pezê) 'on foot'; but if you were wondering whether to travel or stay and dreamed of rho, you

*had better stay, since what also added up to 100 was μένε (mene), the Greek for 'stay!'*

*And then you had the problem that e.g. the Greek for 'six' was [h]ex, but add the letters up and you got 65. But enough: this way madness lies.*

*PS An early Christian graffito pointed out that κύριος (kurios) 'lord' and πίστις (pistis) 'faith' both added up to 800.*

*The final two of these 'dream' Bellaria will abandon the technicalities and concentrate on the picture of the social world which the dreams conjure up.*

## **ARTEMIDORUS: THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (4)**

*This and the next Bellaria will continue to draw on Peter Thonemann's work (see Bellaria XI) to explore the fascinating picture of social life that emerges from Artemidorus in the Greek world of Asia Minor, under the Roman empire of Septimius Severus (AD 193-211). It goes without saying that these extracts can only hint at the riches contained in Thonemann's wide-ranging analysis.*

### **In sickness and in health**

*Life in the ancient world was not sacrosanct. Since the survival of a society in the ancient world depended on women producing healthy children, of whom the men would be able to defend it and the women produce more healthy children, there was little sympathy for the ill, the crippled or the mentally deficient about whom effectively nothing could be done and who were felt to be nothing but a burden on society. In this respect, it was a very unforgiving world:*



*Sickness*



#### *Health*

In my observations **physical beauty, a handsome figure, and bodily strength** are auspicious for all alike, as long as these attributes do not exceed human norms, since to dream that one is preternaturally beautiful, handsomely built, or strong has the same outcome as dreaming that one is ugly, crippled, or enfeebled, all of which signify death for the sick, and for those in good health unemployment and chronic illness.

#### **Hammond ID 1.50.8**

ἀγαθὸν δὲ ἐπίσης πᾶσιν ἐτήρησα τὸ κάλλος καὶ τὴν τοῦ σώματος εὐφυΐαν καὶ τὴν ἰσχύν, ὅταν μὴ ὑπὲρ ἄνθρωπον ἢ ταῦτα, ἐπεὶ τό γε ὑπερβαλλόντως καλὸν εἶναι δοκεῖν ἢ εὐπρεπῆ ἢ ἰσχυρὸν, ἐπίσης τῷ αἰσχυρὸν εἶναι δοκεῖν, ἢ παραλεύσθαι, ἢ μὴ ἰσχύειν ἀποβαίνει. ἃ δὴ πάντα θάνατον μὲν τοῖς νοσοῦσιν, ἀπραγίαν δὲ καὶ μακρονοσίαν τοῖς ἐρρωμένοις, σημαίνει.

#### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.50.8**

*And it gets worse: it was commonly assumed that any sort of physical disability implied moral failings too:*

To imagine that one has **the same physical symptoms** as any of one's acquaintances—for example a problem with the same foot or the same hand or any other part of the body, or generally the same disease or the same pain—signifies that one will also share the moral faults of the other. Diseases of the body and the crippling of any of its parts symbolize mental lack of control and irrational desires, so it stands to reason that anyone sharing the physical symptoms will also share the moral faults.

#### **Hammond ID 3.51**

πάσχειν δὲ δοκεῖν τὰ αὐτὰ ἄλλω ὄτινι οὖν γνωρίμῳ, οἷον τὸν αὐτὸν πόδα ἢ τὴν αὐτὴν χεῖρα ἢ ἄλλο τι μέρος τοῦ σώματος τὸ αὐτὸ πάσχειν, καὶ ὅλως συννοσεῖν ἢ συναλγεῖν, κοινωνῆσαι σημαίνει τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων ἐκείνῳ· τὰ μὲν γὰρ νοσήματα τοῦ σώματος, καὶ αἱ τῶν μερῶν πηρώσεις, εἰκόσασιν ταῖς τῆς ψυχῆς ἀκολασίαις καὶ ἀλόγοις ἐπιθυμίαις, ὁ δὲ τὰ αὐτὰ πάσχων εἰκότως ἂν συνεξαμαρτάνοι.

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 3.51**

*The mentally deranged were pointed out in the streets and laughed at. Oddly, to dream of this could for some be a predictor of success, because it attracted attention to oneself:*

To dream of **being mad** is auspicious for those intent on some initiative—madmen let nothing stand in the way of whatever they have set their minds on. And it would be particularly auspicious for those who want to be political leaders of the masses and those who present themselves before a crowd: they will be thought that much more deserving of a popular reception. It is auspicious too for those who want to be teachers, because children also like following madmen. And the dream signifies that poor men will become more prosperous, because all give something to a madman. And for a sick person it foretells good health. This is because madness induces people to move around and walk about, and not take to their beds prostrate and inactive as sick people do: this movement is a sign of health.

### **Hammond ID 3.42.1**

μαίνεσθαι ἀγαθὸν τοῖς ἐπὶ τὸ πράττειν ὀρμῶσιν· ἀκόλυτοι γὰρ οἱ μαινόμενοι, ἐφ' ὅ τι ἂν ὀρμήσωσι. μάλιστα δ' ἂν εἴη ἀγαθὸν τοῖς δημαγωγεῖν, καὶ ὄχλου ἄρχειν βουλομένοις, καὶ τοῖς εἰς ὄχλον καθιεῖσιν ἑαυτούς· πλείονος γὰρ ἀποδοχῆς ἀξιοθήσονται. ἀγαθὸν δὲ καὶ τοῖς παιδεύειν βουλομένοις, ἐπειδὴ καὶ παῖδες τοῖς μαινομένοις ἀκολουθοῦσι. καὶ τοὺς πένητας εὐπορωτέρους ἔσεσθαι σημαίνει· παρὰ πάντων γὰρ ὁ μαινόμενος λαμβάνει. καὶ τῷ νοσοῦντι ὑγιάν προαγορεύει· κινεῖσθαι γὰρ καὶ περιπατεῖν ἢ μανία προάγεται, καὶ μὴ κατερριφθαι καὶ μὴ ἡρεμεῖν ὥσπερ ἐν νόσῳ, ὅπερ ὑγείας ἐστὶ σύμβολον.

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 3.42.1**



*The madness of Hercules, about to kill his family*

*But one group of the disabled in Artemidorus' dream-topics were not subject to such treatment or prejudice: the blind. People were willing to help them in a number of different ways, perhaps because the mighty Homer was thought to have been blind, and blindness could be considered to give one special insight? However that may be, they feature frequently in Artemidorus, probably reflecting the widespread occurrence of eyesight loss or impairment:*

**2** But to dream of being **blind** is auspicious for someone in prison, and for someone forcibly held by others in extreme destitution. The first will no longer see the horror of his surroundings, and the second will have people to help him: a good number come forward to help a blind man, which gives him relief from his troubles...

**10** To imagine having **someone else's eyes** signifies that the dreamer will go blind, and someone else will lead him about by the hand.

**Hammond ID 1.26.2, 10**

**2** ἀγαθὸν δὲ τῶ ἐν δεσμοῖς ὄντι τὸ δοκεῖν τυφλοῦσθαι, καὶ τῶ βία ὑπὸ τινῶν κατεχομένῳ καὶ σφόδρα πενομένῳ· ὁ μὲν γὰρ οὐκέτι ὄψεται τὰ περὶ αὐτὸν κακά, ὁ δὲ ἔξει τοὺς ὑπηρετήσοντας αὐτῷ· καὶ γὰρ τῶ τυφλῷ προσίασιν ὑπηρετήσοντες οὐκ ὀλίγοι, αὐτός τε τῶν πόνων ἀποπέπαιται...

**10** ἀλλοτρίους δὲ δοκεῖν ἔχειν ὀφθαλμοὺς τυφλὸν γενέσθαι σημαίνει, καὶ ὑπ' ἄλλου χειραγωγηθῆναι.

**Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.26.2, 10**

## Nature

*Artemidorus' account of the natural world was thoroughly instrumental: only what was useful to mankind was auspicious. His charming bird's-eye view of the landscape makes the distinction clearly enough:*

To dream of flying not very high above the earth nor too low, but just at the height from which one can clearly distinguish the features of the land, signifies travel somewhere abroad or a change of location. From what can be seen on the ground the dreamer can learn what sort of experience will meet him on his travels. So, for example, plains, ploughland, towns, villages, fields, all forms of human activity, lovely rivers, lakes, a calm sea, harbours, ships running before a fair wind—all these sights prophesy an auspicious time abroad. But glens, ravines, wooded valleys, rocks, wild animals, river torrents, mountains, cliffs—these foretell nothing but a malign experience of travel abroad.

**Hammond ID 2.68.4**



*Corinth canal*

πέτεσθαι μήτε πολὺ τῆς γῆς ἀπέχοντα, μήτε αὖ ταπεινὸν σφόδρα, ἀλλ' ὡς δύνασθαι διαγινώσκειν τὰ ἐν τῇ γῆ, ἀποδημίαν τινὰ καὶ μετανάστασιν σημαίνει. ἔξεστι δὲ μαθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν ἐν τῇ γῆ βλεπομένων ποταπά τινα τῷ ἰδόντι ἐν τῇ ἀποδημίᾳ ἀπαντήσει. οἷον πεδία μὲν καὶ ἄρουραι καὶ πόλεις καὶ κῶμαι καὶ ἀγροὶ καὶ πάντα τὰ ἀνθρώπων ἔργα, καὶ ποταμοὶ καλοὶ καὶ λίμναι καὶ θάλασσα εὐδῖος, καὶ ὄρμοι καὶ νῆες οὐριοδρομοῦσαι, ταῦτα πάντα βλεπόμενα ἀγαθὴν τὴν ἀποδημίαν μαντεύεται· ἄγκη δὲ καὶ φάραγγες καὶ νάπαι καὶ πέτραι καὶ θηρία, καὶ ποταμοὶ χεῖμαρροι καὶ ὄρη καὶ κρημνοί, πονηρὰ πάντα τὰ ἐν τῇ ἀποδημίᾳ προαγορεύουσιν.

**Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.68.4**

*The point about use is well made by Artemidorus' observations about trees:*

**Planes, black poplars, elms, beeches, ash-trees,** and all similar trees are advantageous only for people setting out to war, and for carpenters—for the former because weapons are made from their wood, and for the latter because carpenters' work depends on them. For others they are indicative of poverty and deprivation, because these trees bear no fruit.

**Hammond ID 2.25.3**

πλάτανοι καὶ αἴγειροι καὶ πελέαι καὶ ὄξυαι καὶ μελίαι, καὶ πάντα τὰ ὅμοια, μόνοις τοῖς ἐπὶ πόλεμον ὀρμῶσι καὶ τεκτονικοῖς συμφέρει—τοῖς μὲν, διὰ τὸ ἐξ αὐτῶν γίνεσθαι ὄπλα, τοῖς δέ, διὰ τὴν ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐργασίαν. τοῖς δὲ λοιποῖς, διὰ τὸ ἄκαρπον, πενίας καὶ ἀπορίας ἐστὶ σημαντικά.

**Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.25.3**

*Not that living off the land was a bowl of cherries: far from it. Artemidorus' view of a farmer's life differs little from that of farmer Hesiod 900 years earlier.*

To **cultivate, sow, plant, or plough the land** is auspicious for those intending to marry and for those without children. A field for ploughing can only mean a wife, and seeds and plants the children—wheat for boys, barley for girls, pulses for miscarriages. For everyone else a farming dream signifies hard labour and misery.

**Hammond ID 1.51.2**



*Cultivating, sowing, planting and ploughing the land*

γεωργεῖν ἢ σπεῖρειν ἢ φυτεύειν ἢ ἀροτριᾶν ἀγαθὸν τοῖς γῆμαι προηρημένοις καὶ τοῖς ἄπαισιν· ἄρουρα μὲν γὰρ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἐστὶν ἢ γυνή, σπέρματα δὲ καὶ φυτὰ οἱ παῖδες—πυροὶ μὲν υἱοί, κριθαὶ δὲ θυγατέρες, ὄσπρια δὲ τὰ ἐξαμβλώματα†· τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις, πόνον καὶ κακοπάθειαν σημαίνει.

†Note the significant Greek gender of the three plants

**Ὀνειροκριτικά 1.51.2**



## ARTEMIDORUS: THE INTERPRETATION OF DREAMS (5)

### The Roman world

*It is remarkable that the world of the Roman Empire—especially its higher echelons—rarely features in Artemidorus. Indeed, there is no sign he knew Latin, and his general view seems to be that his world was one of two quite distinct cultures—one Greek and one Roman. Only two emperors—Hadrian and Antoninus Pius—are mentioned, and where emperors feature at all it is mostly as symbols and images:*

To dream of riding on the back of an eagle prophesies death for emperors, the rich, and the great and good. When men of that eminence have died, it is a long-standing convention to depict them in painting or sculpture as riding on eagles,† and to pay them honour with this sort of artistic monument. But the dream is auspicious for poor men: they will be taken in hand by some rich people and given substantial benefits, more often than not after travelling abroad.

†Dead emperors were often thus depicted

### Hammond *ID* 2.20.2



Greek silver tetradrachm, c. AD 245

ὀχεῖσθαι δὲ ἀετῶ βασιλεῦσι μὲν καὶ ἀνδράσι πλουσίοις καὶ μεγιστᾶσιν ὄλεθρον  
μαντεύεται. ἔθος γάρ τι παλαιὸν τοὺς ἀποθανόντας τοὺς γε τοιοῦτους γράφειν τε καὶ  
πλάσσειν ἐπ' ἀετῶν ὀχουμένους καὶ διὰ τῶν τοιούτων δημιουργημάτων τιμᾶν. πένησι  
δὲ ἀγαθόν· ἀναληφθέντες γὰρ ὑπὸ τινῶν πλουσίων, ὠφελήθησονται οὐ μικρά, ὡς ἐπὶ  
τὸ πολὺ ἀποδημήσαντες.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.20.2

## Punishments

*The one place in Artemidorus where the Roman state seriously impinged on the Greek consciousness was in Rome's legal system and its terrifying punishments. (So too in the Gospels: until Jesus was accused of breaking the law, one could hardly know that Judaea was a Roman province).*

To be **crucified** is auspicious for all who sail, because a cross is constructed from wood and nails just like a ship, and a ship's mast resembles a cross.† It is auspicious also for a poor man, because someone who has been crucified is elevated and has the substance to keep many birds well fed. And the dream brings secrets to light, because someone crucified is exposed to public view. But the dream does harm to the rich, because men are stripped naked for crucifixion, and once crucified they lose their flesh.††

†i.e. is T-shaped

††through decay or being consumed by birds

### Hammond ID 2.53



Crucifixion spikes

σταυροῦσθαι πᾶσι μὲν τοῖς ναυτιλλομένοις ἀγαθόν· καὶ γὰρ ἐκ ξύλων καὶ ἤλων γέγονεν ὁ σταυρὸς ὡς καὶ τὸ πλοῖον, καὶ ἡ κατάρτιος αὐτοῦ ὁμοία ἐστὶ σταυρῶ. ἀγαθὸν δὲ καὶ πένητι· καὶ γὰρ ὑψηλὸς ὁ σταυρωθεὶς καὶ πολλοὺς τρέφει οἰωνούς. τὰ δὲ κρυπτὰ ἐλέγχει· ἐκφανῆς γὰρ ὁ σταυρωθεὶς. τοὺς δὲ πλουσίους βλάπτει· γυμνοὶ γὰρ σταυροῦνται, καὶ τὰς σάρκας ἀπολλύουσιν οἱ σταυρωθέντες.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.53

*Artemidorus used the following example of Roman punishments to show how the same dream could have new significance.*

A man had dreamt that he had intercourse with a lump of iron, as if it were a woman: the outcome was that he was condemned to slavery, and his intercourse with iron was to spend his time in its constant company. The great Antipater remembered this, and when someone else dreamt of intercourse with iron he interpreted the dream as signifying condemnation to gladiatorial combat. That was not the result: the dreamer was castrated.

### Hammond ID 4.65.2

ἔδοξέ τις σιδήρῳ πλησιάζειν ὥσπερ γυναικί. ἀπέβη αὐτῷ εἰς δοῦλον καταδικασθῆναι, καὶ σιδήρῳ συνεῖναι, τοῦτ' ἔστι συναναστρέφεσθαι. ὁ δὴ βέλτιστος Ἀντίπατρος, τοῦτο μεμνημένος, ἄλλῳ ποτὲ δόξαντι σιδήρῳ πλησιάζειν ὑπεκρίνατο τὴν εἰς μονομάχους καταδίκην· τῷ δὲ οὐχ οὕτως ἀπέβη, ἀλλ' ἐτμήθη τὸ αἰδοῖον ὁ ἰδὼν τὸν ὄνειρον.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.65.2

#### Life in the city

*Artemidorus provides an extraordinarily rich picture of contemporary Greek life in the city (not the country), filled with the masses—butchers, tanners, beggars, barbers, pickpockets—rich and poor alike, people going about their business in marketplace, public meetings, festivals and so on. He and his dreamers seem to have had no interest in the glorious classical past of Greece at all: it was life in the here and now that counted:*



The Athenian *agora*

A **marketplace** signifies disturbance and commotion because of the crowd that gathers there. For those who make their living in the marketplace a dream of a marketplace seething with people and full of noise is auspicious: but an empty and silent marketplace foretells unemployment for them, and for everyone else lasting security. A marketplace which has been **sown with a crop** is obviously out of bounds to all, whatever the crop sown. Some people say that such a prodigy signifies famine for a city which enjoys prosperity, and prosperity for a city experiencing famine. Theatres, streets, suburbs, temple precincts, promenades, and all public spaces have the same meaning as a marketplace.

### Hammond ID 3.62

ἀγορὰ ταραχῆς ἐστὶ σημαντικὴ καὶ θορύβου, διὰ τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ ἀγειρόμενον ὄχλον. τοῖς δὲ ἐν ἀγορᾷ ζῶσιν ἀνθρώποις ἀγαθὴ καὶ ὄχλου πλήθουσα καὶ θορύβου μεστὴ ὀρωμένη· ἢ δὲ ἔρημος καὶ ἀθόρυβος ἀπραξίαν μὲν τούτοις, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις πολλὴν ἀσφάλειαν προαγορεύει. ἀγορὰ ἐσπαρμένη παντὶ δῆπουθεν ἄβατος γίνεται, ὅτι ἂν ἦ τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ ἐσπαρμένον. λέγουσι δὲ ἔνιοι τὸ τοιοῦτον τῇ πόλει ἐν μὲν εὐποτμία λιμόν, ἐν δὲ λιμῷ εὐποτμίαν σημαίνειν. θεάτρα δὲ καὶ πλατεῖαι καὶ προάστεια καὶ τεμένη καὶ περίπατοι καὶ πάντα τὰ κοινὰ τὸν αὐτὸν τῇ ἀγορᾷ λόγον ἔχει.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 3.62

#### Festivals

*Since Greeks loved public spectacles and competitive rivalry, it is not surprising that festivals and games also featured large in people's dreams. Indeed, outside his life in Ephesus and its environs, the only parts of the Roman Empire that Artemidorus seems to know about are the great international athletics festivals.*



Nicholas Poussin

**All-night carnivals**, festivals held at night, and celebrations into the small hours are auspicious for marriages and partnerships, and signify prosperity and acquisition of property for the poor. And likewise it has been observed that they remove their fears and troubles from those who are troubled or afraid of something: there is no way that one will party all night if one is not in full celebratory mood. These festivities do show up adulterers and the women with whom they commit adultery, but no punishment will follow, because what goes on at these all-night carnivals, however uninhibited, is common knowledge among all participants and in a way licensed behaviour. For prosperous people of some distinction in life such a dream brings them embarrassment and scandal which will ultimately cause them no grief.

### Hammond ID 3.61

παννυχίδες δέ, καὶ ἑορταὶ νυκτεριναὶ, καὶ μετὰ ἀγρυπνίας εὐφροσύναι, πρὸς γάμους καὶ κοινωνίας εἰσὶν ἀγαθαί, καὶ τοῖς πένησιν εὐπορίας καὶ προσκτήσεώς εἰσι σημαντικά, καθότι καὶ τοῖς λυπουμενοῖς καὶ τοῖς φοβουμένοις ἄφοβοι καὶ ἄλυποι τετήρηνται· οὐ γὰρ ἔνεστι παννυχίζειν μὴ οὐχὶ ἐν πολλῇ εὐφροσύνῃ ὄντας. μοιχοὺς δὲ καὶ μοιχευομένας καταφανεῖς μὲν τίθησι, κολάζει δὲ σὺδαμῶς, ἐπειδὴ τὰ πραττόμενα ἐν ταῖς παννυχίσι γνώριμα μὲν τοῖς συναναστρεφομένοις ἐστί, κἂν ἀκόλαστα ἦ, τρόπον δὲ τινα συγχωρεῖται. τοῖς δὲ ἐν εὐπορίᾳ καθεστῶσι, καὶ οἷς ἐστὶν ἐπίλαμπρος ὁ βίος, ταραχὰς καὶ περιβοησίας τίθησιν, ὧν τὸ τέλος ἄλυπον ἂν γένοιτο.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 3.61

#### Games

*Athletes seems to have been enthusiastic dreamers, and virtually all the main games are covered, with particular concentration on runners, wrestlers and pancratiasts. Not surprisingly, victory was their main concern:*

(i) A runner who had won the crown in the boys' stade-race at Olympia, and was about to compete in another event, dreamt that he was using the Olympic crown<sup>†</sup> like a basin to wash his feet.<sup>†</sup> He lost that second race and was forced to make an inglorious exit from the racecourse: the reason was his sullyng of that earlier crown.

<sup>†</sup>not a wreath but a large cylindrical metal crown, an innovation at the time

### Hammond ID 5.55



Runners at the Games

δρομεὺς ἐν Ὀλυμπίᾳ παίδων στάδιον ἐστεφανωμένος μέλλον ἕτερον ἀγῶνα ἀγωνίζεσθαι ἔδοξεν ἐν τῷ Ὀλυμπικῷ στεφάνῳ ὥσπερ ἐν λεκάνῃ τοὺς πόδας νίπτεσθαι. ἐλείφθη ἐκεῖνον τὸν ἀγῶνα καὶ ἀδόξως ἐξώσθη<sup>†</sup> τοῦ σταδίου· κατήσχυνε γὰρ τὸν πρότερον στέφανον.

<sup>†</sup>a missing verb is here supplied

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 5.55

(ii) A junior wrestler who was anxious about the pre-selection for the games dreamt that the adjudicator was Asclepius, and that as he paraded for review with the other juniors he was disqualified by the god.† And in fact he died before the games started. The god had disbarred him not from the games but from life itself, the more usual question on which he is thought to adjudicate.

†athletes were physically examined before being allowed to compete

### Hammond ID 5.13

ἔδοξε παῖς παλαιστής περὶ τῆς ἐγκρίσεως πεφροντικῶς τὸν Ἀσκληπιὸν κριτὴν εἶναι καί, παροδεύων ἅμα τοῖς ἄλλοις παισὶν, ἐν παρεξαγωγῇ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐκκεκρίσθαι. καὶ δὴ πρὸ τοῦ ἀγῶνος ἀπέθανεν· ὁ γὰρ θεὸς οὐ τοῦ ἀγῶνος ἀλλὰ τοῦ ζῆν, οὗπερ μᾶλλον εἶναι κριτῆς νομίζεται, ἐξέβαλεν αὐτόν.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 5.13



Greek wrestling

(iii) An athlete dreamt that he cut off his penis, bound his head, and won the crown. He became a victor in the sacred games and acquired quite a reputation. As long as he remained chaste, he had a brilliantly distinguished athletic career, but once he succumbed to sexual indulgence it came to an inglorious end.†

†to lose semen was to lose strength. Doctors recommended athletes put cold metal plates over their abdomen at night to prevent wet dreams

### Hammond ID 5.95

ἔδοξέ τις ἀθλητής, τὰ αἰδοῖα ἀποτεμὼν καὶ ἅμα τὴν κεφαλὴν δῆσας, ἐστεφανῶσθαι. ἐγένετο ἱερονίκης καὶ οὐκ ἄδοξος· καὶ μέχρι ἄφθορος ἦν, λαμπρῶς καὶ ἐπιφανῶς τῇ ἀθλήσει ἐχρήσατο, χαρισάμενος δὲ ἀφροδισίοις, ἀδόξως κατέλυσεν.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 5.95

## Gladiators

*Gladiators were a Roman invention, but by imperial times they had become very popular in Greece. Indeed, we know of Greek theatres that were re-shaped into*

*gladiatorial rings. After describing the significance of dreams about gladiators (below), Artemidorus went on to argue that the style of gladiator you dreamed about could predict the sort of woman you would marry! This is probably based on the belief that women found gladiators sexually irresistible. Since there were 25 different styles of gladiator, there was plenty of choice for the discerning woman.*

To dream of being a **gladiator** signifies getting involved in a **lawsuit** or having some other dispute or fight on one's hands. We use the word 'fight' both for gladiatorial combat and for an action at law: even though there are no physical weapons in a lawsuit, the gladiators' weaponry signifies the depositions and formal claims submitted by the contestants. The weapons of the defending gladiator always signify being the defendant in a lawsuit, and the weapons of the attacking gladiator signify being the plaintiff.

### Hammond ID 2.32.1



Retiarius vs secutor

μονομαχεῖν δὲ δικάσασθαι σημαίνει ἢ ἄλλην τινὰ στάσιν ἢ μάχην μαχέσασθαι. καὶ γὰρ ἡ πυγμαία μάχη καλεῖται καὶ ἡ δίκη, εἰ καὶ μὴ δι' ὄπλων γίνεται, ἃ δὴ τὰ ἔγγραφα καὶ δίκαια τῶν μαχομένων σημαίνει· αἰεὶ δὲ τὰ μὲν τοῦ φεύγοντος ὄπλα ἐγκληθῆναι σημαίνει, τὰ δὲ τοῦ διώκοντος ἐγκαλέσαι.

### Ὀνειροκριτικά 2.32.1

#### Sigmund Freud

*Freud, keen to find ancient precedent for his theories, was most interested by what he read in Artemidorus' lengthy discussion of dreams involving sex. Defining sex in terms of who was penetrating whom, Artemidorus divided the activity into three groupings: (i) in accordance with 'nature, law and custom', e.g. penetrating a wife or male*

*acquaintance, (ii) 'contrary to law' or social custom—i.e. incest and oral sex, and (iii) 'contrary to nature', e.g. penetrating oneself, being penetrated by a corpse or wild beast, and so on. (Women's dreams on the subject rarely featured.)*

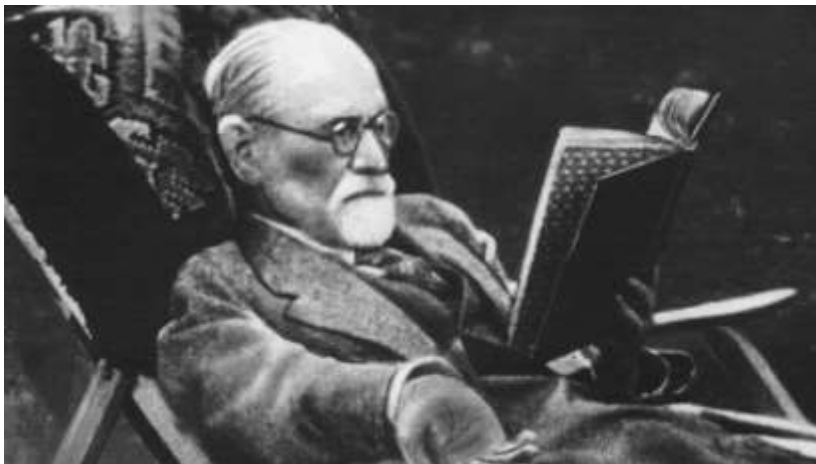
*Freud thought the following dream perfectly exemplified correct dream interpretation: linguistic precision and wish-fulfilment. In this dream, Alexander the Great, laying siege to Tyre, imagined that he saw a satyr (satyros) playing about on his shield. Aristander interpreted it thus:*

... by separating the syllables in the word *satyros* into 'sa Tyros' ('Tyre is yours') [Aristander] was able to sharpen the king's appetite for the war, with the result that he took the city.

### **Hammond ID 4.24.3**

τὸ γὰρ 'Σάτυρος' ὄνομα εἰς τὸ 'σὰ Τύρος' διαλαβὼν, προθυμότερον τὸν βασιλέα πολεμεῖν ἐποίησεν, ὥστε καὶ εἴλε τὴν πόλιν.

### **Ὀνειροκριτικά 4.24.3**



'Fellating oneself, eh? Pretty poor taste, I'd say'

*In fact, the two could not have been further apart. Artemidorus simply thought dreams offered insights into future events. Freud thought a dream's significance could be unlocked only with reference to the dreamer's personality and his suppressed desires.*

This ends the sequence on Artemidorus. I must again express my thanks here to Martin Hammond and Peter Thonemann for allowing me full access to their ground-breaking work, textual and socio-cultural, on Artemidorus. Martin's translation (including his important contributions to the text as well extensive notes and index) and Peter's book on the subject are now reviewed by Anactoria Clarke at: <https://classicsforall.org.uk/book-reviews/an-ancient-dream-manual-artemidorus-the-interpretation-of-dreams/>





No image of Martial exists. We shall therefore content ourselves with this wonderful 'Fayum mummy portrait', 2nd c AD, Object #ECM.1473-2010, Myers Collection, Eton College – the wood painted portraits were discovered in the Roman Egyptian Al Fayyum Oasis, buried with their mummified subjects.

## Brief life

To judge from his poetry (always a dodgy business with a poet): Marcus Valerius Martialis was a Spaniard with a good Roman name, like his parents, Fronto and Flacilla (5.34). So presumably the family had at some stage in the past held office in the municipium where they lived (Augusta Bilbilis, on a hill near modern Catalayud, 4.55) and as result been given Roman citizenship.

Martial was born probably in AD 41 and was apparently educated by his parents (9.73). He tells us that he went to Rome 23 years later in AD 64 (10.103.7), but what he was doing over the sixteen years until his first published work is not known. It is said high-profile Spaniards in Rome such as Seneca and Lucan gave him a warm reception, but there is no hard evidence for that in Martial's poems or elsewhere. That said, as his poems make clear, he made plenty of patrons, friends and acquaintances, some of them Spanish, among the wealthy and senatorial sets. Many of his poems refer in flattering terms to the emperors Titus (AD 79-81), his brother Domitian (81-96) and Nerva (96-98).

**Note:** where the translation is not acknowledged, it is my attempt at a crib for the Latin.

## MARTIAL (1)



Augusta Bilbilis

## Opening the Colosseum

Martial's first collection of poems—*Liber de spectaculis*, published in AD 80—eulogised the stupendous 100 days' worth of shows put on by the Flavian emperor Titus to celebrate the opening of the 50,000-seater *amphitheatrum Flavium*, as the ancients called it ('Colosseum' was a medieval appellation, used from c. AD 1000). Obviously this involved putting in a good word for the emperor too.

In the following epigram, Martial makes the central point that Titus has built this magnificent public facility over the site of Nero's 'Golden House', built on the ruins of the fire of Rome in AD 64. That house was certainly a spectacular edifice, set

in vast grounds (l. 8, below), but used (it was said) only for Nero's own personal pleasure.

Martial takes us round it, like a tour guide, the first two couplets and the remaining four couplets pointing out what can be seen *now*, contrasted with what it *was* under Nero, the last summarising Titus' achievement—restoring Rome to its proper function, i.e. putting its wealth at the service of the people, not a tyrant.

Here, where the starry colossus† sees constellations too close,  
and lofty scaffolding soars up in the middle of the road,  
there used to gleam the hated halls of a barbarous king,  
and a single house\* was established in the whole of Rome.

Here, where the august pile of the amphitheatre in full view 5  
is being built, used to be Nero's lake.

Here, where we admire the public baths—a timely present—  
a disdainful estate had deprived wretches of homes.

Where Claudius' portico‡ unfolds its broad shade  
used to be the outer limit where the palace came to its end. 10

Rome is restored to itself and, under your leadership, Caesar,  
so is wealth to the people, which had been the tyrant's.

† The 116' high statue of Nero, built near his ornamental lake

\*The Golden House; so too 'palace' l.10

‡ Where Agrippina had built a temple to Claudius on Mt Caelius

### ***de spectaculis 2***

*hic ubi sidereus propius uidet astra colossus,  
et crescunt media pegmata celsa uia,  
inuidiosa feri radiabant atria regis,  
unaque iam tota stabat in urbe domus;*

*hic ubi conspicui uenerabilis Amphitheatri 5  
erigitur moles, stagna Neronis erant;*

*hic ubi miramur uelocia munera thermas,  
abstulerat miseris tecta superbus ager;*

*Claudia diffusas ubi porticus explicat umbras,  
ultima pars aulae deficientis erat. 10*

*reddita Roma sibi est et sunt, te praeside, Caesar,  
deliciae populi, quae fuerant domini.*

### ***de spectaculis 2***

In the next epigram, Martial informs—or reminds—the reader/listener of the sheer number of different nationalities that the tour-guide will have to serve. The whole world was watching, in other words: such were the celebrity and unifying power (v. 11) of Rome and its emperor:

What nation is so remote, so barbarous, Caesar,  
that no spectator is from your own city?

A Bulgarian farmer has arrived from Mt Haemus with its Orphic tablets,  
a Russian nomad, feeding on draughts of horse's blood,  
an Egyptian who has tasted the Nile's first waters, 5  
a Briton whom Tethys' furthest waves beat down.

An Arab has hurried in, so have Yemenis,  
and southern Turks sprayed with their own misty perfumes.†

Germans have arrived, hair tied in a knot,  
and Ethiopians, hair differently tied. 10

Their voices all sound different, yet they are one,  
When you are being declared the fatherland's true father.

†saffron, used to scent the water sprayed over crowds to cool them

### ***de spectaculis 3***

*quae tam seposita est, quae gens tam barbara, Caesar,  
ex qua spectator non sit in urbe tua?  
venit ab Orpheo cultor Rhodopeius Haemo,  
uenit et epoto Sarmata pastus equo,  
et qui prima bibit deprensi flumina Nili, 5  
et quem supremae Tethyos unda ferit;  
festinauit Arabs, festinauere Sabaei,  
et Cilices nimbis hic maduere suis.*

*crinibus in nodum tortis uenere Sygambri,  
atque aliter tortis crinibus Aethiopes. 10  
vox diuersa sonat populorum, tum tamen una est,  
cum uerus patriae diceris esse pater.*

### ***de spectaculis 3***

The rest of the collection records the slaughter of men and animals in various imaginative ways (e.g. re-enacting myths) and also a sea-battle in a water-filled arena.

### **Post-entertainment gifts**

In AD 84/5 Martial produced his collection of two-line Xenia (127 'Mottoes', accompanying a gift of food and wine) and two-line *Apophoreta* (223 'Takeaways', mottoes accompanying presents dished out during the Roman *Saturnalia* celebrations). These tags make amusing remarks on the gifts, singing them up (if cheap) or otherwise finding something witty to say about them.

These two works are today numbered as Books 13 and 14, a numbering not given to them in antiquity but by a much later edition of his collected works.

### **XENIA ('Mottoes')**

#### **16 Turnips**

*These turnips, rejoicing in the cold of winter,  
which is my gift, Romulus is accustomed to eat in the heavens.*

*damus: the royal 'we'*

### **XVI Rapa**

haec tibi, brumali gaudentia frigore, rapa  
    quae damus, in caelo Romulus esse solet.

*A cheap present, but what's good enough for Romulus ...*

### **29 Jar of damsons**

*Plums, wrinkled by shrivelling from ageing in foreign lands,  
    take (as a gift): they usually ease the load of constipated bowels.*

### **XXIX Vas Damascenorum**

Pruna, peregrinae carie rugosa senectae,  
    sume: solent duri solvere ventris onus.

*These are damson, plums from Damascus (whence the name).*



Liquamen optimum ex officina Scauri ('Best garum from Scaurus' factory', in Pompeii)

### **102 Garum of the Allies**

*From the first blood of a mackerel, still breathing its last,  
    take proud garum, an expensive gift.*

### **CII Garum sociorum**

exspirantis adhuc scombri de sanguine primo  
    accipe fastosum, munera cara, garum.

*The most highly prized, and a doubly strong, garum from Carthage (garum is a sauce made from the liquefied entrails of mackerel).*

### **APOPHORETA ('Takeaways')**

Martial self-deprecatingly introduces this collection by saying that you can stop wherever you like—it's just a string of couplets. But if you want to know why there are headings (*lemmata*), I'll tell you—so you can just read *them*:

ut, si malueris, lemmata sola legas.

### **23 Earpick**

*If your ear crawls with an irritating itch,  
    I give a weapon designed for such urges.*

### **XXIII Auriscalpium**

si tibi morosa prurigine verminat auris,  
    arma damus tantis apta libidinibus.

### **93 Antique cups**

*This ornament of yours is neither modern nor of Roman making:  
Mentor first drank from them as he made them.*

### **XCIII Pocula archetypa**

non est ista recens nec nostri gloria caeli:

primus in his Mentor, dum facit illa, bibit.

*caelum 'engraving tool' or 'location'; Mentor was a very famous Greek silversmith.*

### **83 Ivory backscratcher**

*This [ivory] hand will protect you, when an irritating flea bites  
your shoulder blades—or something fouler than a flea.*

### **LXXXIII Scalptorium eboreum**

defendet manus haec, scapulas mordente molesto

pulice, vel si quid pulice sordidius.

*'Something fouler' would be lice, bed-bugs etc.*

### **94 Rough-and-ready cups**

*We are plebeian cups of rough-and-ready glass,  
And our fine crockery is not cracked by boiling water.*

### **XCIV Calices audaces**

nos sumus audacis plebeia toreumata vitri,

nostra neque ardenti gemma feritur aqua.

*All very ironical: cheap glass became available in the 1st C AD with the development of glass-blowing.*

*Toreumata are classy embossed ware, and gemma is used of expensively decorated ware. Romans regularly mixed wine with hot water.*

### **98 Arretine ware**

*I warn you not to become too dismissive of Arretine pottery:  
Porsena luxuriated in his Tuscan earthenware.*

### **XCVIII Vasa Arretina**

Arretina nimis ne spernas vasa monemus:

lautus erat Tuscis Porsena fictilibus.

*Arretium (modern Arezzo) in Etruria was a major centre for the production of this very popular matt-red pottery. Lars Porsena from Clusium was the famous Etruscan who failed to take Rome.*



Arretine drinking vessel

### **99 Basket**

*I, a foreign basket, have come from the painted Britons;  
but Rome already prefers to call me its own.*



Medieval basket

### **XCIX Bascauda**

*barbara de pictis veni bascauda Britannis;  
sed me iam mavolt dicere Roma suam.*

*This is clearly an exotic and expensive import from a country which at this time the Romans were trying to subdue under Agricola.*

### **119 Earthenware chamberpot**

*When I am summoned by a click of the fingers and the slave lingers,  
how often a pillow is turned into my rival!*



Roman chamberpot, with ledges for comfy seating

### **CXIX Matella fictilis**

*dum poscor crepitu digitorum et verna moratur,  
o quotiens paelex culcita facta mea est!*

*paelex is a rival mistress: the user is presumably envisaged ejaculating or urinating into it.*

Martial's major works are the epigrams to be found in books 1-12. To these we will turn in the rest of this sequence.

**MARTIAL (2)**



Male with scroll (*Pompeii*)

**Apologies** in advance for the doggerel (per)versions. Prose translations of Martial don't do it for me.

### **Metre**

Martial's poems are predominantly composed in elegiac couplets.

The second most common is the hendecasyllable, which I give here in a brief, simplified, rhythmical version (x ['blank'] = long or short):

x x / — U U — U — / U — — (blank blank / tum ti ti tum ti tum / ti tum tum)

e.g. 'Oh you / chorus of indolent / reviewers'

### **'Publishing'**

Martial put his twelve books of epigrams into the public domain book by book between c. AD 86 and AD 100, spanning the reigns of Domitian and Nerva. There being no such thing as mass publishing in a commercial sense in those days, let alone copyright or royalties, private 'vanity' publishing was the only way to get one's work known. One tactic was for the author to give a copy of his book to a bookshop for the owner (such as the *bibliopola* Tryphon) to choose whether to have it copied and sold for whatever he could get. Probably far more fruitfully, the author would get his book copied himself and give it to friends, who would lend it to friends to copy, and so on (it may be significant that Cicero and Pliny never mention going to a bookshop).

Martial was clearly no friend of Quintus:

Quintus, you demand that I give you my books.

I have none: give Tryphon's a try.

'I'd be mad to give money to buy pap like that:

I'll not act so daft'. Nor will I.



*exigis ut donem nostros tibi, Quinte, libellos.  
non habeo, sed habet bibliopola Tryphon.  
'aes dabo pro nugis et emam tua carmina sanus?  
non' (inquis) faciam tam fatue.' nec ego.*

#### 4.72

One result of manual copying was that the text might not be all that accurate. Martial challenges the reader to improve on it:

Reader, if something in these pages seems  
Like doubtful Latin or far too obscure,  
It's not my fault: the copyist screwed up,  
Too quick to count the verses, that's for sure.  
But if you think the sin's not his but mine,           5  
I'll reckon you have some sort of vendetta.  
'They're still tripe.' Me – deny the obvious? As if!  
They are. But you can't do them any better.

*si qua uidebuntur chartis tibi, lector, in istis  
siue obscura nimis siue latina parum,  
non meus est error: nocuit librarius illis  
dum properat uersus adnumerare tibi.  
quod si non illum, sed me peccasse putabis,           5  
tunc ego te credam cordis habere nihil. †  
'ista tamen mala sunt.' quasi nos manifesta negemus!  
haec mala sunt, sed tu non meliora facis.*

†lit. 'that you have nothing (in the way) of heart', i.e. no reason to act as you do

#### 2.8



Without advances or royalties from sales, an author in the ancient world clearly needed either private resources, or patrons. A patron in the ancient world was not necessarily someone who gave a client money out of the goodness of his heart or because he admired what he was doing. Patronage was based on a form of *amicitia*, ‘friendship’, which depended on a relationship involving reciprocal exchange of goods (loans, gifts) or services (social political, legal) of one sort or another.

Martial’s poems are full of unkind words about his *patroni*. Here he takes to task Maximus (‘the Greatest’, whom he calls *rex*, ‘king’) for seeming *himself* to be a client of a patron, i.e. having no time to be a patron to Martial. Martial feels he might as well be Maximus’ slave for all the help he gets:

I’m angling, Maximus, to my shame, I’m angling for a dinner.  
You’re angling food off someone else, which puts us on a par.  
I come to give you a morning call, and you are said to be  
Already calling someone else: still both the same, so far.  
I escort you, leading the way for my proud patron lord.       5  
You do the same for someone else: and so the same old thing.  
I might as well, then, be your slave: I’ll be your slave no more.  
No man should be a king who has another for his king.

*capto tuam, pudet heu, sed capto, Maxime, cenam,  
tu captas aliam: iam sumus ergo pares.  
mane salutatum uenio, tu diceris isse  
ante salutatum: iam sumus ergo pares.  
sum comes ipse tuus, tumidique anteambulo regis,† 5  
tu comes alterius: iam sumus ergo pares.  
esse sat est serum: iam nolo uicarius esse.  
qui rex est regem, Maxime, non habeat.*

†Some clients would walk ahead to clear the way for their patron

## 2.18

Getting dinners off patrons seems to be an essential part of social existence in Rome.  
Poor old Philo:

Philo never dines at home, he swears. This is the case.  
He does not dine, when no one ever asks him to his place.  
*numquam se cenasse domi Philo iurat, et hoc est:  
non cenat, quotiens nemo uocauit eum.*

## 5.47

There’s never been much love lost between poets. For a poet it was worse than not getting a dinner to be plagiarised by rival poets or asked to read their poems (the first is in hendecasyllables):

You wonder why I don’t give you my books,  
for all that you beg and you plead?

The main reason, Theo, is so you don't give  
Your books to me to read.

*non donem tibi cur meos libellos  
oranti totiens et exigenti  
miraris, Theodore? magna causa est:  
dones tu mihi ne tuos libellos.*

**5.73**

The book that you recite from, Fidentinus, is my own.

You do it so abominably, it's virtually yours alone.

*quem recitas meus est, o Fidentine, libellus:  
sed male cum recitas, incipit esse tuus.*

**1.38**



Reading from a scroll (Herculaneum, 1st C AD)

You ask that I recite my poems to you, but I decline.

You simply want to recite your own, not give an ear to mine.

*ut recitem tibi nostra rogas epigrammata. nolo.  
non audire, Celer, sed recitare cupis.*

**1.63**

Cinna is said to direct at me his verses slight.

But one whose poems no one reads can't claim to write.

*versiculos in me narratur scribere Cinna:  
non scribit, cuius carmina nemo legit.*

**3.9**

Why tie a scarf around your neck when you recite?

To tie it round our ears is far more right.

*quid recitaturus circumdas uellera collo?  
conueniunt nostris auribus ista magis.*

**4.41**

Next week: The X (certificate) Factor: Emperors and Obscenities

## ***Martial (3)***

**Apologies** in advance for the doggerel (per)versions. Prose translations of Martial don't do it for me.

### **Metre**

Martial's poems are predominantly composed in elegiac couplets.

The second most common is the hendecasyllable, which I give here in a brief, simplified, rhythmical version (x ['blank'] = long or short):

x x / — U U — U — / U — — (blank blank / tum ti ti tum ti tum / ti tum tum)

e.g. 'Oh you / chorus of indolent / reviewers'.

### **Schoolboy humour...**

Martial is famous for his filthy poems. Nothing is held back, from heterosexual intercourse to oral, anal and then some. Clearly most of the highly educated Roman toffs for whom Martial wrote loved this sort of thing, though he was careful to justify it (see below). Some have a genial behind-the-bike-sheds feel to them:

#### **Public baths**

In the baths you hear applause?

Know that Maro's c\*ck's the cause.

*audieris in quo, Flacce, balneo plausum,*

*Maronis illic esse mentulam scito.*

**9.33**

### **Weighing him up**



Priapus, god of luck, weighing his organ against a bag of gold (Pompeii)

Marulla each time weighs in hand  
 the penis, erected at full stand,  
 and tells the pounds and ounces of the gland.†  
 Its work now done, she grabs the male  
 member, weighs it—rag-like, frail—

5

and states how lighter, in detail.  
 That's no hand: it's a weighing-scale.

*arrectum quotiens Marulla penem*

*pensavit digitis diuque mensa est,*

*libras, scripula sextulasque dicit;*

*idem post opus et suas palaestras*

*loro cum similis iacet remisso,*

5

*quanto sit levior Marulla dicit.*

*non ergo est manus ista, sed statera.*

† The Latin says *libra* (3/4 of a pound), *scripula* (1/288th of a *libra*!, here plural), *sextula* (one sixth of an ounce)

**10.55**

### ...but purity of life?

Others move from the bike-sheds to a level of extreme viciousness. It is understandable that these poems caused great distress to lovers of the classics: Lord Macaulay wrote of the disgust aroused in him by Martial's indecency. We live in more Roman times in this respect, but even so Martial himself was aware of the charge that could be laid against him, and was keen to clear his name of it, given how important it was to stay on good terms with the Great and Good.

This is where the emperor came in. Domitian had just come to power and made himself moral *ensor*, in order to take action against various sexual offences. Martial, who was acquainted with him (needing to maintain his links of patronage, he

dedicated Book 8 to him), makes the same claim that Catullus—one of his main models (see further below)—made in relation to his work:

### The spirit of fun

If you happen, Caesar, to pick up this little book,  
Lay aside your earthly master's supercilious look.  
Jokes are part and parcel of your triumphal fun;  
There's no shame in warlords being subjects of a pun.†  
Read my poems, I beg you, in that spirit that you view **5**  
Thymele and Latinus in their saucy peek-a-boo.‡  
A censor's able to permit many a harmless game.  
My pages may be filthy, but my life is without shame.

†Soldiers made fun of their general during the triumph

‡They were two actors in a mime mentioned by Juvenal (a contemporary): Latinus was Thymele's lover, hidden in a chest to deceive her aged husband

*contigeris nostros, Caesar, si forte libellos,  
terrarum dominum pone supercilium.  
consueuere iocos uestri quoque ferre triumphi,  
materiam dictis nec pudet esse ducem.  
qua Thymelen spectas derisoremque Latinum, **5**  
illa fronte, precor, carmina nostra legas.  
innocuos censura potest permittere lusus:  
lasciua est nobis pagina, uita proba.*

### 1.4

Martial thought it worth repeating the point when the elderly, austere Nerva came to power in AD 96. So he reminded Nerva of a filthy poem that the great Augustus once wrote, as trouble brewed between him and Marc Antony. Fulvia, angry with her husband Marc Antony's adultery, decided to take it out on Antony's rival for power Augustus (then Octavian, Caesar's adoptive son). War was already brewing between Augustus and Antony's brother, backed by Fulvia:



Nerva

### The example of Augustus

Envious one [Nerva], who sternly read plain Latin, now just read filthy verses put together by Augustus Caesar:

‘Since Antony f\*cked Glaphyra, his Fulvia resolved to punish *me* by saying it’s my duty now to squeeze *her*.

F\*ck Fulvia? But if Manius† begged me that I b\*gg\*r him, I do not think I’d do it: I’m not stupid, anyhow.

“F\*ck, or let us fight” she said. But is a thing more dear in life than c\*ck is dear to me? Sound the trumpets now!’

So, Augustus,† surely, you’ll forgive my witty verse—

For you can speak real Roman, honest, frank and terse.

5

10

†Manius was Antony’s agent in Rome

† Nerva, of course: all emperors were called Augustus



Fulvia, 40 BC

*Caesaris Augusti lascivos, livide, versus*

*sex lege, qui tristis verba Latina legis:*

*‘quod futuit Glaphyran Antonius, hanc mihi poenam*

*Fulvia constituit, se quoque uti futuam.*

*Fulviam ego ut futuam? quod si me Manius oret*

*pedicem? faciam? non puto, si sapiam.*

*“aut futue, aut pugnemus” ait. quid quod mihi vita*

*carior est ipsa mentula? signa canant!’*

*absolvit lepidos nimirum, Auguste,† libellos,*

*qui scis Romana simplicitate loqui.*

5

10

11.20

Martial repeated the flattery when Trajan came to power in 98 (‘Truth has been brought back from the house of Styx’ [10.72] a somewhat awkward comment on the death of his patron Domitian!).

### Naming names

Here an important point must be made. In his *prose* introduction to Book 1, Martial contrasts himself with older satirists whose respect for people ‘fell so short that they made free not only with real names, but also famous names. Let not *my* fame be established at so great a cost’ (*adeo ... defuit ut nominibus non tantum ueris abusi sint, sed etiam magnis. mihi fama vilis constet*). In other words, the names of the people he seriously abuses are for the most part *fictional*, and regularly chosen for their pun value (cf. Mr Gradgrind, Toby Belch). *Candidus*, the subject of this poem, means ‘clean, pure, lucky, prosperous’:

**The man with everything**

None but you has land, Candidus, none but you has dosh,  
 none but you has gold, none but you fine goblets (posh!),  
 none but you has Cheval Blanc, none but you d’Yquem,  
 and none but you has spirit, none but you a brain.

None but you has everything, I don’t deny: good job! 5

But the wife you have, Candidus, you share *her* with the mob.

*praedia solus habes et solus, Candide, nummos,*

*aurea solus habes, murrina solus habes,*

*Massica solus habes et Opimi Caecuba solus,*

*et cor solus habes, solus et ingenium.*

*omnia solus habes, nec me puta uelle negare.* 5

*uxorem sed habes, Candide, cum populo.*

**3.26**

In this poem, both names are *Greek*: ‘safe gift’ and ‘beauty gift’. ‘Ploughing’ has sexual connotations:

**Ploughing**

Artemidorus, to get a boy, buys him with a field.

Calliodorus gets the field, having the boy to sell.

Auctus, say which of the two has done the better deal?

Artemidorus ploughs his field, Calliodorus as well.

*Artemidorus habet puerum, sed vendidit agrum;*

*agrum pro puero Calliodorus habet.*

*Dic uter ex istis melius rem gesserit, Aucte:*

*Artemidorus arat, † Calliodorus arat.*

† The ms reads *amat* ‘loves’. That loses the point of the pun on *aro*.

**9.21**

*Sabellus* here is simply a tribal name, referring to a Sabine or Samnite; the stem *math-* is Greek, ‘learn, understand’.

**Sodomy**

Matho, you’ve never seen a man in greater misery

than sodomite Sabellus—once, none happier than he.

Now thefts, flights, slaves’ deaths, fires, and grief



leave him quite out of luck.

Unhappy man! Reduced to having to f\*ck.

*nil miserabilis, Matho, pedicone Sabello*

*uidisti, quo nil laetius ante fuit.*

*furta, fugae, mortes seruorum, incendia, luctus*

*adfligunt hominem, iam miser et futuit.*

### 6.33

#### Oral sex

You say halitosis, Fabullus,

betrays a sodomite. Well,

if that is true, Fabullus,

where does the c\*nt-licker smell?

*pediconibus os olere dicis.*

*hoc si, sicut ais, Fabulle, verum est,*

*quid tu credis olere cunnilingis?*

Here Themisôn—Greek again—carries suggestions of ‘established custom’ (*themis*):

#### Incest

Themison has no wife—and never missed her.

Fabullus, you ask why? He has a sister.

*Quare non habeat, Fabulle, quaeris*

*uxorem Themison? habet sororem.*

### 12.20

#### Susan McLeant†

Martial says that he has a wife, but the way that his poetry openly shames and abuses her, especially sexually, makes it clear this is another fiction. He reserves his most sensuous poetry for boys (was that his preference?), here his fictitious slave Diadumenos. It means ‘the boy binding his hair [with the victory wreath at the games]’, a famous Greek statue by Polykleitos. In one poem he asks Diadumenos for kisses and Diadumenos asks how many? Martial gives some examples but ends by rejecting the specific number that *dedit ... Catullo / Lesbia: pauca cupit qui numerare potest* ‘Lesbia /gave Catullus: he desires few who can count them.’ (6.34). Here he takes a different line:



The Farnese Diadumenos (plaster copy)

### Diadumenos

An apple's fragrance as a young girl bites it;  
Corycian saffron's odor; the lush scents  
of blooming grapevines white with their first clusters,  
or grass just cropped by sheep; the redolence  
of myrtle, Arab spice-reapers, rubbed amber,  
fire, pale with clouds of Eastern incense, soil  
lightly sprinkled with summer rain, a garland  
resting on tresses moist with spikenard oil—  
your kiss is scented, cruel boy, so sweetly.

5

What if you gave it freely and completely?  
*quod spirat tenera malum mordente puella,  
quod de Corycio quae uenit aura croco;  
uinea quod primis cum floret cana racemis,  
gramina quod redolent, quae modo carpsit ovis;  
quod myrtus, quod messor Arabs, quod sucina trita,  
pallidus Eoo ture quod ignis olet;  
gleba quod aestiuo leuiter cum spargitur imbre,  
quod madidas nardo passa corona comas:  
hoc tua, saeue puer Diadumene, basia fragrant.  
quid si tota dares illa sine inuidia?*

10

5

10

3.65

Susan McLean<sup>†</sup>

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**MARTIAL (4)**

**Life in Rome**

Martial mentions nearly fifty jobs of one sort or another—from actors, advocates, architects and astrologers through executioners and gladiators to teachers, snake-keepers and undertakers. There was also plenty of work for builders provided by the emperor Domitian, and Martial was not about to miss the chance to win favour with him by mentioning it.

Titus's Colosseum had been the Flavian emperors' biggest single project, but the ruthlessly efficient Domitian, who saw himself as a second Augustus, instituted a massive building programme across Rome, restoring or putting up temples, arches, an odeion, a stadium, theatres, baths, a fourth level to the Colosseum and much, much more.



Domitian's stadium

Here Martial enthuses over Domitian's top street-widening programme:

### **Widening the streets**

Brash shopkeepers had taken all the city,  
                   no shopfront kept within its proper seat.  
 Domitian ordered narrow lanes to widen,  
                   and what was once track to become a street.  
 No vintner's column's hung with wine-filled flagons,           5  
                   no praetor's forced to fight through muddy places,  
 no barber's blade's drawn blindly in dense crowds,  
                   no grimy cook-shop fills up all the spaces,  
 And pub, cook, butcher, barber self-restrain.  
                   That massive supermarket's Rome again!                   10  
*abstulerat totam temerarius institor urbem*  
                   *inque suo nullum limine limen erat.*  
*iussisti tenuis, Germanice, crescere uicos,*  
                   *et modo quae fuerat semita, facta uia est.*  
*nulla catenatis pila est praecincta lagonis,*                   5

*nec praetor medio cogitur ire luto,  
stringitur in densa nec caeca nouacula turba  
occupat aut totas nigra popina uias.  
tonsor, copo, cocus, lanius sua limina seruant.  
nunc Roma est, nuper magna taberna fuit.*

10

### 7.61

#### Schools

Early education was infamous for its brutality. One of Martial's poems begs schoolmasters to give citizens a bit of peace by laying off the floggings at unseemly hours. Here Martial offers a different, seasonal take on the matter. The last sentence is suggestive: summer in Rome was not only very hot, it was also dangerous (ll.11-12). Malaria, the major killer, thrived in that weather:



Roman school (2nd C AD, Neumagen)

Master, spare your artless long-haired flock.  
So will they come in crowds to learn from you,  
and treasure you—young chorus at your desk—  
teaching shorthand and maths:† none will outdo  
the pupil numbers that you gather round. 5

The skies in flaming summer glow white-hot  
and roasted harvests cook throughout July:  
Lay off the gruesome Scythian fringed knot  
That thrashed Marsyas,‡ and the tearful canes—  
The pedagogues' sceptre:‡ all that horrid stuff 10  
Can sleep sound till October first. If boys  
Stay well in summertime, they learn enough.

†i.e. arithmetic; in Latin the shorthand is called uelox, 'speedy'  
‡he challenged Apollo to a music contest and was flogged to death  
‡ a sort of rod of office, usually symbolising e.g. regal authority

*ludi magister, parce simplici turbae:  
sic te frequentes audiant capillati  
et delicatae diligat chorus mensae,  
nec calculator nec notarius uelox*

*maiore quisquam circulo coronetur.* 5  
*albae Leone† flammeo calent luces*  
*tostamque feruens Iulius coquit messem.*  
*cirrata loris horridis Scythae pellis,*  
*qua uapulauit Marsyas Celaenaeus,‡*  
*ferulaeque tristes, sceptrata paedagogorum,* 10  
*cessent et Idus dormiant in Octobres:*  
*aestate pueri si ualent, satis discutunt.*  
 † Leo, sign of the Zodiac (July-August)  
 ‡ from Celaenae, a town in Phrygia  
**10.62**

## Hermes, the gladiator

Many gladiators assumed dramatic names, and here Martial lists the qualities that made Hermes a fearsome opponent, even for gladiators like Helius (l.5) and Advolans (l.6). He is master of at least *three* different styles of fighting (ll.11-13, cf. 2), He brings in the crowds (l.9), especially the women (l.10) who were always assumed to lust after these devil-dare musclemen:

Hermes, warlike darling of his age,  
 Hermes, skilled in every martial tool,  
 Hermes, gladiator, trainer too,  
 Hermes, tornado, earthquake of his school,  
 Hermes, the only one that Helius fears, 5  
 Hermes, by whom alone Advolans is outfaced,  
 Hermes, always winning, without wounding,  
 Hermes, impossible to be replaced,  
 Hermes, cashcow for the ticket touts,  
 Hermes, women's passion (how they fret!) 10  
 Hermes, king of the mighty battle spear,  
 Hermes, with sea-trident also a threat,  
 Hermes, in helmet† holding fearful sway,  
 Hermes, glory of Mars in every way,  
 Hermes, in all things on his own, thrice one—‡ 15  
 Hooray!

†typical of the 'Samnite' gladiator

‡this has no religious significance: he alone is the top man, as one who can fight in three modes

*Hermes Martia saeculi uoluptas,*  
*Hermes omnibus eruditus armis,*  
*Hermes et gladiator et magister,*  
*Hermes turbo sui tremorque ludi,*

*Hermes, quem timet Helius, sed unum,* 5  
*Hermes, cui cadit Aduolans, sed uni,*  
*Hermes uincere nec ferire doctus,*  
*Hermes subpositicius sibi ipse,*  
*Hermes diuitiae locariorum,*  
*Hermes cura laborque ludiarum,* 10  
*Hermes belligera superbus hasta,*  
*Hermes aequoreo minax tridente,*  
*Hermes casside languida timendus,*  
*Hermes gloria Martis uniuersi,*  
*Hermes omnia solus et ter unus.* 15  
**5.24**



Hermes, a gladiator from Libya

### Small farmer

Farming was the default way of life in the ancient world, the only way to survive for the vast bulk of the population. Since the man in this poem has heirs, he is not a tenant farmer but a small-holder.

It is typical to ask the earth to lie lightly on the deceased. Here it is doubly true, because as a little guy, he must have found all earth-working extremely ‘heavy’ (*gravis*), which also means ‘oppressive’:

Heirs, this farmer’s much too small: don’t lay him underground.  
 The earth, however little, will make too heavy a mound.  
*heredes, nolite breuem sepelire colonum:*  
*nam terra est illi quantulacumque gravis.*

**11.14**



Roman hoe-blade (Chicago)

## Doctors

Doctors were easy meat for satire: they knew virtually nothing about how the body actually worked or what made it ill (germs and viruses are a late 19th C discovery), and the absence of anaesthetics when it came to wielding the knife (red-hot irons dealt with piles) did not exactly increase their popularity:

### Symmachus

I was ill: but you came straightaway to see me,  
And with a hundred pupils, Symmachus, too.  
A hundred wind-chapped hands were laid upon me.  
I didn't have a fever: now I do.

*languēbam: sed tu comitatus protinus ad me  
uenisti centum, Symmache, discipulis.*

*centum me tetigere manus aquilone gelatae:  
non habui febrem, Symmache, nunc habeo.*

## 5.9



Medical eye inspection

### Diaulus

Doctor Diaulus changed his trade:

He's an undertaker now.

He's started practising medicine†

The only way he knew how.

†the Latin is *clanicus*, lit. 'one who lies you down'. It derives from Greek *klinê*, 'bed, bier'!

*chirurgus fuerat, nunc est uispillo Diaulus:  
coepit quo poterat clinicus esse modo.*

1.30

### Legacy hunting

Many authors satirized this exploitative practice. Horace imagined an impoverished Odysseus consulting the prophet Teiresias in the underworld about how to return home to Penelope after all these years without a bean to his name. Teiresias suggests he seek out the old, rich, frail and childless, make himself indispensable to them and get written into their will as heir. If they are writers, praise their work; if they are lechers, offer the wife ('What! Faithful Penelope?' protests Odysseus. 'No problem,' says Teiresias, 'one taste of the cash and she'll be like a dog with a juicy bone'). If they are women, become their gigolo. And if Odysseus succeeds, he must lay on a magnificent funeral at which he is a picture of misery ready for the next victim.

Here Martial tries his hand at the theme. Chloe kills off her husbands; Gemellus hopes to marry a rich woman with a fatal illness:

### Chloe at work

On the tombs of her seven husbands, evil Chloe wrote the claim  
'This work was carried out by me': † could anything be more  
[plain?

†i.e. a common assertion made on tombs, but not quite in Martial's sense...

*inscripsit tumulis septem scelerata uirorum  
'se fecisse' Chloe. Quid pote simplicius?*

9.15



'[The tomb of] Caius Octavius Tryphon, freedman [L] of Marcella. Aelia Musa made it for her deserving husband'

### A cough

Gemellus, Maronilla faine



would have unto his wife:  
 He longs, he likes, he loves, he craves,  
 with her to leade his life.  
 What? is she of suche beautie brave?  
 naie none more foule maie be:  
 What then is in her to be likte  
 or lovd? still cougheth she.†  
 †indicating she has consumption (tuberculosis)  
*petit Gemellus nuptias Maronillae  
 et cupit et instat et precatur et donat.  
 adeone pulchra est? immo foedius nil est.  
 quid ergo in illa petitur et placet? tussit.*

1.10

Timothy Kendall (1577)

### Give me the money!

You'd have me call you kind, Gargilianus,  
 for sending gifts to widows and old men?  
 No one is viler, more obscene than you,  
 who dare to call your ruses 'presents' when  
 they're like sly hooks cajoling greedy fish, 5  
 like baits that trap dumb beasts through trickery.  
 If you can't tell a gift from *quid pro quo*,  
 I'll teach you how they differ: give to me.  
*munera quod senibus uidisque ingentia mittis,  
 uis te munificum, Gargiliane, uocem?  
 sordidius nihil est, nihil est te spurcius uno,  
 qui potes insidias dona uocare tuas:  
 sic auidis fallax indulget piscibus hamus, 5  
 callida sic stultas decipit esca feras.  
 quid sit largiri, quid sit donare docebo,  
 si nescis: dona, Gargiliane, mihi.*

4.56

Susan McLeant

### Oratory

The main purpose of Roman education was practical—to prepare men for a life in law and politics. One training technique was to argue about the rights and wrongs of men's decisions, drawn from history—as below, great families, battles and so on: such *exempla* could then prove useful in the courtroom (Romans greatly respected ancient examples of how, and how not, to behave). But it did rather depend on the case in hand...



Roman bronze goat

### The Billygoats Three

I've taken my case to the courts,  
Not for poison, assault or murder,  
But simply because three goats  
Have been stolen, I claim, by a neighbour.

The judge wants the case to be proved.

5

But *you* are declaiming on Carrhae,  
And the war against Mithradates  
And Sullas, Mucii and Marii,  
And raging Punic treachery,  
Shouting, gesturing frenziedly...

Postumus, get to the Billygoats Three.

*non de ui neque caede nec ueneno,*

*sed lis est mihi de tribus capellis:*

*uicini queror has abesse furto.*

*hoc iudex sibi postulat probari:*

*tu Carrhas Mithridaticumque bellum*

*et periuria Punici furoris*

*et Sullas Mariosque Muciosque*

*magna uoce sonas manumque tota.*

*iam dic, Postume, de tribus capellis.*

5

**6.19**



Egyptian water-clock

### Thirsty work

Loudly ordering seven clepsydras†

- the judge unwillingly conceded -

Head back, gulping jars of water,

You banged on far more than you needed.

We ask, to satisfy your voice and thirst's desire, 5

That you drink, Caecilianus, from the clepsydra.

†the water clock used for timing the speeches by both sides

*septem clepsydras magna tibi uoce petenti*

*arbiter inuitus, Caeciliane, dedit.*

*at tu multa diu dicis uitreisque tepentem*

*ampullis potas semisupinus aquam.*

*ut tandem saties uocemque sitimque, rogamus* 5

*iam de clepsydra, Caeciliane, bibas.*

6.35

### Slave for auction

The public *praeco* was an official, associated with different *magistratus*, who helped them run and control large authorized assemblies. They were also involved with the sale of state property, e.g. the spoils of war, slaves, assets of debtors and so on. This was a respectable position.

Then there were private *praecones* who were basically hucksters and sharpsters, known for their quick wit and ability to hold a crowd, who would sell anything for anyone in the street corners and alleyways of Rome, taking commission and doubtless backhanders on the way and often becoming wealthy in the process. Such 'middlemen' were generally despised by the élite. Martial, Juvenal and Cicero among others all took pot-shots at them:



Slave for sale (Henryk Siemiradzki)

When Gellianus the auctioneer was selling  
a girl just now, of none-too-good report,  
the kind who sits in the middle of Subura,<sup>†</sup>  
for quite a while the bids had fallen short.  
Wanting to prove that she was clean, he pulled 5  
her near, against her will,<sup>‡</sup> and kissed her two,  
three, four times. What resulted from that kissing?  
One who'd just bid six hundred then withdrew.

<sup>†</sup>A crowded, low-class area of Rome

<sup>‡</sup> the girl, though a whore, is revolted at the prospect of being kissed by an auctioneer

*famae non nimium bonae puellam,  
quales in media sedent Subura,  
uendebat modo praeco Gellianus.  
paruo cum pretio diu liceret,  
dum puram cupit adprobare cunctis, 5  
adtraxit prope se manu negantem  
et bis terque quaterque basiauit.  
quid profecerit osculo, requiris?  
sescentos modo qui dabat, negauit.*

**6.66**

**Susan McLean<sup>†</sup>**

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## **MARTIAL (5)**

**Pliny the Younger on Martial**

The only solid evidence for Martial's life and character is to be found in a letter written by Pliny to his friend Cornelius Priscus:

'I hear Valerius Martial is dead and I am very upset. He was talented (*ingeniosus*), penetrating (*acutus*) and sharp (*acer*), a man who, in his writings, displayed a great deal of both wit (*sal*) and sarcasm (*fel*), but just as much desire to please (*candor*). I presented him with his travel expenses when he was going into retirement; this was a recognition of our friendship, but also a recognition of the unassuming verses he composed about me.'

Pliny then quoted the epigram that Martial wrote when presenting Pliny with his latest volume. In it he instructed Thalia, the muse of light verse, not to be drunk when she delivered it because Pliny 'will be working hard writing speeches on private cases which future years will be able to compare with Cicero' (10.20). This was high praise indeed, and Pliny went on:

'Surely the author of these lines merited the friendliest of farewells when I sent him off, and merits now my grief for the loss of a very dear friend. He gave me the best he could, and he would have given more if he could have. And yet what greater gifts can be given a man than glory, praise, and immortality? It may be said that his writings will not be immortal: perhaps not, but he wrote them as though they would be.'

**Letters 3.21**

### **Martial on his poetry**

Martial certainly hoped for future glory, as his very first epigram amusingly implies:

He unto whom thou art so partial,  
o reader, is the well-known Martial,  
the epigrammatist: while living,  
give him the fame thou wouldst be giving  
so shall he hear, and feel, and know it:

5

*post-obits rarely reach a poet.*  
*hic est quem legis ille, quem requiris,*  
*toto notus in orbe Martialis*  
*argutis epigrammaton libellis:*  
*cui, lector studiose, quod dedisti*  
*uiuenti decus atque sentienti,*  
*rari post cineres habent poetae.*

5

**1.1**

**Lord Byron**

It was a theme he came back to:

Only the poets of old you admire,  
The living get no accolade.  
Please spare me your praises, Vacerra:  
That's too high a price to be paid.  
*miraris ueteres, Vacerra, solos  
nec laudas nisi mortuos poetas.  
ignoscas petimus, Vacerra: tanti  
non est, ut placeam tibi, perire.*

**8.69**

Martial certainly did not lack confidence. Here he attacks tragic poets:

Believe me, he has no idea what epigrams, Flaccus, are,  
Who calls them just a wordplay or a tease.  
No, rather he's the tease who pens cruel Tereus' luncheon treat,  
Or the dinner that you ate, cruel Thyestes, †  
Or Daedalus who put his son in wings that soon would melt, 5  
Or Cyclops feeding his Sicilian flock.  
Such bombast is a long way from my books, nor does my  
[Muse  
Swell with the tragic Muse's flowing frock.  
'Yet all the world loves, praises and admires such stuff'.  
[Agreed.

They certainly all praise it. But mine is what they read. 10

†Both Tereus and Thyestes were deceived into eating their own children

*nescit, crede mihi, quid sint epigrammata, Flacce,  
qui tantum lusus illa iocosque uocat.*

*ille magis ludit qui scribit prandia saeui*

*Tereos aut cenam, crude Thyesta, tuam,  
aut puero liquidas aptantem Daedalon alas,  
pascentem Siculas aut Polyphemon ouis.*

*a nostris procul est omnis uesica libellis,*

*Musa nec insano symmate nostra tumet.*

*'illa tamen laudant omnes, mirantur, adorant'.*

*confiteor: laudant illa, sed ista legunt.*

10

**4.49**

### **Martial's 'other voice'**

It would be unfair to Martial to give the impression that his epigrams are all cynicism, sarcasm and outright bile. It is clear he put considerable effort into ensuring that each of his books demonstrated a huge variety of subjects, styles and moods. The following

epigrams illustrate him in a mellower mood, one of relaxed moralising on the good life and death, but no less witty:

### **Live for the day**

O Julius, first, bar none, of my old mates  
    (if lengthy faith and old oaths still mean much)  
twice thirty consuls—nearly—close on you,†  
    and you can count scarce few days left, as such.  
You're wrong to put off what may be denied you, 5  
    and you should count as yours just what is past.  
Troubles and long chains of toil await you,  
    Joys, taking wing, fly off: they do not last.  
Seize them with both hands, then, and hug them to you;  
    even so, they slip too easily away. 10  
It's no wise man, trust me, who says 'I *shall* live'.  
    Tomorrow's life's too late: live for today.

†i.e. you are nearly sixty

*o mihi post nullos, Iuli, memorande sodales,  
    si quid longa fides canaque iura ualent,  
bis iam paene tibi consul tricensimus instat,  
    et numerat paucos uix tua uita dies.  
non bene distuleris uideas quae posse negari, 5  
    et solum hoc ducas, quod fuit, esse tuum.  
expectant curaeque catenatique labores,  
    gaudia non remanent, sed fugitiua uolant.  
haec utraque manu complexuque adsere toto:  
    saepe fluunt imo sic quoque lapsa sinu. 10  
non est, crede mihi, sapientis dicere 'uiuam'  
    sera nimis uita est crastina: uiue hodie.*

### **1.15**

#### **Live for yesterday**

Tomorrow you will live, you say, tomorrow, all the time.  
    Tell me, then, Postumus, when will that time come, or  
    [no?  
How far off is it? And where is it? Or where can it be sought?  
    Is it hiding among the Armenians? In Parthia, lying low?  
That 'tomorrow' of yours is now as old as Nestor or Troy's  
    king. [5  
    For that tomorrow, you tell me, how much you'd have to  
    [pay?  
You'll live tomorrow? Today, my friend, is late enough to live.  
    That man is really wise, Postumus, who lived yesterday.  
*cras te uicturum, cras dicis, Postume, semper:  
    dic mihi, cras istud, Postume, quando uenit?*

*quam longe cras istud! ubi est? aut unde petendum?  
numquid apud Parthos Armeniosque latet?  
iam cras istud habet Priami uel Nestoris annos.  
cras istud quanti, dic mihi, possit emi?  
cras uiues? hodie iam uiuere, Postume, serum est:  
ille sapit quisquis, Postume, uixit heri.*

5

### 5.58

#### Live twice over

Antonius Primus numbers years in Olympiads<sup>†</sup> (fifteen),  
spending a life, the happy man, in calm tranquillity,  
looking back at days gone by and years all safely passed,  
fearing not the slow advance of the waters of Lethe.  
No day, as he recalls it, was unwelcome or a trial, 5  
nor any would he wish to be unable to recover.  
A good man amplifies his life: that way he can enjoy  
The life he has already spent, and so live it twice over.

<sup>†</sup>An Olympiad was a four-year period

*iam numerat placido felix Antonius aeuo  
quindecies actas Primus Olympiadas,  
praeteritosque dies et tutos respicit annos  
nec metuit Lethes iam propioris aquas.  
nulla recordanti lux est ingrata grauisque;  
nulla fuit, cuius non meminisse uelit.  
ampliat aetatis spatium sibi uir bonus: hoc est  
uiuere bis, uita posse priore frui.*

5

### 10.23

#### Martial's choice: town and country?

If you briefly want to know your Marcus' wishes,  
Fronto, star of battle and the bar,  
he asks to plough his own estate, a small one,  
and loves plain, humble pleasures, as they are.  
Who's fool enough to worship frigid, gaudy, 5  
green Spartan stonework all about the place?  
And plod about each morning crying 'Greetings',<sup>†</sup>  
when he could happily enjoy the space  
of woods and countryside and all their spoils,  
laying out full nets before the family snug?  
And catch, on trembling line, the leaping fish,



and ladle honey from the earthen jug, 10  
 while a stout farm-help wife loads teetering tables,  
 and ash (all free!) cooks eggs that are home grown?  
 May him who loves me not, not love this life,  
 But pass wan years, obliging all—in Rome.

†The stonework is luxurious green porphyry—it takes a fine polish—and probably from a newly opened site. ‘Spartan’ (rather than ‘Laconian’) adds to the coldness of the scene. ‘Greetings’ signals the tedious duty of the client calling every day on his patron, cf. l.14—a thankless task.

*uota tui breuiter si uis cognoscere Marci,  
 clarum militiae, Fronto, togaeque decus,  
 hoc petit, esse sui nec magni ruris arator,  
 sordidaque in paruis otia rebus amat.  
 quisquam picta colit Spartani frigora saxi 5  
 et matutinum portat ineptus ‘haue’,  
 cui licet exuuiis nemoris rurisque beato  
 ante focum plenas explicuisse plagas  
 et piscem tremula salientem ducere saeta  
 flauaque de rubro promere mella cado? 10  
 pinguis inaequales onerat cui uilica mensas  
 et sua non emptus praeparat oua cinis?  
 Non amet hanc uitam quisquis me non amat, opto,  
 uiuat et urbanis albus in officiis.*

1.55

### The simple life

Quintilian, † master guide of wayward youth,  
 and glory of civic life, please now forgive  
 that I, being poor, not crippled by old age,  
 I’m keen—none can be keen enough—to live.  
 Defer life, if you want to out-earn dad, 5  
 Or fill your house with many a family mask.  
 For me, a smoking chimney, flowing stream,  
 and unmown grass are all the joys I ask.  
 Give me a well-fed slave, an unlearned wife,  
 A good night’s sleep, and daytime without strife. 10

†A respected author and professor of education

*Quintiliane, uagae moderator summe iuuentae,  
 gloria Romanae, Quintiliane, togae,*

*uiuere quod propero pauper nec inutilis annis,  
da ueniam: properat uiuere nemo satis.  
differat hoc patrios optat qui uincere census*

5

*atriaque inmodicis artat imaginibus:  
me focus et nigros non indignantia fumos  
tectata iuuant et fons uiuus et herba rudis.  
sit mihi uerna satur, sit non doctissima coniunx,  
sit nox cum somno, sit sine lite dies.*

10

## 2.90

### Martial's preferred life style (i)

If you and I, dear Martial, could  
enjoy our days, secure from strife,  
spending our leisure idly, both  
at liberty to relish life,  
we wouldn't know the halls and homes  
of mighty men, no bitter courts,  
no gloomy Forum, no proud busts,  
but riding, chatting, books, and sports,  
the portico, the shade, the baths,  
the fountain†—daily, these would be  
our haunts, our work. Now neither lives  
his life. We feel our good days flee,  
numbered and spent. ‡ Knowing the way  
to live, why should a man delay?

5

10

†The Latin says *Virgo*, name of an aqueduct famed for the purity of its water. In its restructured form, it still serves e.g. the Trevi Fountain

‡The Latin *pereunt et imputantur* '(the days) perish and are ticked off on our account/entered as a debt') is often seen on clocks

*si tecum mihi, care Martialis,  
securis liceat frui diebus,  
si disponere tempus otiosum  
et uerae pariter uacare uitae:  
nec nos atria nec domos potentum  
nec litis tetricas forumque triste  
nossemus nec imagines superbas;  
sed gestatio, fabulae, libelli,  
campus, porticus, umbra, Virgo, thermae,  
haec essent loca semper, hi labores.  
nunc uiuit necuter sibi, bonosque*

5

10

*soles effugere atque abire sentit,  
qui nobis pereunt et inputantur.  
quisquam uiuere cum sciat, moratur?*

5.20

Susan McLeant†

**Martial's preferred life style (ii)**

Most genial Martial, these things are  
the elements that make life blessed:

money inherited, not earned;

a fire year-round, a mind at rest,

productive land, no lawsuits, togas

5

rarely, friends of like degree,

a gentleman's physique, sound health,

shrewd innocence, good company,

plain fare, nights carefree, yet not drunk;

a bed that's decent, not austere;

10

sleep, to make darkness brief; desire

to be just what you are, no higher;

and death no cause for hope or fear.

*uitam quae faciant beatiorem,*

*iucundissime Martialis, haec sunt:*

*res non parta labore, sed relictas;*

*non ingratus ager, focus perennis;*

*lis numquam, toga rara, mens quieta;*

5

*uires ingenuae, salubre corpus;*

*prudens simplicitas, pares amici;*

*conuictus facilis, sine arte mensa;*

*nox non ebria, sed soluta curis;*

*non tristis torus, et tamen pudicus;*

10

*somnus, qui faciat breues tenebras:*

*quod sis, esse uelis nihilque malis;*

*summum nec metuas diem nec optes.*

10.47

Susan McLeant†

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## A Martial pot-pourri

This sequence of *Bellaria* has been broadly thematic. That is not quite fair to Martial the poet, each of whose books reveals an impressively unpredictable diversity of subject matter. In that sense, it has been likened to the experience of reading a newspaper: you never know what is going to hit you next. But that is all part of the fun, as it is with Martial. It is a 'Mad World, My Masters' (Thomas Middleton, 1605), but Martial makes sense of it by turning it upside down with a joke: it may be mad, but it doesn't fool *him*.



### Teeth

Thais has black teeth,

Laecania has white.

You ask the reason why.

Thais' teeth are all her own,

Laecania had to buy.

*Thais habet nigros, niueos Laecania dentes.*

*quae ratio est? emptos haec habet, illa suos.*

### 5.43

### Crunching a critic

'Write shorter epigrams' is your advice.

Yet you write nothing, Velox. How concise!

*scribere me quereris, Velox, epigrammata longa.*

*ipse nihil scribis: tu breuiora facis.*

### 1.110

Susan McLeant†



### Water into wine

Ovid, the vintage did not fail

In every single quarter.

Coranus did well from the rain,

producing vintage water.

*uindemiarum non ubique prouentus*

*cessauit, Ouidi; pluua profuit grandis.*

*centum Coranus amphoras aquae fecit.*

**9.98**



Wreathed party-girl

### Polla

Why send me pristine wreaths? I'd rather wear

the roses, Polla, fallen from your hair.

*intactas quare mittis mihi, Polla, coronas?*

*a te uexatas malo tenere rosas.*

**11.89**



Cerberus (William Blake)

### Erotion

To you, dear father, mother, I pass on  
my much-kissed, sweet delight Erotion,  
that she, poor tiny thing, will feel no fright  
nor shudder at the Underworld's black night,  
or Cerberus' great maw. She would have passed,

5

but for six days, six winters – this, her last.  
With her old guardians let her frisk and game,  
and chattering, as she used to, lisp my name.  
May no hard clod hide her soft bones from view,  
nor earth press hard on her—so light on you.

10

*hanc tibi, Fronto pater, genetrix Flaccilla, puellam  
oscula commendo deliciasque meas,  
paruola ne nigras horrescat Erotion umbras  
oraque Tartarei prodigiosa canis.*

*impletura fuit sextae modo frigora brumae,  
uixisset totidem ni minus illa dies.*

5

*inter tam ueteres ludat lasciua patronos  
et nomen blaeso garriat ore meum.  
mollia non rigidus caespes tegat ossa nec illi,  
terra, grauis fueris: non fuit illa tibi.*

10

5.34

### Nasica

You ask me to dinner at only that time  
When you *know* I've called guests of my own.  
So I ask you, please, to accept my excuse:  
*Today* I am dining at *home*.

*inuitas tunc me cum scis, Nasica, uocasse.  
excusatum habeas me rogo: ceno domi.*

**2.79**

**It's nothing**

You say what you're asking for's nothing.

Sinner, I now guarantee

if it's nothing you're asking for, Cinna,  
you'll *not* get that nothing from *me*.

*esse nihil dicis quidquid petis, inprobe Cinna:  
si nil, Cinna, petis, nil tibi, Cinna, nego.*

**3.61**

**Critical assessment**

'Tell me the truth, please, Marcus, please!

There's nowt I'd rather hear - nought.'

So you say, when you read me your books,  
and fight someone's case in the court.

You insistently plead with me, beg me.

5

Your request is too hard to deny.

So hear what the truth is – truer than true:  
truth is, you want me to lie.

*'dic uerum mihi, Marce, dic, amabo;  
nil est quod magis audiam libenter.'*

*sic et cum recitas tuos libellos,  
et causam quotiens agis clientis,*

*oras, Gallice, me rogasque semper.*

5

*durum est me tibi quod petis negare.*

*uero uerius ergo quid sit audi:*

*uerum, Gallice, non libenter audis.*

**8.76**

**To marry or not**

You want to marry Priscus: that's wise of you.

But he rejects the offer. He's wise too.

*nubere uis Prisco: non miror, Paula; sapisti.*

*ducere te non uult Priscus: et ille sapit.*

**9.10**



Drunken Hercules

### An honest life

A good man, and a poor man, but true in word and heart:  
 what, Fabianus, do you mean, by heading off for Rome?  
 You can't be taken for a pimp or drunken reveller,  
 or cow unnerved defendants<sup>†</sup> with a gloomy voice of  
 [doom,  
 Nor can you shag a dear friend's wife, nor can you get it up 5  
 for ancient corpse-like biddies, or sell insidious  
 puffs of empty promises around the Palatine,<sup>‡</sup>  
 or act as a claqueur for Canus or for Glaphyrus.\*  
 How to survive, then, poor old thing? 'As a staunch friend, day  
 [by day'.

Hopeless! You will never become filthy rich<sup>¶</sup> that way! 10

<sup>†</sup>as a prosecutor on a treason trial

<sup>‡</sup>'selling smoke' refers to selling false information for political gain

\* performers of some sort, perhaps musical, presumably corrupt

<sup>¶</sup>The Latin says Philomelus: another of the corrupt, undeserving wealthy

*uir bonus et pauper linguaque et pectore uerus,*

*quid tibi uis urbem qui, Fabiane, petis?*

*qui nec leno potes nec commissator haberi,*

*nec puidos tristi uoce citare reos,*

*nec potes uxores cari corrumpere amici,*

*nec potes argentes arrigere ad uetulas,*

*uendere nec uanos circa Palatia fumos,*

*plaudere nec Cano, plaudere nec Glaphyro:*

*unde miser uiues?—'homo certus, fidus amicus.'*—

*hoc nihil est: numquam sic Philomelus eris.*

5

10

4.5



### Hullo goodbye

Since your return from Libya, five days straight  
I sought to greet you, Afer. On each try,  
I'm told 'He's busy', 'He's asleep'. Enough!

You don't want greetings, Afer? Then goodbye.  
*dicere de Libycis reduci tibi gentibus, Afer,  
continuis uolui quinque diebus 'haue':  
'non uacat' aut 'dormit' dictum est bis terque reuerso.  
iam satis est: non uis, Afer, hauere? uale.*

9.6

Susan McLeant†

### No escape

Fannius committed suicide while from the enemy flying.  
Is not this, I ask, insane - to die, to ward off dying?  
*hostem cum fugeret, se Fannius ipse peremit.  
hic, rogo, non furor est, ne moriari, mori?*

2.80

### Quid pro no

Why don't I send you, Pontilianus,  
my little *jeux d'esprit*?  
Just in case, Pontilianus,  
you might send yours to me.  
*cur non mitto meos tibi, Pontiliane, libellos?  
ne mihi tu mittas, Pontiliane, tuos.*

7.3



Ant encased in amber

### Enambered ant

An ant was wandering under a poplar tree,  
when a drop of amber quite encased it whole.  
So she who was despised while life remained,  
becomes invaluable on her funeral.  
*dum Phaethontea formica uagatur in umbra,  
implicuit tenuem sucina gutta feram.  
sic modo quae fuerat uita contempta manente,*

*funeribus facta est nunc pretiosa suis.*

### 6.15

#### **Bitter sweet**

You're obdurate, and the opposite,  
Delightful, and the reverse.

Living with you's impossible, and  
Living without you, worse.

*difficilis facilis, iucundus acerbus es idem:  
nec tecum possum uiuere, nec sine te.*

### 12.4

#### **Martial's self-assessment**

My Rome is praising, loving, and reciting all my books,  
I'm now in every hand and every coat.

Look! Someone's blushing, angry, yawning, stunned and quite  
[disgusted.

Excellent! Now my poems get *my* vote.

*laudat, amat, cantat nostros mea Roma libellos,  
meque sinus omnes, me manus omnis habet.  
ecce rubet quidam, pallet, stupet, oscitat, odit.  
hoc uolo: nunc nobis carmina nostra placent.*

### 6.60



Dr John Fell (1625-1686, Dean of Christ Church and Bishop of Oxford)

#### **The best known of all**

Now this one rings a certain bell.

The reason why, I cannot tell.

But this I know and know full well:

*Sabidius?* Who? Oh, what the hell...

*non amo te, Sabidi, nec possum dicere quare,  
hoc tantum possum dicere—non amo te.*

### 1.32

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Manuscript (12th C AD) of an ancient Latin textbook, Codex 1 from Zwettl Abbey (Austria), folio 11r. Printed by kind permission of Zisterzienserstift Zwettl.

### ***Colloquia of the Hermeneumata Pseudodositheana***

The extraordinary ‘Conversations to be found in the Translations of Pseudo-Dositheus’ are manuals to help Greeks learn Latin, and Romans Greek. Rather like a Loeb text or a *Teach Yourself Swahili*, they do this by setting jolly conversational scenes from everyday life—going to school, dinner parties, bathing, law-court scenes, etc.—in simple language side by side on the page, together with pronunciation tips, vocabulary lists, grammar exercises and so on.

It seems tough on poor old Dositheus Magister, a blameless Greek grammarian of the 4th C AD, to be announced as a pseud, but that is not his fault. As a teacher of Latin in the Greek world, he sensibly glossed his Latin grammar with a side-by-side translation (*hermeneuma*) into Greek. As result, he became associated with these language-learning materials which are to be the subject of the ensuing *Bellaria* sequence. But it is now clear he is innocent as charged.

The reason is that the *school* scenes from these *colloquia* date from Republican times and were used to help pupils learn Greek: indeed, Caesar and Cicero may have learnt their Greek from whatever form they originally took. The scenes of *daily life* date from the 2nd-3rd C AD, and were composed in the Greek East to enable Greeks both to learn Latin and the niceties of Roman life (e.g. polite conversation round the

dinner-table, what you talk about with chums in the baths, and so on). But equally, they could be used by Romans to learn Greek too.

Our manuscripts of these *colloquia* derive from the 4th – 5th C, through the early Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Professor Eleanor Dickey (Reading University) has been almost single-handedly responsible for bringing them into the light of day for the 21st century. She published the two definitive scholarly editions (CUP, 2012 and 2015), and spun out from them *Learning Latin the Ancient Way* (CUP, 2016), *Stories of Daily Life from the Ancient World* (CUP, 2017) and an elementary textbook *Learn Latin from the Romans* (CUP, 2018).

For this *Bellarina* sequence Professor Dickey has most generously provided the texts, with her translations, from her scholarly editions, and allowed me to make full use of her commentaries and material from her books.

## *Colloquia (1)*

### **Up in the morning and off to school**

Here is a real Fotherington Thomas, showing how it should be done. At any moment one expects him to cry *χαίρετε, νεφέλαι, χαῖρε, αἴθερ* / *salvete, nubes, salve, caelum* and start skipping about like a weed.

Observe the sentence structures: all very short and simple.

**Note:** interleaved comments in the text in italics are my additions, drawn (with a few interjections) from Professor Dickey's commentary.

Ἦγέρθην πρωῖ ἐξυπνισθείς, καὶ ἐκάλεσα παῖδα. ἐκέλευσα ἀνοῖξαι τὴν θυρίδα·	Surrexi mane expergefactus, et vocavi puerum. iussi aperire fenestram;	I got up in the morning, having been woken up, and I called a [slave] boy. I told [him] to open the shutters; <i>he needs light to get dressed</i>
ἤνοιξεν ταχέως. ἐγερθείς ἐκάθισα ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐνηλάτου τῆς κλίνης. ἤτησα ὑποδήματα καὶ περικνημίδας· ἦν γὰρ ψῦχος.	aperuit cito. elevatus assedi supra sponda(m) lecti. poposci calciamenta et ocreas; erat enim frigus.	he opened [it] quickly. Having got up, I sat on the frame of the bed. I asked for shoes and leggings, for it was cold. <i>But no top! Presumably something was lost here</i>
ὑποδεθείς οὖν ἔλαβον ὠμόλινον. ἐπεδόθη καθαρόν. προσηνέχθη ὕδωρ	calciatus ergo accepi linteum. porrectum est mundum. allata est aqua	So then having been shod I received a linen towel. A clean one was handed [to me]. Water was brought

πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν  
εἰς ὀρνόλην.  
ὧ̃ ἐπιχυθεῖς  
πρῶτον χειρᾶς,  
εἶτα κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν  
(ἐνιψάμην)·  
καὶ τὸ στόμα ἔκλεισα.  
ὀδόντας ἔτριψα  
καὶ οὖλα.  
ἐξέπτυσσα  
τὰ ἄχρηστα  
ὡς τινα ἐπήρχοντο,  
καὶ ἐξεμυξάμην.  
ταῦτα πάντα  
ἐξεχύθησαν.

ἐξέμαξα τὰς χειρᾶς,  
ἔπειτα  
καὶ τοὺς βραχίονας  
καὶ τὴν ὄψιν,  
ἵνα καθαρὸς προέλθω.

οὕτως γὰρ πρέπει  
παῖδα ἐλεύθερον  
μαθεῖν.  
μετὰ ταῦτα  
γραφεῖον ἐπεζήτησα,  
καὶ σωματίον;  
καὶ ταῦτα παρέδωκα  
ἐμῷ παιδί.  
ἔτοιμασθεῖς οὖν  
εἰς πάντα, προῆλθον  
καλῆ κληδόνι,  
ἀκολουθοῦντός μοι  
παιδαγωγῷ,  
ὀρθῶς διὰ τῆς στοᾶς  
ἣτις ἦγεν  
εἰς τὴν σχολήν.  
εἴ τινές μοι γνωστοὶ  
ὑπήντησαν,  
ἤσπασάμην αὐτούς· καὶ  
ἐκεῖνοι ἐμὲ  
ἀντησπάσαντο.

ad faciem  
in urceolum.  
cuius superfusu  
primum manus,  
deinde ad faciem  
(lavi);  
et os clausi.  
dentes fricui  
et gingivas.  
exspui  
inutilia  
sicut superveniebant,  
et emunxi me.  
haec omnia  
effusa sunt.

tersi manus,  
deinde  
et brachia  
et faciem,  
ut mundus  
procedam.

sic enim decet  
puerum ingenuum  
discere.  
posthaec  
graphium requisivi,  
et membranam;  
et haec tradidi  
meo puero.  
paratus ergo  
in omnia, processi  
bono auspicio,  
sequente me  
paedagogo,  
recte per porticum  
quae ducebat  
ad scholam.  
sicubi mihi noti  
occurrerunt,  
salutavi eos; et illi me  
resalutaverunt.

for my face  
in a little jug.  
Doused by which [water],  
first [as to my] hands,  
then onto my face,  
(I washed);  
and I closed my mouth.  
I scrubbed [my] teeth  
and gums.  
I spat out  
the undesirable stuff  
as it accumulated,  
and I blew my nose.  
All these things  
were expelled.

*Perhaps refers to going to the  
lavatory?*

I dried my hands,  
then  
also my arms  
and my face,  
in order to go out clean.

For thus it is fitting  
for a free-born boy  
to learn.  
After this  
I asked for a stylus  
and [my] book;  
and I handed these things  
to my [slave] boy.  
So having been prepared  
for everything, I left  
with a good omen,  
with my paedagogue  
following me,  
Straight through the  
colonnade that led  
to the school.  
If any acquaintances of  
mine met me anywhere,  
I greeted them; and they  
greeted me in return.

ὡς δὴ ἦλθον  
πρὸς τὴν κλίμακα,  
ἀνέβην διὰ τῶν  
βαθμῶν,  
ἀτρέμα, ὡς ἔδει.  
καὶ ἐν τῷ προσχολίῳ  
ἀπέθηκα βίρριον.  
καὶ κατέψηξα  
τρίχας.

ut ergo veni  
ad scalam,  
ascendi per gradus,  
otio, ut oportebat.

et in proscholio  
deposui birrum:  
et demulsi  
capillos.

So when I came  
to the staircase,  
I went up step by step,  
unhurriedly, as one ought.  
*No hurrying on the stairs!*

And in the school  
vestibule  
I deposited [my] cloak;  
and I smoothed down  
[my] hair.  
*Teacher's pet...*

### Aspects of life at school

There are four quite *separate* scenes here: a new pupil; the fees; problems with writing equipment; and an accusation of truancy.

The pupil in this scene is learning Latin. He tells his slave to stop lazing about and get ready to accompany him to school:



The main characters in the *Colloquia* school scenes are always boys but one MS says they should be used by both girls and boys

### New Pupil

Ἀνάστα, παῖς  
τί κάθησαι;  
ἄρον πάντα βιβλία  
τὰ Ῥωμαῖα,  
τὰς διφθέρας

Surge, puer;  
quid sedes?  
tolle omnes libros  
Latinos,  
membranas

'Get up, boy;  
why are you sitting?  
Pick up all  
the Latin books,  
the parchment notebook  
*This wealthy pupil owns books  
and small notebooks*

καὶ τὰς πινακίδας	et pugillares	and the <i>[small, writing]</i> tablets
⟨καὶ⟩ τὸν γλωσσοκόμον καὶ τὴν παράγραφον, τὸ μέλαν καὶ τοὺς καλάμους.	et locellum  et praeductal, † atramentum et cannas. <i>†praeductal</i> <i>is medieval, its meaning not</i> <i>certain</i>	and the casket <i>[to hold the]</i> and the ruler, the ink and the pens.
ἀπέλθωμεν, ἀσπασώμεθα. Χαῖρε, κύριε διδάσκαλε, καλῶς σοι γένοιτο. ἀπὸ σήμερον φιλοπονεῖν θέλω. ἔρωτῶ σε οὖν, ⟨δίδαξόν με⟩ Ῥωμαῖστί λαλ(ε)ῖν.	eamus, salutemus. Ave, domine praeceptor, bene tibi sit. ab hodie studere volo. rogo te ergo, ⟨doce me⟩ Latine loqui.	Let's go, let's greet [the teacher].' 'Hello, sir teacher! May it be well for you. From today I want to work hard. So please teach me to speak Latin.' <i>It looks as if the pupil is new to</i> <i>the school</i>
Διδάσκω σε, ἐάν με πρόσσχης.	Doceo te, si me attendas.	'I [shall] teach you, if you pay attention to me.'
Ἴδού, προσέχω.	Ecce, attendo.	'Look, I'm paying attention.'
Καλῶς εἶπας, ὡς πρέπει τῇ εὐγενείᾳ σου. ἐπίδος μοι, παῖ, τὸ ἀναλογεῖον.	Bene dixisti, ut decet ingenuitatem tuam. porrige mihi, puer, manuale.	'You have spoken well, as befits your good birth. Hand me, boy, the book-stand. <i>This suggests the book is a</i> <i>(heavier) codex, not a papyrus</i> <i>roll, but see revolve 5b</i>
ταχέως οὖν ἐπίδος τὸ βιβλίον, ἀνείλησον, ἀνάγνωθι μετὰ φωνῆς, ἄνοιξον τὸ στόμα, ψήφισον. ἄρτι καλῶς ποιήσον τόπον, ἵνα γράψῃς ἄμιλλαν.	cito ergo porrige librum, revolve, lege cum voce, aperi os, computa.  modo bene fac locum, ut scribas dictatum.	So, quickly hand [me] the book, turn [to the right place], read aloud, open your mouth, count. <i>Perhaps the first exercise</i> Now mark the place well, so that you may write an exercise.'

*Perhaps the exercise was to write out a translation of a passage he had just read out*

### Fees

〈Τὸν μισθὸν〉  
οὐκ ἤνεγκας;

Mercedem  
non attulisti?

‘Didn’t you bring the  
tuition money?’

*Always an issue in private schools*

‘I asked my father,  
and he said,

Ἦιτησα τὸν πατέρα  
καὶ εἶπεν·

Petivi patrem  
et dixit:

Ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἐλεύσομαι  
ἐκεῖ ἅμα.

Ego ipse veniam  
ibi noviter.

“I myself will go  
there at once.

Θέλω γὰρ  
καὶ ἀπόδειξιν  
λαβεῖν.

volo enim  
et experimentum  
accipere.

For I want to have a  
demonstration [of your  
progress] too.”

Πρᾶξον οὖν ἐπιμελῶς,  
ἵνα ἐτοῖμος ᾦς.

Age ergo diligenter,  
ut paratus sis.

‘So work hard,  
so that you will be ready.’

*The teacher wants to be sure  
that dad is impressed with his  
son’s progress in order to get  
paid.*

Ἐτοῖμός εἰμι· ἦψα γὰρ

Paratus sum; incendi

τὸν λύχνον καὶ νύκτωρ  
ἐμελέτησα.

enim lucernam et  
nocte  
meditatus sum.

‘I am ready; for I lit the  
lamp and studied at  
night.’

*Doing homework at night by  
candlelight was no fun.*

Καλῶς ἐποίησας·  
ἄρτι σε ἐπαινῶ.

Bene fecisti;  
modo te laudo.

‘You have done well;  
now I praise you.’

### Writing material

λεύκανον τὸ πυξίον,  
κάθησο καὶ γράψον.  
ὀρθὸς  
ἐνεάζεις;  
τὰς κεραίας ποίησον  
τῶν γραμμάτων.  
〈εἰς〉 τὸ μέλαν  
τὸ σὸν ὕδωρ ὀλίγον  
〈βάλε〉.  
ἰδοὺ ἄρτι καλῶς ἔχει.

dealba buxum,  
sede 〈et〉 scribe.  
rectus  
stupes?  
apices fac  
litterarum.  
〈in〉 atramentum  
tuum aquam paucam  
〈mitte〉.

‘Whiten the tablet,  
sit down and write.  
Are you stupefied,  
standing up like that?  
Put the macrons (*i.e. long  
vowel marks*) on the letters.  
Into your ink  
Put a little water.

See, now it is fine.’



<p>Ἐπίδος) τὸν κάλαμον,  ἐπίδος τὸ σμιλίον.  Ποταπὸν θέλ(ε)ις;  Ὅξυ θέλω  (ἢ ἀμβλύ).  Ὅξυ θέλεις;  διὰ τί;</p>	<p>ecce modo bene  habet.  (Porrige) cannam,  porrige scalpellum.  Quale vis?  Acutum volo  (aut hebes).  Acutum vis?  qua re?</p>	<p><i>The ink thickened as the water  evaporated out</i>  ‘Hand [me] the pen,  hand me the penknife.’  ‘What sort do you want?’  ‘I want a sharp [one]  (or a dull [one]).’  ‘You want a sharp one?  Why?’  <i>Pens were made of e.g. reeds,  soon blunted on e.g. ostraka</i></p>
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### The Truant

<p>Ἐχθὲς ἤργησας  καὶ δεύλης  εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν  (ἔπαιζες)  οὐκ ἦς.  ἐγὼ σε ἐζήτησα  καὶ ἤκουσα πάντα  παρὰ τοῦ τροφέως  σου, ἅπερ ἐποίησας.  Ψεύδεται  ὃ σοι εἰπὼν,  ἦγεν γάρ με  ὁ πατήρ μου  εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον  μεθ’ ἑαυτοῦ.</p>	<p>Heri cessabas  et meridie  in domum  (ludebas)  non eras.  ego te quaesivi  et audivi omnia  ab alumno tuo,  quae fecisti.  Mentitur  qui tibi dixit,  duxit enim me  pater meus  in praetorium  secum.</p>	<p>‘Yesterday you slacked,  and at midday  in the house  (you were playing)  you were not at home.  I looked for you  and I heard everything  you did from your nurse.’  ‘The person who spoke to  you is lying,  for my father took me  with him  to the praetorium.  <i>i.e. the provincial governor’s  headquarters</i>  He was greeted  by the magistrates  and he received letters  from my masters</p>
<p>προσηγορεύθη  ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων  καὶ ἐπιστολὰς ἔλαβεν  ἀπὸ τῶν κυρίων τῶν  ἐμῶν  τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων·  καὶ εὐθέως  προῆλθεν  εἰς τὸ ἱερόν  καὶ ἔθυσεν  τῷ αἰωνίῳ  καὶ τῇ νίκῃ  τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων,</p>	<p>salutatus est  a magistratibus  et epistulas accepit  a dominis meis  imperatoribus;  et continuo  ascendit  in templum  et immolavit  pro aeterno  et victoria  imperatorum,</p>	<p>the emperors;  and immediately  he went up  to the temple  and made a sacrifice  for the eternity  and victory  of the emperors,</p>

καὶ κατήλθεν.	et descendit.	and [then] he came down. <i>Note 'emperors', dating this to the late 2nd C or a period after Diocletian's reforms in 283</i>
σήμερον δὲ διακρίσεων ἀκούει ἀπὸ ὥρας πρώτης.	hodie autem condictiones audit ab hora prima.	But today he is hearing disputes from the first hour.'
Ἀφορμὰς ζητεῖς πράττ(ε)ιν καὶ οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι αἱ ἀργίαι τοὺς παῖδας ἀπαιδεύτους ποιοῦσιν.	Occasiones quaeris agere et nescis quod feriae pueros indoctos faciunt.	'You look for pretexts for doing things and you don't know that holidays make boys ignorant.
δ(ε)ῖξον, ἴδω, πῶς ἔγραψας; καλῶς λίαν; ἄξιός εἰ δαρῆναι. ἰδού, συγχωρῶ σοι. σήμερον δὲ ὕπαγε καὶ ἀρίστησον, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρίστου ταχέως ἐλθέ. καλὰς ὥρας. Καλῶς σοι γένοιτο.	ostende, videam, quomodo scripsisti? bene valde? dignus es vapulare. Ecce, concedo tibi. hodie autem vade et prande, et a prandio citius veni. bonas horas. Bene tibi sit.	Show [me], let me see, your writing. Very good?! You deserve to be flogged! [But] look, I [shall] let you off. But today go and have lunch, and come [back] from lunch rather quickly. Have a good time! 'May it be well for you.'

## *Colloquia (2)*

This sequence of *Bellaria* is drawn from Professor Eleanor Dickey's definitive scholarly editions (CUP, 2012 and 2015), and her spin-offs from them, *Learning Latin the Ancient Way* (CUP, 2016), *Stories of Daily Life from the Ancient World* (CUP, 2017) and an elementary textbook *Learn Latin from the Romans* (CUP, 2018). She has provided the texts from her two editions (any mistakes in the way they have been set are to be laid at my door) and generously allowed me to make full use of her commentaries and the material from her books. All errors of setting are to be laid at my door.

**Note:** the *Colloquia* do not as a rule tell us who is speaking, and are at times rather difficult to interpret, owing to corruption of various sorts. I have followed Professor Dickey's suggestions throughout.

### **Ancient Bathing**



Piazza Armerina, Sicily (4th C AD): a bathing party: a mother and perhaps her two sons, flanked on either side by slaves carrying towels or clothes (left) and other bathing necessities (right)

The eleven aqueducts that eventually served Rome (total length c. 300 miles) supplied it with about 250 million gallons a day. Their main purpose was to provide Romans with their main favourite recreational activity after a hard day's work—bathing either in the *thermae* (state-provided) or *balneae* (smaller, private) baths with the cool room, hot-room and sweat-room. Here, in the afternoon ('eight hours after sunrise'), for a small fee, everyone from the elite (including the emperor) to the poor turned up to exercise and use the facilities (including e.g. brothels, libraries, food and drink stalls, depilation services, etc.), and socialize, though only with their own kind. Romans putting on dinner parties would often invite their guests to join them in the baths beforehand.

The rich came with their thick towels, expensive unguents, perfumes, masseurs, fine wine and slaves to look after all their gear; the poor man with a thin towel and prayer that his clothes would not be nicked. Before bathing, many 'worked out' with weights, wrestling and ball-games. It was a noisy place. Marcus Aurelius described it as 'all oil, sweat, filth and greasy water'. That was why the strigil was used right at the end before getting dressed—to ensure one was as clear of as much muck as possible. At the end of a session, one could pick up a takeaway, as in this episode.



Tepidarium, Stabian Baths (Pompeii)

Many of the above features occur in this key to polite bathing with friends and (perhaps) family—as reconstructed here by Professor Dickey—in the Roman world (note the bath attendant’s friendly farewell, still used in the Arabic *hammam* today). It is worth noting that, if the action looks a little repetitive and long-drawn-out, the reason is to get into it as much of the bathing vocabulary as possible for the Greek learner.

### At the baths

#### ***Paterfamilias (to slaves)***

Κατάγετε σάβανα  
εἰς τὸ βαλανεῖον,  
ξύστρον,  
προσοψίδιον,  
ποδεκμάγιον,  
λήκυθον,  
ἀφρόνιτρον.  
προάγετε,  
λάβετε τὸν τόπον.

Deferte sabana  
ad balneum,  
strigilem,  
faciale,  
pedale,  
ampullam,  
aphronitrum.  
antecedite,  
occupate locum.

‘Take the towels down  
to the bath,  
the strigil,  
face-cloth,  
foot-cloth,  
flask [of oil],  
soap.’  
Go ahead [of us],  
get a place.’

#### ***Friend (to paterfamilias)***

Ποῦ κελεύεις;  
ἔς τὸ δημόσιον  
ἢ ἐν τῷ ἰδιωτικῷ;

Ubi iubes?  
ad thermas  
aut in priuato?

‘Where do you order it?  
At the public baths,  
or in the private one?’

**Paterfamilias**

Ὅπου κελεύετε.

Ubi iubetis.

‘Wherever you order.’

**Friend (to slaves)**

Προάγετε μόνον·

ὕμῖν λέγω,

οἱ ἐνθάδε ἐστέ.

Antecedite tantum;

uobis dico,

qui hic estis.

‘Just go ahead;  
I’m talking to you,  
the ones who are here.’

**Paterfamilias (to slaves)**

Θερμὸν γενέσθω ἡμῖν.

Calida fiat nobis.

‘Let there be hot [water]  
for us.’

Ὅσον ὑπάγομεν,

διηγῆσομαί σοι.

Ἐγείρου, ἄγωμεν.

Quando imus,

narrabo tibi.

Surge, eamus.

I’ll tell you when we’re  
coming.’

Get up, let’s go.’

**Paterfamilias (to son)**

Ἐνθεν θέλεις διὰ τῆς στοᾶς

Hinc uis per  
porticum,

‘Do you want [to go] from  
here through the  
portico,

διὰ τὸν ὑετόν;

propter lumen?

on account of the light?†

†Corrupt: The Greek says  
‘rain’, not ‘light!’

Μήτι θέλεις ἐλθεῖν

ἄς τὸν ἀφεδρῶνα;

Numquid uis uenire

ad secessum?

Do you want to come  
to the privy?’

**Son**

Καλῶς με ὑπέμνησας,

ἢ κοιλία με ἐπάγει.

ἄγωμεν λοιπόν.

Bene me admonuisti,

uenter me cogit.

eamus iam.

‘You reminded me well;  
my belly urges me to.  
Let’s go now.’

**Paterfamilias (to son)**

Ἐκδυσαι.

Exspolia te.

‘Take off your clothes.’

**Paterfamilias (to slave)**

Ἐπόλυσόν με,

σύνθεσ τὰ ἱμάτια,

περίβαλε,

τήρει καλῶς,

μὴ νύσταζε

διὰ τοὺς κλέπτας.

Discalcia me,

compone

uestimenta,

cooperi,

serua bene,

ne obdormias

propter fures.

‘Take off my shoes,  
put the clothes together,  
cover them over  
and watch [them] well:  
don’t doze off,  
on account of the thieves.’

**Paterfamilias**

Ἄρπαξον ἡμῖν σφαῖραν·

παίξωμεν ἐν τῷ

σφαιριστηρίῳ.

Rape nobis pilam;

ludamus in

sphaeristerio.

‘Grab a ball for us:  
let’s play in the ball-court.’

**Son**

Γυμνασθῆναι θέλω

Exerceri uolo

‘I want to practise

ἐν τῷ κηρώματι. δεῦρο παλαίσωμεν διὰ χρόνου μιᾶ ῥοπῆ.	in ceromate. ueni luctemus post tempus uno momento.	on the wrestling-ground. Come here, let's wrestle after a while for a moment.'
<b>Paterfamilias</b> Οὐκ οἶδα, εἰ δύναμαι· πάλαι γὰρ πέπαυμαι τοῦ παλαίειν. ὁμως πειράζω εἰ δύναμαι.	Non scio, si possum; olim enim cessauit luctare. tamen tempto si possum.	'I don't know if I can; for I stopped wrestling a long time ago. Nevertheless I [shall] try if I can.
<b>[After a short bout]</b> Ἐλαφρῶς κεκόπωμαί. Εἰσέλθωμεν εἰς τὸν πρῶτον οἶκον προπνιγέα. δοῦς τῷ βαλανεῖ κέρμα·	Leuiter fatigatus sum. Introeamus in cellam primam tepidaria. da balnitori nummos;	I'm a bit tired. Let's go into the first room, the tepidarium. Give the bath-keeper coins;
ἀπόλαβε τὸ ὑπόλοιπον. <b>Son</b> ἄλειψε.	recipe reliquum. unge.	get the change.' 'Anoint [me].'
<b>Paterfamilias</b> Ἄλειψα. Ἄλειφομαι.	Unxi. Ungo me.	'I have anointed [you].' I anoint myself.'
<b>Son</b> Τριῖψον.	Frica.	'Rub [me].'
<b>Paterfamilias</b> Ἔρχου ἔς τὸ ἰδρωτήριον.	Veni ad sudatorium.	'Come to the sweat-room.
<b>[Later]</b> Ἴδροῖς;	Sudas?	Are you sweating?'
<b>Son</b> Ἴδρῶ· ἐκλέλυμαι.	Sudo; lassus sum.	'I am sweating; I am exhausted.'
<b>Paterfamilias</b> Ἔσέλθωμεν εἰς τὴν ἐμβάτην. Κατάβα.	Introeamus ad solium Descende.	'Let's enter the hot pool. Go down.'
<b>Son</b> Χρώμεθα τῇ ξηροπυρίᾳ  καὶ οὕτω καταβῶμεν εἰς τὴν ἐμβάτην.	Utamur assa  et sic descendamus ad solium.	'Let's use the dry heat room and go down that way to the hot pool.'

***Paterfamilias to son***

Κατάβα,  
κατάντλησόν με.  
ἔξελθε λοιπόν.  
βάλε σεαυτὸν  
εἰς τὴν κολυμβήθραν  
ὑπαίθριον.  
κολύμβησον.

Descende,  
fomenta me.  
exi iam.  
mitte te ipsum  
ad piscinam  
subdiualem.  
nata.

‘Go down,  
pour hot water over me.  
Now get out.  
Throw yourself  
into the open-air pool.  
  
Swim!’

***Son***

Ἐκολύμβησα.

Nataui.

‘I swam.’

***Paterfamilias to son***

Πρόσελθε εἰς τὸν λουτήρα,  
περίχεε σαυτόν.

Accede ad luterem,  
perfunde te.

‘Go over to the basin;  
pour [water] over you.’

***Son***

Περιέχεα,  
ἀνέλαβον.

Perfudi,  
resumpsi.

‘I have poured [it]; I have  
put [the basin] up  
again.’

***Paterfamilias to slaves***

Ἐπίδος ξύστραν.  
περικατάμαξόν με.  
περίζωσε σάβανα.  
κατάμαξόν μου τὴν κεφαλὴν  
καὶ τοὺς πόδας.  
δὸς σανδάλια,  
ὑπόδησόν με.  
ἐπίδος ἐπικάρσιον,  
ἀναβόλαιον, δαλματικὴν.  
συνάξετε τὰ ἱμάτια  
καὶ πάντα τὰ ἡμῶν.  
ἀκολουθεῖτε εἰς τὸν οἶκον,  
καὶ ἀγοράσετε ἡμῖν  
ἀπὸ τοῦ βαλανείου  
λεπτόσπερμα καὶ θέρμους  
<καὶ> ὄξυκυάμια.

Porrige strigilem.  
deterge me.  
cinge sabana.  
terge mihi caput  
et pedes.  
da caligulas,  
calcia me.  
porrige amiculum,  
pallam, dalmaticam.  
colligite uestimenta  
et omnia nostra.  
sequimini ad domum,  
et emite nobis  
a balneo  
minutalia et lupinos  
<et> fabas acetatas.

‘Hand [me] the strigil.  
Rub me down.  
Wrap towels around me.  
Dry my head  
and feet.  
Give [me my] shoes,  
put on my shoes.  
Hand me [my] underwear,  
mantle, Dalmatian tunic.  
Gather up the clothes  
and all our things.  
Follow [me] home,  
and buy for us,  
from the bath-shop,  
chopped food and lupins  
and beans in vinegar.’

***Bath attendant***

Καλῶς ἐλούσω,  
καλῶς σοι ἔστω.

Bene lauasti,  
bene tibi sit.

‘You bathed well,  
may it be well for you.’

**Money-lending**



Roman bas relief: money-changer

Thomas Jefferson (1816) said that the banking system was ‘more dangerous than standing armies ... the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity, under the name of funding, is but swindling futurity on a grand scale’.

But there was no such thing as banking in our sense in the ancient world, only money-lending. In Rome minted coin (from c. 300 BC) was the sole financial instrument, worth its weight (it had no symbolic value, as it does today). If you had no coin, you could not spend: so Rome had no ‘national debt’. There was no such thing as credit either. All you could do was to borrow against assets. As is apparent from this typical credit note (June 18 AD 37), wealth lay in agriculture:

‘I, Novius, have written that I have received a loan from Hessucus. I am therefore in debt to the sum of 10,000ss, which I will return on request and for good reason, as stipulated between Hessucus and me, Novius, and I hereby formally obligate myself. For the 10,000ss, I have given as collateral 7,000 modii (over 40 tons) of Alexandrian grain and 4,000 modii (25 tons) of chickpeas, lentils and spelt contained in 200 sacks, deposited in the public granaries of Puteoli.’

Romans knew all about interest, but the actual amount was never *mentioned* in private transactions, though it was written in (usually either 6% or 12%). Presumably everyone knew what the rate was. But one could reach a different agreement on the issue: Novius later borrowed another 1250ss to be repaid on November 1st and added ‘If on that day I do not respect my obligation, not only must I be considered to have perjured myself [note the importance of one’s public standing] but as penalty I must pay 20ss for every day of delayed payment’.

Observe the technical details in this passage. Five thousand ss was a large sum of money: no wonder the money-lender had to assure the client he had the ready available. It is assumed the client was a wealthy man in good standing with the money-lender, so collateral was not needed. All the client had to do was write a statement that he had taken the money and put his seal on it (since this story was composed for Greeks learning Latin, it flattered the student to see himself as wealthy client of impeccable credentials borrowing money from a friendly Roman money-lender). The client then counted the money, checked it was all good coin, and agreed to repay it in good coin.

It is worth pointing out that no Roman we know of borrowed money to make some go-getting investment in an exciting start-up business. It was for immediate use. If seriously large sums were needed, the rich would form a consortium (*societas*)



to find it. They did so (in the absence of a civil service) to tender for government services—building a road or aqueduct, supplying the army, etc., the most famous of which was the right to gather taxes from the provinces, done by the dreaded *publicani*, ‘public contractors’ and, presumably, the occasional sinner.

### Borrowing money

<b>Money-lender</b>		
Κύριε, τί ἐπιτάσσεις;	Domine, quid imperasti?	‘Sir, what is your order?’
<b>Client</b>		
Μήτι ἔχεις χρήματα εὐκαιροῦντα;	Numquid habes pecuniam uacua?	‘Do you have any money available?’
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Τί χρεῖαν ἔχεις δανείσασθαι;	Quid opus habes mutuari?	‘What do you need to borrow?’
<b>Client</b>		
Εἰ ἔχεις, χρησόν μοι πέντε δηνάρια.	Si habes, commoda mihi quinque sestertia.	‘If you have it, lend me five thousand sesterces.
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Καὶ μὴ ἐσχηκῶς ὀθενδήποτε ἐξεπλεξάμην <ἄν>.	Etsi non habuissem, undecumque explicassem.	‘Even if I hadn’t had it, I would have sorted it out from somewhere or other.’
<b>Client</b>		
Ἐνέχυρον θέλεις;	Pignus uis?	‘Do you want a security?’
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Μὴ γένοιτο, οὐ χρεῖαν ἔχω. χειρογράφησόν μοί σε εἰληφέναι.	Absit, <non opus habeo.> caue mihi te accepisse.	‘Heaven forbid! I have no need [of one]. Certify for me that you have taken [the money].’
<b>Client</b>		
Ποίοις τόκοις;	Quibus usuris?	‘At what rate of interest?’
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Οἷς θέλεις.	Quibus uis.	‘At the rate you want.’
<b>Client</b>		
Ἐχειρογράφησα.	Caui.	‘I have certified it.’
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Χάριτάς σοι ὁμολογῶ· σφράγισον.	Gratias tibi ago; signa.	‘Thank you; Add your seal.’

<b>Client</b>		
Ἐσφράγισα.	Signaui.	'I have sealed [it].'
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Ἀριθμῶ ἀρίθμησον.	Numero numera.	'Count it out by number.'
<b>Client</b>		
Ἀρίθμησα.	Numerauui.	'I have counted it.'
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Δοκίμασον.	Proba.	'Examine it.'
<b>Client</b>		
Ἐδοκίμασα.	Probauui.	'I have examined it.'
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Καθὼς ἔλαβες, δοκίμως ἀπόδος.	Sicut accepisti, probum reddas.	'Just as you took it, return it in good coin.'
<b>Client</b>		
Ὅς σοι ἀποδώσω, καὶ τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιήσω.	Cum tibi reddidero, et satisfaciam.	'As I shall return [it] to you, I shall also satisfy [you].'

### Returning the money

<b>Money-lender</b>		
Καλήμερον ἦλθες.	Bono die uenisti.	'You have come on an auspicious day.'
<b>Client</b>		
Ἦλθον.	Veni.	'I have.'
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Ἔλαβες; ἔδωκας αὐτῷ;	Accepisti? dedisti illi?	'Did you get [the money]? Did you give it to the clerk?'
<b>Client</b>		
Ἔδωσα.	Dedi.	'I did.'
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Ἀπηλλάγης.	Caruisti.	'You have been discharged.'
<b>Client</b>		
Μή τινος χρεῖαν ἔχεις;	Numquid aliquid opus habes?	'Do you need anything [else from me]?'
<b>Money-lender</b>		
Σὲ ὑγιαίνειν.	Te ualere.	'For you to fare well.'

### Health

This charming scene requires little comment. Keeping up the morale of the ill by visiting them is a common human reflex. Lucius (a stock name) lived on the second floor of an *insula*, and was presumably fairly well off: the first floor was shops, the second large flats for the wealthy, getting smaller and smaller the further up you went.

As far as Romans were concerned, the Greeks invented medicine and they took over their practices and most of their terminology. One exception: the Greeks called cancer *karkinos*, ‘crab’, because that is what a tumour looked like when sliced open. Having a word for crab, Romans therefore called it *cancer*. But they also used Greek *karkinoma* (*carcinoma*)—whence our two roots for cancer. However, many Romans were somewhat suspicious of all things Greek. Pliny the Elder distinguished between the medical advice a wise Roman would take over from the Greeks and what not.

Greek doctors laid much emphasis on the importance of exercising the body—exactly what the patient here is doing. The famous Galen thought playing catch was the best of all gymnastic exertions. Massages and baths were also popular remedies.



Masseur at work

### Visiting the Sick

**Friend A**

Ἐὰν θέλῃς,  
ἐλθέ μεθ’ ἡμῶν.

Si uis,  
ueni mecum.

‘If you want,  
come with us [Lat: with me].’

**Friend B**

Ποῦ;

Ubi?

‘Where?’

**Friend A**

Πρὸς φίλον  
τὸν ἡμέτερον Λύκιον.  
ἐπισκεψώμεθα αὐτόν.

Ad amicum  
nostrum Lucium.  
uisitemus eum.

‘To our friend  
Lucius.  
Let’s go see him.’

**Friend B**

Τί γὰρ ἔχει;

Quid enim habet?

‘What’s wrong with him?’

**Friend A**

Ἄρρωστεῖ. <b>Friend B</b>	Aegrotat.	'He's sick.'
Ἄπὸ πότε; <b>Friend A</b>	A quando?	'Since when?'
Πρὸ ὀλίγων ἡμερῶν ἐνέπεσεν. <b>Friend B</b>	Intra paucos dies incurrit.	'A few days ago he fell ill.'
Ποῦ μένει; <b>Friend A</b>	Ubi manet?	'Where does he live?'
Οὐ μακράν. Εἰ θέλεις, περιπάτει. <b>(On arrival)</b>	Non longe. Sis ambula.	'Not far off. 'Please walk [there with me]'
Αὕτη ἐστί, νομίζω, ἡ οἰκία αὐτοῦ. αὕτη ἐστίν. ἰδοὺ ὁ ὀστιάριος. ἐρώτησον αὐτόν, εἰ δυνάμεθα εἰσελθεῖν καὶ ἰδεῖν τὸν κύριον αὐτοῦ. <b>Doorman</b>	Haec est, puto, domus eius. haec est. ecce ostiarius. interroga illum, si possumus intrare et uidere dominum eius.	This, I think, is his house. This is it. Here's the doorman. Ask him if we can enter and see his master.'
καὶ ἐκεῖνος εἶπεν· Τίνα ζητεῖτε; <b>Friend A</b>	et ille dixit: Quem quaeritis?	And he said, 'Who are you looking for?'
Τὸν δεσπότην σου. περὶ τῆς ὑγείας αὐτοῦ ἐληλύθαμεν. <b>Doorman</b>	Dominum tuum. de salute eius uenimus.	'Your master. We have come about his health.'
Ἀνάβατε. <b>Friend A</b>	Ascendite.	'Go on up.'
Πόσας κλίμακας; <b>Doorman</b>	Quot scalas?	'How many flights of stairs?'
Δύο. 'ς τὰ δεξιὰ κρούσατε, εἰ μέντοι γε ἦλθεν· προεληλύθει γάρ. <b>Friend A (after going up)</b>	Duas. ad dexteram pulsate, si tamen uenit; processerat enim.	'Two. Knock [the door] to the right, that is, if he has come [back]; for he had gone out.'
Κρούσωμεν. <b>[From inside the flat]</b>	Pulsemus.	'Let's knock.'
βλέπε· τίς ἐστίν; <b>Slave emerging from flat</b>	uide; quis est?	'Go and look: who is it?'

Χαίρετε πάντες.	Auete omnes.	‘Hello, all of you!’
<b>Friend A</b>		
Τὸν κύριόν σου θέλομεν ἐπισκέψασθαι. (εἰ) γρηγορεῖ, μήνυσόν με.	Dominum tuum uolumus uisitare. si uigilat, nuntia me.	‘We want to pay a visit to your master. If he is awake, announce me.’
<b>Slave</b>		
κάκεῖνος εἶπεν· Οὐκ ἔστιν ᾧδε.	et ille dixit: Non est hic.	And he said, ‘He’s not here.’
<b>Friend A</b>		
Τί λαλεῖς; ἀλλὰ ποῦ ἐστιν;	Quid narras? sed ubi est?	‘What are you saying? But where is he?’
<b>Slave</b>		
Ἐκεῖ κατέβη ᾿ς τὸν δαφνῶνα διακινῆσαι.	Illuc descendit ad lauretum deambulare.	‘He went down there to the laurel grove to take a walk.’
<b>Friend A</b>		
Συγχαίρομεθα αὐτῷ. ὅταν ἔλθῃ, εἴποις αὐτῷ ἡμᾶς πρὸς αὐτὸν χαιρομένους ἐληλυθέναι περὶ τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτοῦ, ὅτι πάντα ὀρθῶς ἔχει.	Gratulamur illi. cum uenerit, dices illi nos ad ipsum gratulantes uenisse ad salutem eius, quia omnia recte habet.	‘We congratulate him! When he returns, tell him that we came to him rejoicing about his health, because he’s entirely recovered.’
<b>Slave</b>		
Οὕτω ποιῶ.	Sic faciam.	‘I shall do [Gk: I do] that.’

### Home Life

In the modern world this little scene would popularly feature an enraged housewife waiting at the front door brandishing a rolling-pin, but equally it could depict the morning after the night before. The man’s humiliating repentance and continued illness probably point to the latter. But is it a wife speaking? If not, who? A brother? A son? Whatever the answer, the composer of this scene must have thought it a good idea to alert Greeks to the way to deal with the father of a Roman household—who held all the power over it—in a somewhat embarrassing situation, even though it seems to have been a one-off, surprising his fellow-diners too (second and third sentence).

These *Colloquia* do contain lists of rebukes, but none as extended as this. Note the emphasis on the ignominy that his behaviour brings upon the whole household—a very ancient and modern note.



The party's over: Attic red-figure kulix c. 490 BC

### The bender

#### **Family member**

Τίς οὕτως ποιεῖ,  
 <κύριε,>  
 ὡς σύ,  
 ἵνα τοσοῦτον πίης;  
 τί εἰρήκασι  
 οἱ ἰδόντες σε τοιοῦτον;  
 ὅτι οὐδέποτε  
 ἔξω ἐδείπνησας  
 ὡς ἀπλήστως;

τοῦτο δὲ πρέπει  
 φρόνιμον  
 οἰκοδεσπότην  
 ἰδιοπράγμονα  
 (ὃς ἄλλοις συμβουλεύει)  
 ἑα(υ)τὸν εὐθύνειν;  
 οὐ δύναται  
 ἀσχημονέστερα  
 οὔτε αἰσχρότερον

Quis sic facit,  
 domine,  
 quomodo tu,  
 ut tantum bibis?  
 quid dicent  
 qui te uiderunt  
 talem?  
 quod numquam  
 foris cenasti  
 tam auditer?

ita hoc decet  
 sapientem  
 patrem familias  
 sui negotii  
 (qui aliis consilia dat)  
 semet ipsum regere?  
 non potest  
 turpius  
 nec ignominiosius

'Who acts like this,  
 sir,  
 as you do,  
 that you drink so much?  
 What did people say  
 who saw you like this?  
 That you never  
 dined out  
 so greedily?

Is this a fitting way for a  
 prudent  
 paterfamilias  
 who minds his own business  
 (who gives advice to others)  
 to conduct himself?  
 It is not possible [for things]  
 to happen more shamefully  
 nor more ignominiously

συμβῆναι ἢ ἐχθὲς ἔπραξας. <b>Father</b>	euenire quam heri gessisti.	than you acted yesterday.'
Ἐμὲ δὲ λίαν καταισχύνει. <b>Family member</b>	Me certe ualde pudet.	'I certainly am very much ashamed.'
Τί λέγουσιν ἄλλοι ἐν τῇ σῇ ἀπουσίᾳ; δυσφημίαν μεγίστην σοὶ ἐπλήρωσας. συνέβη πρὸς ταῦτα μεγά(λη) ἀποσημείωσις ἐκ τοιαύτης ἀκρασίας.	Quid dicunt alii in absentia tua? infamiam maximam tibi cumulasti. accidit ad haec grandis denotatio de tali intemperantia.	'What do others say in your absence? You have accumulated great infamy for yourself. In addition to this, great censure [of you] has occurred from such intemperance.
δέομαί σου μὴ ὕστερον τοιοῦτο ποιήσης. ἀλλὰ νῦν μήτι ἐξεράσαι θέλεις; καὶ θαυμάζω τί ἔπαθες. <b>Father</b>	rogo te ne postea tale facias. sed modo numquid uomere uis? et miror quae passus es.	Please, in the future don't do such a thing. But now do you want to vomit? And I'm amazed what has become of you.'
Οὐκ οἶδα τί λέξω, οὔτως γὰρ τεθορύβημαι ἵνα λόγον μηδενὶ δυνήσω (ἀποδοῦναι).	Nescio quid dicam, ita enim perturbatus sum ut rationem nulli possim reddere.	'I don't know what to say, for I have been so upset that I can't give an explanation to anyone.'

### *Colloquia (3)*

#### **A lunch date**

Inviting someone to lunch or dinner invited the question 'at what time?' In the absence of time-pieces, one had only 'hours' to play with. That was fine if there were relaxed drinks beforehand, but if not, the only way to get guests there when the food was ready was to send your slave to fetch him, as the guest Gaius says here.

The invitation set up, time to buy the food. That was the slave's job, and it's a light meal of fish, vegetables and assorted fruits (an azarole is a fancy fruit rather like cherry). The slave buys the fish and takes it home while another slave helps with the rest.

The cook is upstairs, presumably not expecting this off-the-cuff lunch-party, so needs to be summoned. Meanwhile, slaves must bring up cooking utensils, wine and condiments from the cellar ('black wine' means 'red'). That was accessed only with the large key, kept in a casket which the master opened with his own small key. Note the lamps (the dining room had no windows) and the fire for warmth and heating the food or the water (if requested) for the wine.

At this point it looks as if this is a dinner invitation since, as was very common, the host would often invite friends to join him in the baths beforehand, as the host does here. But *inde* must mean 'from there' i.e. the host's house, presumably therefore *after* lunch. Gaius is summoned again, but seems to be waiting for his friends to join him at the lunch, but it will become clear they have already arrived.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, preparations continue: wine glasses and bronze vessels are brought up from the cellar—not the silver ones of a very wealthy household—, a live coal from somewhere else in the house to light the dining room fire, cushions arranged for guests to recline on and water scattered outside the house presumably to damp down the dust. Bang on cue, Gaius turns up, perhaps panting slightly.

The worry about guests arriving in time has a pleasingly modern ring to it.



Vegetable seller, Ostia

### The invitation

#### Host

Σὺ ποῦ ὑπάγεις;

#### Gaius

Tu ubi uadis?

'You, where are you going?'



Ἔς τὴν οἰκίαν σπεύδω. διὰ τί ἐπεζήτησας;	Ad domum festino. quare inquisisti?	‘I’m hurrying home. Why did you ask?’
<b>Host</b> Ἄν σοι ἡδύ ἐστίν, σήμερον παρ’ ἐμοὶ ἀρίστησον χρησίμως. οἴνω καλῷ οἰκιακῷ χρώμεθα.	Si tibi suaue est, hodie prae me prande frugaliter. uino bono domestico utimur.	‘If it appeals to you, today with me have lunch – a modest one. We have good household wine.’
<b>Gaius</b> Οὕτως γενέσθω.	Sic fiat.	‘So be it.’
<b>Host</b> Ἐν ὥρᾳ οὖν ἐλθὲ πρὸς ἡμᾶς.	Temperius ergo ueni ad nos.	‘So come to us at the right time.’
<b>Gaius</b> Ὅτε θέλεις, πέμψον πρὸς ἡμᾶς.	Quando uis, mitte ad nos;	‘When you want [us there], send for us;
Ἔς τὴν οἰκίαν εἰμί.	domi sum.	I [shall] be at home.’
<b>Host</b> Οὕτως γενέσθω ἡμῖν.	Sic fiat nobis.	‘So be it for us.
Σύ, παιδάριον, ἀκολούθησόν μοι ἔς τὸ κρεοπωλεῖον· τίποτε ἀγοράσωμεν εἰς ἄριστον. ἐπερώτησον, πόσου ὁ ἰχθύς.	<b>Buying the food</b> Tu, puer, sequere me ad macellum; aliquid emamus ad prandium. interroga, quantum piscis.	You, boy, follow me to the butcher’s shop; let’s buy something for lunch. Ask [him] how much the fish [is].’
<b>Fish-seller</b> Δηνάρια δέκα.	Denarios decem.	‘Ten denarii.’
<b>Host</b> Σύ, παιδάριον, ὑπάγει εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν,  ἵνα δυνηθῶμεν ἀπελθεῖν εἰς τὸ λαχανοπωλεῖον καὶ ἀγοράσαι λάχανα, ἅπερ ἀναγκαῖά εἰσιν, καὶ ὀπώραν·	Tu, puer, refer ad domum, ut possimus ire ad holerarium et emere holera, quae necessaria sunt, et poma: mora, ficus,	‘You, boy, take it home, so that we can go to the greengrocer’s shop and buy vegetables, which are needed, and fruit: mulberries, figs,

συκάμινα, σῦκα, δωράκινα, ἀπίους, τρικόκκια. ἰδοὺ ἔχεις πάντα	persos, piras, tuberes.  ecce habes omnia	peaches, pears, azaroles.  There you have everything
ἃ ἠγοράσαμεν. ὑπαγε εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν.	quae emimus. refer ad domum.	that we bought. Take it home.

### Summoning the cook

<b>[To the slaves]</b> Καλεσάτω τις τὸν μάγειρον. ποῦ ἐστίν; <b>Slave</b> Ἄνω ἀνῆλθεν. <b>Host</b> Καὶ τί θέλει; καταβάτω ὧδε.	Clamet aliquis coquum.  ubi est?  Sursum ascendit.  Et quid uult? descendat hic.	Someone call the cook.  Where is he?  'He went upstairs.'  'And what does he want? Let him come down here.
<b>[To the cook]</b> ἄρον, ἔψησον ἐπιμελῶς τὰ προσφάγια. ἄρτυσις καλὴ γενέσθω.	tolle, coque diligenter pulmentaria. conditura bona fiat.	Take [this food], cook the relish carefully, let it become good sauce.

### Opening the cellar

<b>[To another slave]</b> ἔνεγκε τὴν κλεῖδα. ἄνοιξον τὸ γλωσσοκόμον καὶ ἐξάγαγε κλεῖδα τοῦ ταμείου. <προένεγκε ἃ ἀναγκαῖά εἰσιν>	affer clauem. aperi loculum et eice clauem cellarii.  profer quae necessaria sunt:	Bring the key. Open the casket and take out the key of the cellar. Bring out the things that are necessary:
ἅλας, ἔλαιον Σπανόν	sale, oleum Spanum	salt, Spanish oil,

καὶ ἐπιτήδειον εἰς τοὺς λύχνους, γάρον πρῶτον καὶ δευτέριον, ὄξος δριμύ,	et apparatus ad lucernas, liquamen primum et secundum, acetum acrum,	and provision for the lamps, fish-sauce [garum, both the] first and second grade, sharp vinegar,
οἶνον λευκὸν καὶ μελανόν, γλεῦκος, παλαιόν, ξύλα ξηρά, ἄνθρακας, ἀνθρακιάν, ἀξίνην, σκεύη, λοπάδας, χύτραν, λέβητα, σχάραν, πῶμα, θύειαν, ἀλετρίβανον, μαχαίριον.	uinum album et nigrum, mustum, uetus, ligna sicca, carbones, prunam, securim, uasa, catina, caccabum, ollam, craticulam, coopertorium, mortarium, pistillum, cultellum.	white wine and black [wine], new [wine], old [wine], dry firewood, coals, a live coal, an axe, vessels, dishes, a cooking-pot, a pot, a grid-iron, a cover, a mortar, a pestle, a little knife.'

### Summoning the guest

<b>Slave</b>		
Τί ἄλλο θέλεις;	Quid aliud uis?	'What else do you want?'
<b>Host</b>		
Ταῦτα μόνα, παιδάριον. Ὕπαγε πρὸς τὸν Γάϊον καὶ εἶπέ αὐτῷ· Ἔλθέ· ἐκεῖθεν λουσώμεθα. Ὕπαγε, τρέχε, ταχέως ποίησον· μηδὲν βράδιον, (ἄλλ') εὐθύς.	Haec tantum, puer. uade ad Gaium et dic illi: Veni, inde lauemus. Vade, curre, cito fac; nihil tardius, sed uelocius.	'Only this, boy: go to Gaius and say to him "Come, let's go to the baths from there." Go, run, do it quickly, not at all slowly, but immediately [Lat: faster].
<b>[Later]</b>		
Ἐγένου πρὸς αὐτόν;	Fuisti ad ipsum?	Have you been to him?'

<b>Slave</b>		
Ἐγενόμην.	Fui.	'I have.'
<b>Host</b>		
Ὅπου ἦν;	Ubi erat?	'Where was he?'
<b>Slave</b>		
Εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν ἐκάθητο.	Ad domum sedebat.	'He was sitting at home.'
<b>Host</b>		
Καὶ τί ἐποίει;	Et quid faciebat?	'And what was he doing?'
<b>Slave</b>		
Ἐφιλολόγει.	Studebat.	'He was studying.'
<b>Host</b>		
Καὶ τί εἶπεν;	Et quid dixit?	'And what did he say?'
<b>Slave</b>		
Τοὺς ἐμοὺς ἐκδέχομαι. ἔρχονται καὶ ἀκολουθῶ.	Meos exspecto; ueniunt et sequor.	'[He said,] "I'm waiting for my [friends]; they're coming and I [shall] follow."'
<b>Host</b>		
Ἔπαγε πάλιν καὶ εἶπε αὐτῷ· Πάντες ὧδέ εἰσιν. σὺν αὐτῷ ἐλθέ.	Vade iterum et dic illi: Omnes hic sunt. cum illo ueni.	'Go again and say to him, "Everyone is here." Come [back] with him.'

### Preparing the room

<b>[To other slaves]</b>		
ὁμεῖς τέως σύνθετε ἐπιμελῶς	uos interim componite diligenter	You [servants], meanwhile, set out carefully
τὰ ὑάλινα καὶ τὰ χαλκῶματα.	uitreamina et aeramenta.	the glassware and the bronze vessels
στρώσατε τὸ τρίκλινον καὶ ρίψατε ἔξω ὔδωρ. θέλω ἰδεῖν	sternite cenationem et proicite foras aquam. uolo uidere	Arrange the dining room and throw water outside. I want to see [you hurrying?] like young men.'
ὡς οἱ νεανίσκοι.	quasi iuuenes.	
<b>Slaves [later]</b>		

Ἦδη ἐστρώσαμεν. πάντα ἔτοιμά εἰσιν.	Iam strauimus. omnia parata sunt.	‘Now we have arranged it. Everything is ready.’
<b>Host</b> Οὐδέπω ἦλθεν; ἄπελθε, εἰπέ αὐτῷ· Ὅψέ ἡμᾶς ποιεῖς ἀριστήσαι.	Nondum uenit? uade, dic illi: Sero nos facis prandere.	‘Hasn’t he come yet? Go, say to him, “You’re making us have lunch late.”’
<b>Slave</b> Ἴδου ἦλθεν· ὧδε ἦρχετο.	Ecce uenit; hic ueniebat.	‘There, he has come; he was on his way here.’
<b>Host</b> Συνάντησον αὐτῷ. παρακάλεσον αὐτόν. Τί ἔξω στήκει;	Occurre ei. roga illum. Quid foras stas?	‘Go and meet him. Invite him [in]. Why are you standing outside?’



Roman glassware (Romano-Germanic Museum, Cologne)

### A dinner party

From a light lunch party to a dinner. Slaves set out the chairs and seats where pre-dinner aperitifs are to be served, and the guests arrive. Busy slaves ask guests what they want—not red or white (‘the three most depressing words in the English language’, Kingsley Amis) but spiced or sweet/hot or cold/more or less water.

Then into the dining room, where the guests recline on couches. Social niceties are observed (who sits at the ‘top couch’, important guests quietly pointed out, what pepper sauce goes with). Many different courses arrive—presumably, on the ‘expansion’ principle, to give the learner plenty of new vocabulary on the subject:

after a starter, two varied cold courses and meaty hot course, with assorted side dishes. The cooks are thanked (note the special *bellaria* for good service) and dismissed, hands are washed (much needed—no knives and forks in the ancient world) and the drinking begins, toasts politely exchanged. But no one disgraces themselves (cf. the *paterfamilias* in *Bellaria* 23). Torches are lit to see the guests home (no street lights) and the host thanked.

We hear much of the far more elaborate meals put on by powerful patrons—who is invited, who not, who turns up, who doesn't, and the agonies suffered by their invited 'clients' (all that polite talk and even politer backbiting), who return home moaning about the company and food, to suffer the inevitable hangover.



Gaius Julius Bacchus with drinks and slave attendant (Romano-Germanic Museum Cologne)

### Drinks on arrival

#### **Host [to slaves]**

Δότε ὧδε θρόνους,  
δίφρους, βάθρον,  
διεδρον,  
προσκεφάλαιον.

Date hic cathedras,  
sellas, scamnum,  
bisellium,  
ceruicale.

'Give here chairs,  
seats, a bench,  
a double seat,  
a pillow.

#### **[to guest]**

καθέζου.

sede.

Sit.'

#### **Guest**

Κάθημαι.

Sedeo.

'I am sitting.'

#### **Host [to slave]**

Τί στήκεις;

Quid stas?

'Why are you standing  
up?

Πλῦνον ποτήριν,  
ὔδατι θερμῶ  
συγκέρασον·

Laua calicem,  
aqua calida  
tempera;

Wash a cup,  
mix [a drink] with hot  
water;

πάνυ γὰρ διψῶ. κέρασον παῖσιν.	ualde enim sitio. misce omnibus.	for I'm very thirsty. Mix [some] for everyone.
<b>[to guests]</b> τίς τί θέλει; ἢ ἄρτυτὸν ἢ κάρουνον;	quis quid uult? aut conditum aut caroenum?	Who wants what? Spiced wine or sweet boiled wine?
<b>[to slave]</b> αὐτὸ ἐκείνω κέρασον.	ipsum illi misce.	Mix it for him.
<b>[to a guest]</b> σὺ τί θέλεις;	tu quid uis?	You, what do you want?
<b>[to slave]</b> πλῦνον ποτήριον.	laua calicem.	Wash a cup.'
<b>Guest</b> κέρασόν μοι θερμόν, μὴ ζεστόν μήτε χλιαρόν, ἀλλὰ συγκεραστόν, καὶ ἔκχεε ἐκεῖθεν ὀλίγον.	misce mihi calidum, noli feruentem neque tepidum, sed temperatum, et effunde deinde [modicum.	'Mix me a hot drink, don't [make it] boiling nor lukewarm, but tempered; and then pour out a little.
<b>[tastes it]</b> βάλε νηρόν.	mitte recentem.	Put in fresh water.
<b>[after another taste]</b> πρόσθεσ ἀκρατον.	adice merum.	Add wine.'

### Into the dining room

<b>Host</b> Τί στήκετε;	Quid statis?	'Why are you standing up?
καθέζεσθε, ἐὰν θέλετε.	sedete, si uultis.	Sit down, if you want.'
<b>Guest</b> Ἄναπέσωμεν. Ποῦ κελεύεις;	Discumbamus. Ubi iubes?	'Let's recline.' 'Where do you direct [us]?
<b>Host</b> Ἐν πρώτῳ τόπῳ ἀνάπεσε.	In primo loco discumbe.	'Recline in the first place.'
<b>[to slave]</b> Δόθ' ἡμῖν ὑδρογάρον.	Date nobis hydrogaron.	'Give us fish-sauce prepared with water.

δὸς ἡμῖν γεύσασθαι μολόχας ζεστάς. ἐπίδος μοι χειρεκμάγιον. κομίσατε. βάλε ἐλαιόγαρον εἰς τὸ ὄξυβάφιον. μέρισον τὰ ὀνύχια.	da nobis gustare maluas feruentes. porrige mihi mappam. afferte. mitte impensam ad acetabulum. diuide ungelas.	Give us to taste boiled mallows. Hand me a napkin. Bring [it]. Put some fish-oil sauce into the vinegar-cup. Divide up the pigs' trotters. Cut up the paunch, the boiled tripe.
κατάκοψον κοιλίδιον, πλεκτὴν ἐξ ὕδατος.	concide aqualiculum, chordam ex aqua.	Cut up the paunch, the boiled tripe.
<b>[To a guest]</b> ιδὲ εἰ ἔχεις πεπερᾶτον.  ἐπίβαπτε.	uide si habes piperatum.  intinge.	See if you have a pepper dressing. Dip it in.'
<b>Guest</b> Χρῶμαι.		'Of course.'
<b>Host</b> Χρῶ.	Utor.  Utere.	'Yes, do.'

### Cold courses

<b>[To slave]</b> δὸς συκωτὸν τρυφερόν, κίχλας, καλλίκρεας, θρίδακας.	da ficatum tenerum, turdos, glandulas, lactucas.	Give [us?] some tender fig-fattened liver, thrushes, sweetbreads, lettuces.
εἷς ἐξ ὑμῶν ἄρτον κλάσει  καὶ ᾿ς κανίσκιον εἰσοίσει. κατὰ τάξιν παράδος. κλάσον ψωμούς.	unus de uobis panem [frangat et in canistellum ferat. ad ordinem trade. frange quadras.	One of you [slaves], break the bread and put it into a basket. Pass it around in order. Break the loaves.





**[To guests]**

δειπνήσατε·

Cenate.

Eat!

**[Pointing to a guest]**

πάντως ἐκεῖνος  
ἄξιός ἐστιν παρ' ἡμῖν  
δειπνῆσαι.

utique ille  
dignus est apud nos  
cenare.

He is certainly  
worthy to  
dine among us.

**[To slaves]**

δὸς ταρίχιον,  
τριχίους,  
λόβια,  
ὄρμενον  
μετὰ γάρου  
καὶ ἔλαιον Σπανόν,

da salsum,  
sardinas,  
suriacas,  
cyma  
cum liquamine  
et oleum Spanum,

Give [us] salted fish,  
pilchards,  
beans,  
a sprout  
with fish-sauce  
and Spanish oil,

**Hot course**

γογγυλωτόν,  
ὄρνιν ὀπτῆν,  
ψιλήπλευρα  
διὰ ζωμοῦ,  
τεμάχια,  
δέλφακα ὀπτόν.

rapatum,  
gallinam assam,  
ofellas  
iuscellatas,  
copadia,  
porcellum assum.

meat in grated turnip,  
a roast chicken,  
pieces of meat  
in sauce,  
slices of meat,  
roast suckling pig.

**Side dishes**

θεὸς τὸν δίσκον  
μετὰ τρωξίμων,  
ῥαφάνους,  
ἠδύοσμον,  
ἐλαίας λευκάς  
καὶ τυρὸν  
νεαρόπαστον,  
ὔδνα,  
μύκας.

pone discum  
cum scarias,  
radices,  
mentam,  
oliuas albas  
et caseum  
prosalsum,  
tubera,  
fungos.

Put out the platter  
with endives,  
radishes,  
mint,  
white olives  
and freshly salted  
cheese,  
truffles,  
mushrooms.

## Rewards for service

τοῖς ὑπηρετήσασιν δοτε δειπνήσαι καὶ τῷ μαγείρῳ καὶ τραγήματα, ὅτι καλῶς ὑπηρετήσεν.	ministrantibus date cenare et coquo; et <b>bellaria</b> , quia bene ministrauit.	Give dinner [lit: to dine] to the servants, and to the cook; and [give him] dessert, because he has served well.
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## The symposium

δοτε ὕδωρ εἰς χεῖρας.  κατάμαξον τὴν τράπεζαν. < . . . > πρόσφατον δὸς ἀπλοπότην, δὸς ἄκρατον, πίωμεν νηρὸν ἐκ τοῦ βαυκιδίου. <b>Guest</b> Κέρασον θερμόν. <b>Slave</b> Εἰς τὸ μεῖζον; <b>Guest</b> Εἰς τὸ μικρόν. <b>Slave</b> Ἡδέως. <b>Guest</b> Ἐλπίζω γὰρ καὶ ἄλλην πεῖν.	date aquam manibus.  terge mensam. < . . . > mometum da phialam, da merum. bibamus recentem de gillone.  Misce calidum.  In maiore?  In minore.  Libenter.  Spero enim et aliam [bibere.	Give [us] water for [our] hands. Wipe the table. ? Give [us] a cup, give [us] undiluted wine. Let's drink fresh water from the cooler.'  'Mix some hot [wine].'  'In the bigger [cup]?'  'In the smaller [Gk: small] one.' 'Gladly.'  'For I hope to drink another [bowl?] too.'
<b>Guest 1</b> Ἐὰν ἐπιτρέπῃς, προπίνω σου καλῶς λαμβάνεις; <b>Guest 2</b> Ἄπο σοῦ ἡδέως. <b>Host</b> Διὰ τί οὐ πίνεις;	Si permittis, propino tibi; bene accipis?  A te libenter.  Quare non bibis?	' If you allow it, I drink to you; do you take this well?'  'From you, gladly.'  'Why aren't you drinking?'

πίε κύριε. <b>Guest</b> Ἦιτησα καὶ οὐδεὶς μοι δέδωκεν.	bibe, domine.  Postulavi et nemo mihi dedit.	Drink, sir!  'I asked [for wine] and no-one gave me [any].'
<b>Host (to slave)</b> Δὸς ἡμῖν γλυκέα πλακούντια.	Date nobis dulcia placenta.	'Give us sweet cakes.'
<b>Guests</b> Ἄρκεῖ ἡμῖν. ἄγωμεν λοιπόν.	Sufficit nobis. eamus iam.	'It suffices for us. Let's go now.'
<b>[To slave]</b> ἄψον κανδήλαν.	accende lampadam.	Light the torch.'
<b>Slave</b> Λάβετε.	Accipe.	'Take it.'
<b>Guests</b> Καλῶς ἡμᾶς ἔλαβες.	Bene nos accepisti.	'You have entertained us well.'



A Roman dinner party

### The courts

The emperor Constantine was adamant that all trials must be held in public, and fully documented. So whatever courts the assorted advocates are entering, private or not, the hearings will be in public (*litterarum* refers to branches of legal scholarship). Public too is the trial overseen by the provincial governor, in which a tribunal is set up for all who wish to witness it. Constantine again made it clear that the ordinary man should have access to the governor.

The gruesome list of punishments is probably another instance of the 'expansion' of examples to widen the learner's vocabulary and general awareness (in the late empire, citizens were no longer exempt from judicial torture). Observe that,

in the second case, the defendant is so innocent that we are never told what the charge was, and that the witnesses got off ‘without injury’: if they were slaves, they could be tortured to ensure (the theory went) that they told the truth.

The writer indicates that the presence of an advocate (which the robber does *not* have) is crucial to the outcome of the trial. It is clear that there is no legal aid or right to an advocate. This might suggest to the learner that there was no point in supporting losers: what advocate wants to be associated with defeat? The warming glow of achieving a result with which everyone agreed was far more comforting.



A Roman trial

### The legal teams arrive

<p>γίνεται ὥρα τρίτη. εἰσέρχουσιν παράκλητοι, δικολόγοι, σχολαστικοί,  φωνηθέντες εἰς ἀπόρρητον τοῦ ἰδίου κριτοῦ. πράξουσιν πλείστας αἰτίας,  ἕκαστος ὡς δύναται κατὰ τὴν τῶν γραμμάτων ἐμπ(ε)ριάν.</p>	<p>fit hora tertia. ingrediuntur aduocati, causidici, scholastici, euocati in secretarium iudicis sui.  agunt plures causas,  quisque ut potest secundum litterarum facundiam.</p>	<p>The third hour arrives. The advocates enter, the pleaders, the legal advisers, those called into the private court of their own judge. They [Gk. will] conduct many [Gk: very many] cases, each as he is able according to his skill in letters. There are also cases at their time limit,</p>
<p>εἰσὶν καὶ προφάσεις ἐν τῇ τῶν χρόνων διορίσει, ποίας σήμερον</p>	<p>sunt et causae in temporum finem, quas hodie</p>	<p></p>

πιστεύω διορισμένας.	credo terminandas.	which I believe have to be finished today.
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### The public tribunal

ἔκτοτε οὖν καταβαίνει ὑπατικὸς τὸ βῆμα καθησόμενος. στρωννύεται βῆμα, καταβαίνει ὁ κριτῆς βῆμα,	exinde descendit praeses ad tribunal sessurus. sternitur tribunal, conscendit iudex tribunal,	Then the provincial governor comes down to the platform to take his seat. The platform is laid out, the judge mounts [Gk: comes down to] the platform, and thus by the voice of the herald he orders the persons [on trial] to be stood up.
καὶ οὕτως τῆ φωνῆ τοῦ κήρυκος κελεύει σταθῆναι προσώπους.	et sic uoce praeconis iubet sisti personas.	

### The guilty punished

ἔνοχος στάθεται ληστής, ἐξετάζεται κατὰ τὴν ποίησιν	reus sistitur latro, interrogatur secundum merita	The defendant [Gk: guilty party], a robber, is stood up; he is interrogated according to his deserts
(βασανίζεται, βασανιστῆς κρούει αὐτῷ τὸ στῆθος, στρεβλοῦται,	(torquetur, quaestionarius pulsat ei pectus, uexatur,	(he is tortured, the torturer beats his chest, he is pummeled [Gk: he is tortured on the rack],
συστέλλεται,	suspenditur,	he is hung up [Gk: he is squashed],
αὐξάνει, μαστιγοῦται, ἀποξύλαις δέρεται,	crescit, flagellatur, fustibus uapulat,	he is stretched, he is whipped,

διέρχεται τάξιν τῶν βασανισμάτων),	pertransit ordinem tormentorum),	he is beaten with cudgels, he goes through the order
καὶ ἔτι ἀρνεῖ.	et adhuc negat.	of the tortures), and still he denies [that he is guilty].
κολασμένος (ὤλετο κολάσει,	puniendus est (perit poena,	He must be punished (he perishes [Gk: perished] from the punishment,
ἀπάγεται ἐπὶ ξίφος).	ducitur ad gladium).	he is led off to the sword [i.e. execution]).

### The innocent acquitted

εἶτα ἄλλος στάθεται,	deinde alter sistitur,	Then another [accused person] is caused to stand up,
ἀναίτιος, τίνι πάρεστιν μεγάλη δικολογία, καὶ ἄνδρες δεδιδαγμένοι πάρεισιν αὐτῷ.	innocens, cui adest grande patrocinium, et uiri disertī adsunt illi.	an innocent one, for whom there is a great pleading, and learned men are supporting him. And indeed this man will have a good outcome:
οὗτος δὲ σχήσει <καλήν> ἔκβασιν·	hic etenim habebit <bonum> euentum:	he is acquitted.
ἀπολύεται. μάρτυρες καλῶς ἦλθον ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ αἰτία, ἄτερ ὕβριν λελυμένοι εἰσίν. αὕτη ἡ αἰτία εἶχεν πολυτελεῖ ἀπολογίαν, καὶ πίστιν τῆς ἀληθ(ε)ίας μετὰ πράξεις ἀπέθηκεν	absoluitur. testes bene uenerunt in sua causa, sine iniuria absoluti sunt. haec causa habuit idoneam defensionem, et fidem ueritatis apud acta deposuit	The witnesses came off well in his case, they were released without injury. This case had a lavish defense, and as for faith in the truth in the result, everyone

εἷς ἕκαστος.

unus quisque.

agreed to it.

## Boys' day out

The lads plan a dinner for four and visits to the games, chariot races and the baths—just ordinary, honest blokes (no intellectuals required). Presumably the friend's brother was too badly beaten up to be able to join them at once, but a recuperative trip to the baths later on might be possible.



Roman net-fighter Kalendio (right) against a netted secutor Astyanax (left): at the top, Kalendio surrenders (Pompeii)

### Friend 1

Ἀπέλθωμεν,  
λουσώμεθα.

Eximus  
lauari.

'Let's go out, let's  
bathe [Lat.: we're  
going out to  
bathe].'

### Friend 2

Ὅπου οὖν λουόμεθα;

Ubi ergo lauamur?

'So where are we  
bathing?'

### Friend 1

Ὅπου θέλεις.

Ubi uis.

'Where[ver] you  
want.'

### Friend 2

Ὡς ἑορτή ἐστίν,  
ἔλαβον  
ἡμῖν λάχανα,  
τάριχον  
καλὸν  
καὶ ἰχθύας,

Cum dies festus est,  
acceperunt  
nobis olera,  
salsum  
bonum  
et pisces,

'Since it is a feast  
day,  
they have got  
us vegetables,  
good salt fish

ὀψώνια,  
κρέας,  
οἶνον ἠδὺν  
καὶ ὄρνεις.

stipendia,  
carnem,  
uinum suaue  
et gallinas.

and [fresh] fish,  
cooked foods,  
meat,  
sweet wine,  
and chickens.'

**Friend 1**

Καλῶς ἔχομεν.

Bene habemus.

‘We are well off.’

**Friend 2**

Ἐγὼ εἶμι καὶ σὺ  
καὶ ἄλλοι δύο  
φίλοι.

Ego sum et tu  
et alii duo  
amici.

‘It’s you and I  
and two other  
friends.’

**Friend 1**

Ποῦ οὖν  
εὐφραινόμεθα;

Ubi ergo  
epulamur?

‘So where are we  
feasting? [Gk:  
enjoying ourselves?]

**Friend 2**

Ὅπου θέλετε  
κολλήγιον  
γενέσθω.

Ubi uultis;  
collegium  
fiat.

‘Where[ver] you  
want;  
let it be a shared  
enterprise.’

**Friend 1**

Ἀλλὰ θέλομεν  
ἀπλουστάτους  
μεθ’ ἡμῶν  
ἄνθρώπους·  
ἀναψύχει  
μετὰ τοιούτων  
σπαταλῆσαι.

Sed uolumus  
simplices  
nobiscum  
homines;  
delectat  
cum talibus  
conuersare.

‘But we want [to  
have]  
simple [Gk: very  
simple]  
people  
with us;  
it is refreshing  
to relax  
with such people.’

**Friend 2**

Ὁ δὲ ἀδελφός μου  
παρητήσατο·  
ἐχθὲς γὰρ  
εἰς τὸ βαλανεῖον  
ἀηδίαν ἐποίησεν,  
ἀναγκασθεῖς

Frater autem meus  
excusauit;  
heri enim  
in balneum  
rixam fecit,  
coactus

‘But my brother  
sent his excuses;  
for yesterday  
at the baths  
he had a brawl,  
compelled  
by drunkards [Lat.:  
drunken friends],  
and he is  
embarrassed  
to go out.’

ὑπὸ ἀνδρῶν  
μεθυστῶν,  
καὶ δυσωπεῖται  
προελθεῖν.

ab amicis  
ebriis,  
et confunditur  
procedere.

**Friend 1**

Ἐὰν πάντα  
καλῶς,  
τρίτη ἡμέρα  
ἵππικός ἐστιν,  
καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα  
θέατρα  
τῶν μονομάχων.  
καὶ κοινότερον οὖν

Si omnia  
bene,  
tertium diem  
circus est,  
et postea  
ludi  
gladiatorum.  
(et) communiter ergo

‘If all [goes]  
well,  
day after tomorrow  
there are the races,  
and afterwards  
gladiatorial  
games.  
And so let’s watch it



θεωρήσωμεν  
καὶ οὕτως  
μετὰ ἐκείνου  
λουσώμεθα,  
ὅταν  
ἀπολύσωσιν  
θεωρίαι.

**Friend 2**

Ἵως θέλεις.

spectemus  
et sic  
cum illo  
lauemur,  
quando  
dimittunt  
spectacula.

Quomodo uis.

together  
and then  
go to the baths  
with him,  
when the  
games  
let us out.'

'As you wish.'



Roman chariot races (Pompeii)

## ***Colloquia (4)***

### **Ancient education**



It was Dositheus himself, not the pseudo incarnation, who was the first person to ensure his Latin *grammar* was comprehensible to his Greek pupils and teachers alike by translating it into Greek. Here he explains in the introduction to his grammar what the subject is all about. Its various emphases will help explain what is going in the schoolroom, in the next passage. Note the emphasis on technical accuracy and definition:

Ars	Τέχνη	Grammar
grammatica	γραμματική	
est	ἐστίν	is
scientia	γνώσις	the knowledge
emendati	διωρθωμένης	of correct
sermonis	ὁμιλίας	language
in loquendo	ἐν τῷ λέγειν	in speaking
et scribendo	καὶ ἐν τῷ γράφειν	and in writing,
poematumque	ποιημάτων τε	and of poems
ac lectionis	καὶ ἀναγνώσεως	and of reading
prudens	ἔμπειρος	the skilled
praeceptum.	διδασκαλία.	training.
grammaticus est	γραμματικός ἐστίν	A grammarian is
qui uniuscuiusque	ὃς ἐνὸς ἐκάστου	one who of every single
rei	πράγματος	thing
uim	τὴν δύναμιν	the force
ac proprietatem	καὶ τὴν κυριότητα	and the proper usage
potest	δύναται	is able
explanare	σαφηνίσει	to explain
loquela.	τῇ λαλιᾷ.	through discourse.

## A School day



This *colloquium*, one of the many that we have seen attributed falsely to Dositheus, gives a detailed account of what a schoolboy's day would entail. It was probably put together from two or three colloquia, with scenes from each one being grouped together by subject matter. This accounts for the far more than usually repetitive expansion of vocabulary (etc.) for educational purposes.

	<b>Meeting the teachers</b>	
Ἄπειμι ἔξω πρὸς ἀκροατήριον ψηφιστοῦ (σημειογράφου, Ἕλληνας, Ῥωμαίου, ρήτορος).	Eo foras ad auditorium calculatoris (notarii, Graeci, Latini, oratoris).	I go outside to the lecture hall of the mathematics teacher (the shorthand writer, the Greek [teacher], the Latin [teacher], the orator).
εἰσῆλθον εἰς σχολὴν καὶ εἶπον· Χαῖρε, διδάσκαλε (χαῖρε, καθηγητά). καὶ κεινός με ἀντησπάσατο.	intraui in scholam et dixi: Aue, magister (aue, praeceptor). et ille me resalutat.	I entered into the school and said: 'Hello, teacher (hello, instructor).'
	<b>Reading practice</b>	
δίδωσίν μοι ἀναλογεῖον καὶ κελεύει με ἀναγινώσκειν παρ' αὐτῷ σελίδας πέντε·	dat mihi manuale et iubet me legere apud se paginas quinque;	He gives me the book-stand and orders me to read five columns in front of him;

καὶ ἀνέγνωκα  
ἀκριβῶς  
καὶ ἐπισήμως.  
τότε ἄλλω ἔδωκα.

et legi  
certe  
et nobiliter.  
tunc alio dedi.

and I read  
accurately  
and excellently.  
Then I gave [the book-  
stand] to another  
[student].

### Materials for and terms involved in the classroom

ὕστερον ἐπανερχομαι  
πρὸς ὑποσοφιστήν.  
ἀσπάζομαι αὐτὸν  
καὶ συμμαθητάς,  
καὶ κείνοι ἐμὲ  
ἀντησπᾶσαντο.  
τότε ἐκάθισα  
τῷ τόπῳ μου  
(τῷ ἐμῷ τόπῳ),  
ἐπάνω βᾶθρον  
(ἢ δίφρον  
ἢ βαθμὸν  
ἢ ὑποπόδιον  
ἢ καθέδραν).  
καθημένου μου  
ἐπιδίδει  
ὁ παῖς μου  
καμπροφόρος  
πινακίδας  
καὶ θήκην  
γραφείων,  
παράγραφον,  
δέλτον  
καὶ θέρμους.

postea redeo  
ad subdoctorem.  
saluto illum  
et condiscipulos,  
et illi me  
resalutauerunt.  
tunc sedi in  
loco meo  
(meo loco),  
super scamnum  
(aut sellam  
aut gradum  
aut scamillum  
aut cathedram).  
sedente me  
porrigit  
puer meus  
scriniarius  
pugillares  
et thecam  
graphiorum,  
praeductale,  
tabulam  
et lupinos.

Afterwards I go away  
to the teacher's assistant.  
I greet him  
and my fellow students,  
and they returned my  
greeting.  
Then I sat in  
my place  
(my place),  
on top of the bench  
(or seat  
or stair  
or stool  
or chair).  
When I am seated  
my boy who carries my  
writing implements  
hands [me]  
writing tablets  
and a case  
of styluses,  
ruler,  
tablet,  
and lupins.†

†pea-like seeds for counting?

(ἀποκαθιστάνω,  
δακτυλίζω,  
ψηφίζω,  
ἀριθμῶ, ἀριθμήσω,

(deduco,  
duco,  
computo,  
numero,  
numerabo,  
denumero,

(I subtract,  
I calculate,  
I reckon,  
I count, I shall count,  
I count out, I enumerate,

ἀναριθμῶ, ἀπαριθμῶ,  
διπλασιάζω,  
μερίζω, μέρη,  
πύσμα, ζήτημα,

dinumero,  
multiplico,  
partior, partes,  
quaestio, quaestio,

I multiply [Gk: I double],  
I divide, fractions,  
question, question,

ζητῶ, χρῆσις, τριβή, ψηφίζομαι, ψηφίζω, ἀναγιγνώσκω, στίχος, στίχοι, ὄνομα, ὀνόματα, σημειογράφος, σημεῖα, χαρακτήρ, λῆψις,	quaero, usus, usus, calcolor, calcolor, lego, uersus, uersus, nomen, nomina, notarius, notae, nota, summa,	I ask, usage, practice, I reckon, I reckon, I read, verse, verses, noun, nouns, shorthand writer, symbols, mark, assumption (Lat.: main point), granting of a proposition, model, pattern, explanation, pricking, † †to guide ruling lines
ἐπίληψις, ἐπίγραμμα, ὑπογραμμόν, ἐκτιθέμενον, κέντημα,	acceptio, superpostum, praescriptum, expositum, punctus,	copy made from dictation, person who copies from dictation, reading out loud, recitation, recitation, inflection, inflections, inflections, commentary, commentaries,
διάδοχον, διάδοχος,	exceptum, exceptor,	copy made from dictation, person who copies from dictation,
ἐπανάγνωσις, ἀναγόρευσις, ἐπανάγνωσις, κλίσις, κλισμοί, κλίσματα, ὑπόμνημα, ὑπομνήματα, ποιηταί, πρᾶξις, πράξεις, βιβλίον, βιβλία, κάμψαι, παράγραφον, παράγραψον, κέντησον, πρόσεχε, δίδαξον, δείκνυσον, δείξον, πρόθεσ, σύναγε, †ἔνπαξον, ἄξον, ἄγε, ἀπολόγισον,	relectio, recitatio, recitatio, declinatio, declinationes, declinationes, commentarium, commentaria, auctores, actio, actiones, liber, libri, capsae, praeductum, praeduc, interpunge, attende, doce, monstra, ostende, propone, admoue, impinge, adduc, adduc, excusa,	reading out loud, recitation, recitation, inflection, inflections, inflections, commentary, commentaries, authors [Gk: poets], deed, deeds, book, books, carrying-cases for books, ruled line, draw ruled lines!, punctuate!, pay attention!, teach!, show!, display!, put forward!, bring here!, pin up!, bring!, bring!, excuse!,

ἀπολογία,  
γραφεῖον,  
ἀνάδος,  
παράδος,  
γράψον,  
ἐξάλειψον).

excusatio,  
stilus,  
dicta,  
trade,  
scribe,  
dele).

excuse,  
stylus,  
distribute lessons!,  
hand over!,  
write!,  
rub out!).

### Writing and reading

λιαίνω  
(ἐξαλείφω)

deleo  
(deleo)

I rub out  
(I rub out) [the previous  
contents of my tablets]

καὶ παραγράφω  
πρὸς τὸν ἐπίγραμμαμον,  
καὶ γράφω,  
καὶ δεικνύω  
τῷ διδάσκοντί με.

et praeduco  
ad superpostum,  
et scribo,  
et ostendo  
doctori meo.

and I rule lines  
following the model,  
and I write,  
and I show [the results]  
to the person teaching  
me.

καὶ ἐπήνεσέν με  
ὅτι καλῶς ἔγραψα.  
ἐπαναγιγνώσκω  
ὅ τι ἔγραψα  
κατὰ διαστολήν.  
ἀναγορεύω.  
Ἄνηγόρευκα  
πρότερός σου.  
Ψεύδη.  
Οὐ ψεύδομαι.  
Ἐὰν ἀληθῶς λέγεις  
< . . . >  
εἶπέν μοι  
ὁ ἐμὸς <παιδαγωγός>  
Ἄγωμεν εἰς οἶκον,  
ἵνα δυνησώμεν  
ὑπάγειν  
πρὸς Ἕλληνα  
(Ἑλληνικόν)  
καὶ πρὸς Ῥωμαϊκόν  
(Ῥωμαῖον).  
εἶτα εἰς παλαίστραν  
ἀπολυόμεθα,  
πρὸς Ῥωμαίαν  
παιδείαν  
καὶ Ἑλληνικήν.

et laudauit me  
quod bene scripsi.  
relego  
quod scripsi  
ad distinctum.  
recito.  
Recitauit  
prior te.  
Mentiris.  
Non mentior.  
Si uerum dicis  
< . . . >  
dixit mihi  
meus paedagogus:  
Eamus domum,  
ut possimus  
ire  
ad Graecum  
<(Graecum)>  
et ad grammaticum  
<(grammaticum)>.  
deinde ad ceroma  
dimittimur,  
ad Latina  
studia  
et ad Graeca.

And he praised me  
because I wrote well.  
I read aloud  
what I wrote,  
with proper pauses.  
I recite.  
'I recited  
before you did.'  
'You're lying!'  
'I'm not lying!'  
'If you're telling the truth  
...'  
My paedagogue said  
to me:  
'Let's go home,  
so that we may be able  
to go  
to the Greek [teacher]  
and to the Latin [teacher]  
[Lat.: to the grammarian].'  
Then we are dismissed to  
the wrestling-ground,  
to Latin  
studies,  
and to Greek [studies].

## Learning Latin/Greek

εἰσῆλθον εἰς σχολὴν Ἑλληνοσ	intraimus scholam Graeci	We [Gk: I] entered the school of the Greek [teacher]
καὶ εἰς ἀκροατήριον Ῥωμαίου.	et auditorium grammatici.	and the lecture-hall of the Latin [teacher] [Lat.: of the grammarian].
ἐκμανθάνω τὰ γραπτὰ μου. εἰ ἐτοῖμός εἰμι, εὐθὺς ἀποδίδωμι· εἰ δὲ μή, πάλιν ἀναγιγνώσκω. (προαναγιγνώσκω,	edisco scripta mea. si paratus sum, statim reddo; sin autem, iterum lego. (praelego,	I learn my [assigned] writings thoroughly. If I am ready, I produce [them] at once; but if not, I read [them] again. (I read in front of the class,
ἐπαναγιγνώσκω, ἐπανέγνωκα, προανεγνώκα	relego, relegi, praelegi,	I read aloud, I have read aloud, I have read in front of the class,
προανεγνώκαμεν, προανεγνώκατε,	praelegimus, praelegistis,	we have read in front of the class, you [pl] have read in front of the class,
ἐπανεγνώκαμεν, ἐπανεγνώκατε, ἀναγορεύω, ἀνηγόρευκα, ἀποδίδωμι, ἀπέδωκα, πράσσω, ἔπραξα, λαμβάνω).	relegimus, relegistis, recito, recitavi, reddo, reddidi, ago, egi, accipio).	we have read aloud, you (pl) have read aloud, I recite, I have recited, I produce, I produced, I do, I did, I receive).

## Reading an unseen passage

ἔλαβον ἀνάγνωσιν (στίχους, λέξεις). ἐξηγεῖται μοι ἄγνωστον βιβλίον ἢ ἀγνώστη ἀνάγνωσις. ἐξήγησις παραδίδοται.	accepi lectionem (uersus, glossulas). explanatur mihi ignotus liber aut ignota lectio. expositio traditur.	I received a reading (verses, obscure words). An unknown book or an unknown reading is explained to me. An explanation is given.
---	--	--

λαμβάνω τόπον, καὶ ἄλλοι μετ' ἑμοῦ σημερινὸν (ἀποχρονισμόν),	accipio locum, et alii mecum extemporalem (extemporalem),	I receive a passage, and others along with me render it extemporaneously (extemporaneously),
οἱ λοιποὶ ἀποφροντισμένον (ἐπιμελήτατον) ἀποδιδούσι.	ceteri accuratum (accuratum) reddunt.	the rest render it after careful preparation (after careful preparation).
<b>Primary school work</b>		
οἱ μικροὶ	minores	The smaller [Gk: little] [children] practice
ἐρμηνεύματα καὶ συλλαβάς, τοῦ ῥήματος κλίσιν,	interpretamenta et syllabas, sermonis declinationem,	Hermeneumata and syllables, the inflection of the word,
τέχνην ἀπάσην, διάλεκτον διηγοῦνται παρὰ ὑποσοφιστῆ· πτώσεις ὀνομάτων, γένη ὀνομάτων, ἄριθμούς, σχήματα, κλίσματα, ὀνόματα κατὰ στοιχεῖον,	artem omnem, sermonem exercent apud subdoctorem: casus nominum, genera nominum, numeros, figuras, uocabula, uocabula per litteras,	the whole grammar book, conversation in front of the teacher's assistant: the cases of nouns, the genders of nouns, numbers, compositional status, inflections [Lat.: words], words in alphabetical order [Lat.: in writing],
γράμματα, φωνήεντα καὶ ἡμίφωνα καὶ ἄφωνα· διαμερίζουσι,	litteras, uocales et semiuocales et mutas; diuidunt,	letters, vowels and continuants and stop consonants; they pronounce with proper divisions,
συστέλλουσι, ἐπαίρουσιν. εἶτα ἅπαντα διέρχονται, τὰ δὲ κεφάλαια ὀνομάτων, μέρη λόγου τὰ ὀκτώ.	suspendunt, eleuant. deinde uniuersa pertranseunt, sed et capitula nominum, partes orationis octo.	suspensions, [and] accentuation. Then they go through everything, also the lists of nouns classified by subject, the eight parts of speech.



οὕτως γίνεται ἡ σιγεία.	sic fit silentium.	So then there is silence.
	<b>Advanced reading classes</b>	
ἀπίουσιν πρωτόσχολοι	eunt priores	The more advanced students go up
πρὸς διδάσκαλον· ἀναγιγνώσκουσιν ἀνάγνωσιν περὶ Ἰλιάδος, ἄλλην περὶ Ὀδυσσεΐας. λαμβάνουσι τόπον (παραίνεσιν, ἀμφισβήτησιν, ἱστορίαν, κωμῳδίαν,	ad magistrum; legunt lectionem de Iliade, aliam de Odyssea. accipiunt locum (suasoriam, controuersiam, historiam, comoediam,	to the teacher; they read a reading about the Iliad, another about the Odyssey. † † i.e. simplified summaries They receive a passage (a suasoria, † a controuersia, † a history, a comedy, † declaiming about the past to construct advice and arguments about the present
διηγήματα, ἀπάσῃν φιλοπονίαν ῥητορείας, προφάσεις τοῦ Ἰλιακοῦ πολέμου, πρόθεσιν τῆς ἀναγορεύσεως, ἀνάδοσιν· πράξεις τοῦ Κικέρωνος, Οὔεργίλιον < . . . >, φωτίδιον < . . . >,	narrationes, omnem industriam orationis, causas Troici belli, materiam recitationis, redictiones; actiones Tullianas, Maronem, Persium, Lucanum, Statium,	stories, all the diligence of rhetoric, the causes of the Trojan war, the basis for a recitation, something to repeat back; the speeches of Cicero, Virgil, Persius, Lucan, † Statius, †note the Greek 'little light' (lux,luc- )!
δύο μάχη < . . . >,	duo bella, Terentium, Sallustium,	the two wars, † Terence, Sallust,
τρῆς κωμῳδίας < . . . >,	tres comoedias, Theocritum,  Thucydidem, Demosthenem, Hippocratem, Xenophontem	the three comedies, † Theocritus, †no one knows which two or three Thucydides, Demosthenes, Hippocrates, Xenophon,

καὶ τοὺς Κυνικοὺς). τότε ἐπανέρχεται ἕκαστος, ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τόπῳ καθέζουσιν. ἕκαστος ἀναγιγνώσκει ἀνάγνωσιν αὐτῷ δεδειγμένην· ἄλλος γράφει, <ἄλλος> ἤθοποιεῖ.	et Cynicos). tunc reuertitur quisque, in suo loco considunt. quisque legit lectionem sibi subtraditam; alter scribit, alter meditatatur.	and the Cynics). Then each one returns,  they sit down in their own place. Each one reads the reading assigned to him; one writes, another practices [Gk: makes a speech in character].
εἰς τάξιν ἀναγορεύουσιν ἕκαστος κατὰ τὴν δύναμιν· εἴ τις καλῶς ἀνηγόρευσεν, ἐπαινεῖται· εἴ τις κακῶς, δέρεται. γίνεται ἀπόλυσις· ἀπολυόμεθα ἐγγὺς τὴν ὥραν ἑβδόμην.	in ordinem recitant quisque pro posse; si quis bene recitavit, laudatur; si quis male, coercetur. fit dimissio: dimittimur circiter horam septimam.	They recite in order, each one according to his ability; if someone has recited well, he is praised; if someone [recited] badly, he is punished/flogged The dismissal happens: we are dismissed around the seventh hour.
<b>Another school day</b> κελεύοντος καθηγητοῦ ἀνίστανται οἱ μικρότατοι πρὸς <συλλαβάς>,  καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀνηγορεύκαμεν ἄμιλλαν καὶ στίχους <πρὸς ὑποσοφιστήν>;  ἀποδιδούσιν  <ὀνόματα> καὶ ἐρμηνεύματα, γράφουσιν <ἀνάγνωσιν>.	iubente praeceptore surgunt minores ad syllabas, et nos recitamus dictatum et uersus ad subdoctorem;  reddunt nomina et interpretamenta , scribunt lectionem.	When the instructor orders the smaller [Gk: smallest] [children] stand up to [read] syllables, and we recite [Gk: have recited] an exercise and verses for the teacher's assistant; they produce  vocabulary words and hermeneumata, they write a lesson.

δευτέρα τάξις ἐπαναγιγνώσκει. καὶ ἐγὼ ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ, ὡς ἐκαθίσαμεν,	secunda classis relegit. et ego in prima, ut sedimus,	The second class reads aloud. And I in the first [class], as we sat down,
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## Grammar



## Declension

Note the traditional (i.e. non-British) Latin order of the cases and the use of *hic* to distinguish number, case and form, and *o* for the vocative. The (non-Greek) ablative is tacked on at the end, and prefaced by *ab* to *emphasise* that it is the ablative and distinguish it where needed from the dative in e.g. plural forms.

### (Feminina) in *-io*: haec iussio ἡ κέλευσις 'command'

huius	iussionis
huic	iussioni
hanc	iussionem
o	iussio
ab hac	iussione
pl. hae	iussiones
harum	iussionum
his	iussionibus
has	iussiones
o	iussiones
ab his	iussionibus

### (Feminina) in *-us*: haec palus ἡ λίμνη 'marsh'

huius	paludis
huic	paludi
hanc	paludem
o	palus
ab hac	palude
hae	paludes
et cetera	

**(Feminina) in -ix: haec nutrix  
ἡ τροφός 'nurse'**

huius	nutricis
huic	nutrici
hanc	nutricem
o	nutrix
ab hac	nutrice
pl. hae	nutrices
harum	nutricum
et cetera	

**Neutra in -or: hoc aequor  
τὸ πέλαγος 'sea'**

huius	aequoris
huic	aequori
hoc	aequor
o	aequor
ab hoc	aequore
pl. haec	aequora
horum	aequorum
his	aequoribus
haec	aequora
o	aequora
ab his	aequoribus

**(Neutra) in -ma: hoc poema  
τὸ ποίημα 'poem'**

huius	poematis
huic	poemati
hoc	poema
o	poema
ab hoc	poemate

pl.	haec	poemata
	horum	poematum
	his	poematibus
	haec	poemata
	o	poemata
	ab his	poematibus



## Verbs

More sound stuff from Dositheus himself, presumably for students whose knowledge both of Latin and of grammatical concepts is still rather thin. The Greek, however, is far more sophisticated than that of the *Colloquia*

Qualitas uerborum in quo(t) est formis? III: absoluta, ut <i>lego</i> ; meditatiua, ut <i>lecturio</i> ; frequentatiua, ut <i>lectito</i> ; inchoatiua, ut <i>feruesco</i> , <i>calesco</i> . modi quot sunt?	Ποιότης ῥημάτων ἐν πόσοις ἐστὶν τύποις; τέσσαρσιν· ἀπολυτικῆ, οἷον ἀναγιγνώσκω, μελετητικῆ, οἷον ἐπιθυμῶ ἀναγιγνώσκειν, συνεχείας σημαντικῆ, οἷον συνεχῶς ἀναγιγνώσκω, ἀρκτικῆ, οἷον ἄρχομαι ζέειν, ἄρχομαι θερμαίνεσθαι. ἐγκλίσεις πόσαι εἰσὶν;	The quality of verbs is in how many forms? Four: absolute, as 'I read'; desiderative, as 'I want to read'; frequentative, as 'I read often'; inchoative, as 'I start to boil', 'I start to warm up'. How many moods are there?
V: indicatiuus, ut <i>amo</i> , <i>doceo</i> , <i>lego</i> ;	πέντε· ὀριστικῆ, οἷον φιλῶ διδάσκω ἀναγιγνώσκω,	Five: indicative, as 'I love, teach, read',

imperatiuus, ut ama, doce, lege; optatiuus, ut amarem et utinam amarem, docerem, legerem; coniunctiuus, <ut> cum amem, doceam, legam; infinitiuus, <ut> amare, docere, legere.	προστακτικός, οἶον φίλει δίδασκε ἀναγίνωσκε, εὐκτική, οἶον φιλοίην καὶ εἴθε φιλοίην, διδάσκομι, ἀναγινώσκομι, συνζευκτικός, <οἶον> ὅταν φιλῶ, διδάσκω, ἀναγινώσκω, ἀπαρέμφατος, <οἶον> φιλεῖν, διδάσκειν, ἀναγινώσκειν.	imperative, as 'love!' 'teach!' 'read!' optative, as 'I would love' and 'if only I would love', I would teach, I would read'; subjunctive, as 'when I love, teach, read'; infinitive, as 'to love, teach, read'.
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## Alphabet

This alphabet dates from the 5/6th C AD, so capital and lower-case letters are provided. Note the two mistakes:

α	β	κ	δ	ε	φ	γ	η	ι	κ	λ	μ	ν	ο	π																					
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	V	X	Y	Z													
α	β	κ	δ	ε	φ	κ	η	ι	κ																										
a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u	x	y	z													

Here are the *names* of the Roman letters. Y and z (as usual) are omitted: the former was sometimes known as *y Graeca*, the latter as *zeta*.

α	βη	κη	δη	η	εφ	γη	'	ι	κα	ιλ	μ	εν	ω	π	κου	ρ	ες	τη	ου	ξη																
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	X																

## Transliterations

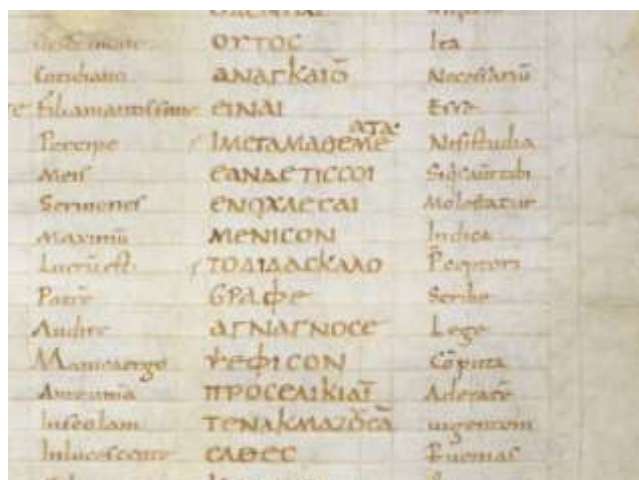
### 1. Conjugations

These are most irregular in reversing the normal order of persons (see 3. below for the transliteration system); and why no plurals?

Greek	Transliterated Latin	[Latin added here by E.D.]
ἀσπάζεταιται	σαλουτατ	salutat
ἀσπάζει	σαλουτας	salutas
ἀσπάζομαι	σαλουτω	saluto

βασιλεύει	ρηγνατ	regnat
βασιλευείς	ρηγνας	regnas
βασιλεύω	ρηγνω	regno
βασανίζει	τορκετ	torquet
βασανίζεις	τορκες	torques
βασανίζω	τορκεω	torqueo
βλέπει	ουιδετ	uidet
βλέπεις	ουιδες	uides
βλέπω	ουιδεω	ideo
βοηθεῖ	αδιουτατ	adiuuat
βοηθεῖς	αδιουτας	adiutas
βοηθῶ	αδιουτω	adiuto
βόσκειται	ουεσκιτουρ	uescitur
βόσκει	ουεσκερις	uesceris
βόσκομαι	ουεσκουρ	uescitur

## 2. Military terminology



There are other such list of words relating to the theatre, amphitheatre, circus and stadium.

Note the strange spelling error φρενεκτους for *praefectus*:

Greek	Transliterated Latin	[Translation]
περί στρατιωτῶν	δη μιλιτιβους	About soldiers ( <i>de militibus</i> )
στρατιά	μιλιτια	military service ( <i>militia</i> )
παρεμβολή	καστρα	camp ( <i>castra</i> )
τάφρος	φοσσα	ditch ( <i>fossa</i> )
ἡγεμών	δουξ	leader ( <i>dux</i> )
αὐτοκράτωρ	ιμπερατωρ	commander ( <i>imperator</i> )
χιλίαρχος	τριβουνους μελιτουμ	military tribune ( <i>tribunus militum</i> )

στρατοπεδάρχης	φρενεκτους καστρωρουμ	camp prefect ( <i>praefectus castrorum</i> )
πρωτοστάτης	πρινκιψ	commander ( <i>princeps</i> )
σκηναί	ταβερνακουλα	tents ( <i>tabernacula</i> )
στρατόπαιδον	εξερκитους	army ( <i>exercitus</i> )
φάλαξ	λεγιων	legion ( <i>legio</i> )
σημία	σιγνα	standards ( <i>signa</i> )
στρατιῶται	μιλιτης	soldiers ( <i>milites</i> )
πεζοί	πεδεστρης	foot-soldiers ( <i>pedestres</i> )
ιππεῖς	εκουειτης	cavalry ( <i>equites</i> )

### 3. Daily conversations

This text derives from the *Colloquia*, but is a transliterated version of a conversation. Note that:

1. Greek *beta* transcribes both Latin *b* and *v*;
2. Latin *u* is transliterated as Greek *ou*;
3. Latin *qu* becomes Greek *κο*;
4. *i* and *e* are also sometimes confused.

Σερμω κωτιδιανους	[Latin by E.D.]	Ὅμιλία καθημερινή
‘Κοιδ φακιμους, φρατερ; λιβεντερ τη βιδεω.’ ‘Ετ εγω δη, δομινε.’ (ετ νως βως.)	<i>quid facimus, frater? libenter te uideo et ego te domine et nos uos</i>	‘Τί ποιοῦμεν, ἀδελφέ; ἡδέως σε ὀρῶ.’ ‘Κάγὼ σέ, δέσποτα.’ (καὶ ἡμεῖς ὑμᾶς.)
‘Νεσκιω Κοις οστιουμ πωλσατ’ εξειτο κιτω φορας ετ δισκε κοις εστ, αυτ κοιεμ πετιτ.’ ‘Αβ Αυρηλιω	<i>nescio quis ostium pulsat exito cito foras et disce quis est aut quem petit ab Aurelio</i>	‘Οὐκ οἶδα τίς τὴν θύραν κρούει· ἔξελθε ταχέως ἔξω καὶ μάθε τίς ἐστιν, ἢ τίνα ἀναζητεῖ.’ ‘Απ’ Αὐρηλίου



βηνιτ'	<i>uenit.</i>	ἦλθεν'
νουντιουμ	<i>nuntium</i>	φάσιν
τουλιτ.'	<i>Tulit.</i>	ἦνεγκεν.'

#### 4. The names of the gods

θεων ονοματα	δεαρουμ νωμινα [ <i>dearum nomina</i> ]	[Latin names by PJ]
υγεια	σαλους	<i>Salus</i>
γη μητηρ	τερρα ματερ	<i>Terra Mater</i>
ηρα	ιουνων	<i>Juno</i>
ηρα βασιλισσα	ιουνων ρηγινα	<i>Juno regina</i>
ειλειθια	ιουνων λουκινα	<i>Juno lucina</i>
αρτεμις	διανα	<i>Diana</i>
λητω	λατωνα	<i>Leto</i>
αφροδειτη	ουενους	<i>Venus</i>
νεμεσις	ουλτριξ	<i>Ultrix</i>
δημητηρ	κερης	<i>Ceres</i>
φερσεφονη	πρωσερπινα	<i>Proserpina</i>
εστια	ουεστα	<i>Vesta</i>
τυχη	φορτουνα	<i>Fortuna</i>
σεμελη	λειβερα	<i>Libera</i>
εισις	εισις	<i>Acis</i>
μητηρ μεγαλη	ματερ μαγνα	<i>Mater Magna</i>

#### Dositheus on the case system



Since Greek also used nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive and dative, Dositheus finds no reason to discuss them. What interests him is the ablative, and here he gives four examples. His seventh case—too long to insert here—simply gives more examples of the uses of the ablative. One can imagine Greek pupils wondering how this could possibly be *both* a six and seventh ‘case’.

Casus sunt VI: nominatiuus genetiuus datiuus accusatiuus uocatiuus ablatiuus. adicitur a diligentioribus etiam septimus casus. semper ablatiuus uno modo profertur, cum a persona aut a loco aut a re ablatum quid (significetur), ueluti <i>ab Aenea stirpem deducit Romulus, ab urbe in Africam redit, a libris Ciceronis intellectum est.</i> septimus uero casus modis IIII profertur.	Πτώσεις εἰσὶν ἅ· ὀνομαστικὴ γενικὴ δοτικὴ αἰτιατικὴ κλητικὴ ἀφαιρετικὴ, ἢ καὶ ἀπενεκτικὴ. προσβάλλεται παρὰ τῶν ἐπιμελεστέρων καὶ ἑβδόμη πτώσις. ἄει ἢ ἀπενεκτικὴ ἐνὶ τρόπῳ ἐκφέρεται, ὅταν ἀπὸ προσώπου ἢ ἀπὸ τόπου ἢ ἀπὸ πράγματος ἀφαιρεθὲν τι (σημαίνεται),  οἶον ἀπὸ Αἰνείου τὴν ῥίζαν τὸ γένος κατάγει Ῥωμύλος, ἀπὸ Ῥώμης εἰς Ἀφρικὴν ἐπάνεισιν, ἀπὸ τῶν βιβλίων τῶν Κικέρωνος νενόηται. ἢ δὲ ἑβδόμη πτώσις τρόποις τέτρασιν ἐκφέρεται·	There are 6 cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, vocative, ablative. There is added by more careful people also a seventh case. Always the ablative in one way is used, when from a person or from a place or from a thing something taken away it signifies, as in: ‘from Aeneas Romulus traced his descent’, ‘from Rome he returns to Africa’, ‘from Cicero’s books it was understood’. But the seventh case in four ways is used.
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### Case examples

These provide homonyms and examples of case usage. Note that the cases specified in the third column are the Greek ones, not the Latin. The idea is to show how many translations the Latin *uos* has in Greek.

uos (pl)	ὕμεῖς, ὑμᾶς	'You (nom. pl.)', 'you' (acc. pl.)
uos priores uenistis	ὕμεῖς πρότεροι ἐληλύθατε	'you (nom.) came earlier'
uos sic iussi	ὕμᾶς οὕτως ἐκέλευσα	'I ordered you (acc.) thus'
genetiui sic fit casus	γενικῆς οὕτω γίνεται πτώσεως	It becomes a genitive case thus:
audio uos	ἀκούω ὑμῶν, ἀκούω ὑμᾶς	'I hear you (gen.)', 'I hear you (acc.)'
contemno uos	καταφρονῶ ὑμῶν	'I despise you (gen.)'
datiui rursus sic	δοτικῆς πάλιν οὕτως	but (it becomes) a dative thus:
sequor uos	ἀκολουθῶ ὑμῖν	'I follow you' (dat.)
adiuuo uos	βοηθῶ ὑμῖν	'I help you' (dat.)

### *Colloquia (5).*

#### **Summaries and the Real Thing**

The Greek pupil has now learned enough Latin from the *Colloquia* and the grammar to turn to the real thing. But the wind needs tempering to the young, if not shorn, lamb. So the bilingual format is still deemed appropriate; and where the real thing is judged too difficult, summaries can take their place, and (in theory) be written in a Greek more in tune with Latin idiom.

Here are some examples.

#### **Aesop's Fables**

The ancients used animals for food, hunting, sacrifice and haulage, and occasionally as pets. It was the shadowy figure of Aesop (sixth-century BC) who gave them literary status. His fables are, as the ancient Greek rhetorician Theon saw, 'fictitious stories picturing a truth', and the characters are almost always animals. The reason is that fables present a world where truth is black and white. Since human motives and character are usually devious, the lessons of the fable are better presented by non-human types, primed to behave in standard ways—the brave lion, tricky fox, feeble mouse, and so on. The lessons thus conveyed are clean, decisive and instantly applicable: 'The dolphins were always at odds with the whale. A crab came forward to mediate between them, as if a man of no account could settle a conflict between warring overlords.'

The values implicit in the fables do not elevate the soul: self-interest, sticking to your station in life, knowing who your friends and enemies are, winning at all costs—a footballer's charter (as Quintilian, the Roman professor of education, delightfully pointed out, they were especially appealing to 'country boors and the uneducated'). But however dubious the morality, the clarity of the issues is never in doubt. That is

why they were as popular in Roman as Greek times and at the centre of education till the renaissance:



Roman stag mosaic (4th CAD)

## On the stag

### Translation

*A stag of great size in the heat of summer, weak with thirst, [10] came to a fountain, clear and deep, and drinking as much as it wanted, [15] paid attention to the look of his body and greatly praised the nature of his horns, stretching up high [20] into the air, and what an ornament they were to his whole body. But he found fault, however, with his legs' [25] thinness, as if they were [Latin: it was] incapable of sustaining his weight. But while he was engaged with this, the barking of dogs [30] he suddenly heard, and hunters nearby. But he set off in flight, and while across the plains [35] he was racing, he was saved by the speed of his legs, but when into the dense [40] and thick wood he fell, his horns becoming caught up in it, he was captured, [45] learning by experience what a bad judge he had been of his own person, finding fault with the features that had saved him, but [50] praising those by which he had been deceived.*

### 40.6 De ceruo

	ceruus bonae magnitudinis	Ἔλαφος εὐμεγέθης
	aestiuo tempore	ὥρα θέρους
	siti deficiens	δίψη λειπόμενος
40.10	aduenit	παραγίνεται
	ad quendam fontem	ἐπὶ πηγὴν τινα
	limpidum et altum,	διαυγῆ καὶ βαθεῖαν,
	et cum bibisset	καὶ πιῶν
	quantum uoluerat,	ὅσον ἤθελεν,
40.15	attendebat	προσεῖχεν
	ad corporis effigiem,	τῆ τοῦ σώματος ἰδέα,
	et maxime quidem laudabat	καὶ μάλιστα μὲν ἐπὶ ἡνείκεν
	naturam cornuorum	τὴν φύσιν τῶν κεράτων
	excelsissimam	ἀνατεταμένων τε
40.20	in multo aere,	εἰς πολὺν ἀέρα,
	et quod ornamentum esset	καὶ ὡς κόσμος εἶη
	omni corpori;	παντὶ τῷ σώματι·

	culpabat autem crurum	ἔψεγεν δὲ τὴν τῶν σκελῶν
40.25	exilitatem, quasi non esset ferre pondus. sed cum in his esset, latratus canum	λεπτότητα, ὡς οὐχ οἴων τε ὄντων αἴρειν τὸ βάρος. ἐν οἷς δὲ πρὸς τούτοις ἦν, ὑλακὴ τε κυνῶν
40.30	subito audiit et uenatores proximo. at ille in fugam ibat, et quamdiu quidem per campos	αἰφνιδίως ἀκούεται καὶ κυνηγεταὶ πλησίον. ὁ δὲ πρὸς φυγὴν ὤρμα, καὶ μέχρις ὅπου διὰ πεδίων
40.35	faciebat cursum, liberabatur a uelocitate crurum; sed ubi in spissam	ἐποιεῖτο τὸν δρόμον, ἐσώζετο ὑπὸ τῆς ὠκύτητος τῶν σκελῶν· ἐπεὶ δὲ εἰς πυκνὴν
40.40	et condensam siluam incidit obligatis ei cornibus captus est,	καὶ δασεῖαν ὑλὴν ἔπεσεν ἐμπλακέντων αὐτῷ τῶν κεράτων ἐάλω,
40.45	modo perdiscens, quod iniustus esset suorum iudex, culpans quidem quae saluabat eum,	πεῖρα μαθῶν, ὅτι ἄρα ἄδικος ἦν τῶν ἰδίων κριτῆς, ψέγων μὲν τὰ σώζοντα αὐτόν,
40.50	laudans autem a quibus deceptus esset.	ἐπαινῶν δὲ ὑφ' ὧν προδέδοται.

**Cicero, in *Catilinam* 1.16-19 (*passim*)**

It appears that Cicero's in *Catilinam* was a popular choice of first prose author for students learning Latin. But it was not ideal in the bilingual format because Cicero's Latin does not always sit easily with Greek idiom. Here is a small example.



Cicero in full flow

### Translation

22-30 *But now what is this life of yours? For I shall speak to you, so that I do not seem to be swayed by hatred ...*

33-41 *Now your fatherland, which is the common parents of us all, hates and fears and now [judges you] for a long time [to be thinking about nothing except its destruction; 43-61 whose] authority [you] will not respect, whose judgement you will not follow, nor whose might [will you fear]. She engages with you, Catiline, like this and, in some way, thought silent, speaks: 'For some years now no crime has been committed except through you ..'*

[Cicero points out that Catiline has already sought voluntary custody, in vain, in a number of people's houses]

95-106 *But for how long ought he seem to be away from prison and chains, who has himself already judged himself worthy of it?*

22	nunc uero quae tua est ista uita?	νῦν δὲ ποία ἢ σὴ ἐστίν αὕτη ἢ ζωή;
25	sic enim tecum loquar, non ut odio permotus esse uidear	οὕτω γὰρ μετὰ σοῦ λαλῶ, οὐχ ὡς μίσει κινηθεῖς εἶναι δοκῶ
	...	...
33	nunc te patria, quae communis est parens omnium nostrum, metuit	νῦν σε ἢ πατρίς, ἣτις κοινή ἐστίν μήτηρ πάντων ἡμῶν, δέδοικε,
40	et iam diu	καὶ ἤδη πάλαι

41	nihil	οὐδέν . . .
41a	te iudicat	
41b	nisi	
41c	de parricidio	
41d	suo	
41e	cogitare:	
42	huius tu	. . .
	neque auctoritatem	οὔτε τὴν αὐθεντίαν
	uerebere	εὐλαβῆ
45	nec	οὔτε
	iudicium	κριτήριον
	sequere	ἀκολουθεῖς
	neque uim	οὔτε τὴν δύναμιν
	pertimesceas?	. . .
50	quae tecum,	ἦτις μετὰ σοῦ,
	Catilina,	Κατιλίνα,
	sic agit	οὔτω πράττει
	et quodam modo	καί τινι τρόπῳ
	tacita	σιωπῶσα
55	loquitur,	λαλεῖ,
	‘nullum iam	‘οὐδέν λοιπόν
	aliquot	τισί ποτε
	annis	ἐνιαυτοῖς
	facinus	δράσμα
60	exstitit	ἀνεφάνη
	nisi per te . . .’	εἰ μὴ διὰ σοῦ . . .’
95	sed quam	ἀλλὰ πῶς
	longe	μακρὰν
	uidetur	δοκεῖ
	a carcere	ἀπὸ φρουρᾶς
	atque a uinculis	καὶ ἀπὸ δεσμῶν
100	abesse	ἀπεῖναι
	debere,	ὀφείλγειν,
	hic qui se	οὔτος ὅστις ἑαυτὸν
	ipse	αὐτὸς
	iam dignum	ἤδη ἄξιον
105	custodia	φυλακῆς
	iudicauerit?	ἔκρινεν;

Summaries of the most famous ancient poet are common in antiquity, and the association with *Colloquia* goes back a long way. They probably date from the 2nd-3rd C AD. This summarizer, however, is either working from a text different to our Iliad or his memory is not all it should be.

## Book 14

In Book 1, Zeus had promised Achilles that he would ensure the Trojans would start winning. In Book 14, though the pro-Greek Poseidon has been helping the Greeks, this is well under way: the Trojans have breached the Greek defensive wall and are creating havoc inside their camp. So the pro-Greek Hera persuades Somnus, god of sleep, to ensure Zeus falls asleep after she has made love to him. She can then rally the Greeks.

In our text Nestor does not find Diomedes fighting: he finds him wounded.



Zeus and Hera

### Translation

*Nestor, hearing the shouting and flight of the Greeks, advances and finds Diomedes fighting [Gk: sparring] in battle. Poseidon/Neptune however and Hera/Juno stand by the Greeks in support. For Hera had promised to give to [the god] Sleep a nymph Pasithea to have sex with, so that he [Sleep] would turn Zeus/Jove to sleep away from battle. And then Ajax alone put the Trojans to flight.*

Ξ

Nestor audiens  
clamorem et fugam  
Graecorum  
procedit et inuenit  
Diomedem in proelio  
dimicantem.

Νέστωρ ἀκούσας  
κραυγὴν καὶ φυγὴν  
τῶν Ἑλλήνων  
προέρχεται καὶ εὕρισκει  
Διομήδην εἰς τὸν πόλεμον  
πυκτεύοντα·



Neptunus autem et Iuno  
in adiutorium  
Graecis astabant.  
Somno enim Iuno  
unam nympham  
dare in coitum  
repromiserat Pasitheaen,  
ut Iouem  
in somnum mitteret  
a pugna.  
et tunc Aeneas solus  
Troianus fugavit.

Ποσειδῶν δὲ καὶ Ἥρα  
εἰς βοήθειαν  
τοῖς Ἑλλησιν παρεστήκεισαν·  
τῷ γὰρ Ὑπνώ Ἥρα  
μίαν νύμφην  
δοῦναι εἰς συνουσίαν  
ὑπέσχετο Πασιθέην,  
ἵνα τὸν Δία  
εἰς ὕπνον τρέψη  
ἀπὸ τοῦ πολέμου·  
καὶ τότε Αἴας μόνος  
τοὺς Τρῶας ἐφυγάδευσεν.

## Book 15

In Book 15 Zeus wakes up, furious at Hera's deception of him, orders Iris to call off Poseidon who had been helping the Greeks, and tells Apollo to rally Hector and the Trojans. The summarizer now gets ahead of himself (Patroclus does not reach Achilles, and the ship is not fired, until Book 16, nor does Patroclus ever describe the fight between Hector and Ajax); but the fact that the Trojans had set fire to a ship inside the Greek camp shows how serious the situation is:

### *Translation*

*When Zeus/Jupiter had seen Hector fainting because of the blow from the rock, which Ajax had hurled at him in the encounter, angered therefore at Hera/Juno, he blamed her, because he [Zeus] had been led astray by her so that Hector would be killed. She therefore said that it was Poseidon/Neptune who, without orders, had become a support for the Greeks, and then Zeus/Jupiter ordered Iris [to go] to Poseidon/Neptune so that he would leave the battle. And Poseidon/Neptune departed, and Zeus/Jupiter sent Apollo as a support for Hector; and Patroclus, leaving Eurypylus, came to Achilles and describes to him the fight between Hector and Ajax. Then therefore he proceeded against Hector with a view to victory, because Protesilaus' ship had been fired, but Ajax killed twelve of the Trojans' strongest soldiers.*



Fighting around the ships

## Ο

cum uidisset Iuppiter  
deficientem animo Hectorem  
ob ictum lapidis,  
quem ei in pugna  
Aeas pepulerat,  
iratus ergo Iunonem  
improperauit,  
quod ab ea seductus esset  
ut Hector occideretur.  
illa ergo dixit  
Neptunum non iussum  
adiutorem fuisse  
Graecis,  
et tunc Iuppiter mittit  
Irim ad Neptunum,  
ut discederet  
a pugna,  
et Neptunus discessit  
et Iuppiter Apollinem  
mittit adiutorem Hectori;  
et Patroclus  
remisso Eurypylo  
uenit ad Achillem  
et enarrat ei  
Hectoris et Aeantis  
pugnam.  
tunc ergo processit  
Hectori in uictoriam,  
quod Protesilai  
nauis incensa est,

Ὅτε ἑώρακεν Ζεὺς  
λιποψυχοῦντα Ἕκτορα  
διὰ τὴν ὀρμὴν τοῦ λίθου,  
ὃν αὐτῷ ἐν τῇ συμβολῇ  
Αἴας ἐνσεσεῖκει,  
ὀργισθεὶς οὖν τῇ Ἥρᾳ  
ὠνείδισεν,  
διότι ὑπ' αὐτῆς ἐπλανήθη  
ὅπως Ἕκτωρ σφαγῆ.  
ἐκείνη δὲ εἶπεν  
Ποσειδῶνα μὴ κεκελευσμένον  
βοηθὸν γεγονέναι  
τοῖς Ἑλλησιν,  
καὶ τότε ὁ Ζεὺς πέμπει  
τὴν Ἴριν πρὸς Ποσειδῶνα,  
ἵνα ἀπονεύσῃ  
ἀπὸ τοῦ πολέμου,  
καὶ Ποσειδῶν ἀπένευσε  
καὶ Ζεὺς Ἀπόλλωνα  
πέμπει βοηθὸν Ἕκτορι·  
καὶ Πάτροκλος  
ἀφείς Εὐρύπυλον  
ἦλθεν πρὸς τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα  
καὶ διηγεῖται αὐτῷ  
τὴν Ἕκτορος καὶ Αἴαντος  
μάχην.  
τότε οὖν προεχώρησεν  
Ἕκτορι ἐν τῇ νίκῃ,  
ὅτι ἡ Πρωτεσιλάου  
ναῦς ἐνεπρήσθη,

sed Aeas XII milites  
fortissimos  
Troianorum occidit.

ἀλλὰ Αἴας δώδεκα στρατιώτας  
τοὺς ἰσχυροτέρους  
τῶν Τρώων ἀπέκτεινεν.

## Book 16

Patroclus appeals to Achilles for help, and Achilles tells him to don his (Achilles') armour, drive back the Trojans but not attempt to take Troy. Patroclus does so, killing Sarpedon and Cebriones, but being in turn killed himself:

### Translation

*Patroclus [son of] Menoetius went to Achilles, weeping at the violence done to the Greeks and asked from him weapons, and took [them] with the army. So Patroclus, armed in the armour of Achilles, and appearing before the Trojans, injected fear into them. And then Sarpedon is killed by Patroclus, whose corpse on Zeus's orders was carried off to Lycia. And he [Patroclus] killed Cebriones, Hector's charioteer. Afterwards, however, he himself is killed by Hector; however he is first disarmed by Apollo and wounded by Euphorbus.*



Sarpedon being carried off to Lycia by Sleep and Death

## Π

Patroclus Menoetii  
uenit ad Achillem  
lacrimans  
Graecorum iniuriam  
et petiit ab eo  
arma  
et accepit cum exercitu.  
ergo Patroclus armatus  
armis Achillis  
et uisus Troianis  
timorem eis inmisit.  
et tunc Sarpedo  
a Patroclo interficitur,

Πάτροκλος ὁ Μενoitίου  
ἦλθεν πρὸς Ἀχιλλέα  
δακρύων  
τῶν Ἑλλήνων ὕβριν  
καὶ ῥήτησατο παρ' αὐτοῦ  
τὰ ὄπλα,  
καὶ ἔλαβεν μετὰ τοῦ στρατοῦ.  
ὁ δὲ Πάτροκλος ὀπλισθεὶς  
τοῖς ὄπλοις τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως  
καὶ φανεὶς τοῖς Τρωσὶν  
φόβον αὐτοῖς ἐνέβαλεν.  
καὶ τότε Σαρπήδων  
ὑπὸ Πατρόκλου ἀναιρεῖται,

cuius corpus  
Iouis iussu Lyciae  
allatum est.  
occidit et Cebrionem,  
aurigam Hectoris;  
postea autem et ipse  
interficitur ab Hectore;  
primum autem exarmatur  
ab Apolline  
et uulneratur  
ab Euphorbo.

οὐ τὸ πτώμα  
Διὸς κελεύσαντος εἰς Λυκίαν  
ἀπηνέχθη.  
σφάζει δὲ καὶ Κεβριόνην  
τὸν ἡνίοχον Ἑκτορος·  
μεταξὺ δὲ καὶ αὐτὸς  
ἀναιρεῖται ὑπὸ Ἑκτορος·  
πρῶτον δὲ ἐξοπλίζεται  
ὑπὸ Ἀπόλλωνος  
καὶ τραυματίζεται  
ὑπὸ Εὐφόρβου.

### Virgil, *Aeneid*

These versions date from the 4th-5th C AD. Virgil was, of course, by far the most famous and popular Roman author.

Both passages come from Greek translations of Aeneid Book 1. Because it is difficult to read the Latin as verse in the form in which it appears in the ancient manuscript, I start by translating and quoting the Latin in the form in which we know it.

#### ***Aeneid* 1. 227-232**

The storm-tossed Aeneas, separated from many of his men, has arrived off the coast of Africa. Here Aphrodite/Venus begins her appeal to Zeus/Jupiter for help for her son and the Trojans:



Venus petitions Jupiter

#### Translation

227 As Jupiter turned over in his heart all the suffering that he saw,

228 *with greater sadness and tears in her shining eyes*  
 229 *Venus spoke: 'You who rule the affairs of gods and men*  
 230 *with your eternal law and at whose lightning we are all afraid,*  
 231 *what great harm has my son Aeneas been able to do to you?*  
 232 *What have the Trojans done, for whom, suffering so many deaths...*

Latin

227 *atque illum talis iactantem pectore curas*  
 228 *tristior et lacrimis oculos suffusa nitentis*  
 229 *adloquitur Venus: 'o qui res hominumque deumque*  
 230 *aeternis regis imperiis, et fulmine terres,*  
 231 *quid meus Aeneas in te committere tantum,*  
 232 *quid Troes potuere, [quibus, tot funera passis,]*

227	atque illum talis iactantem pectore curas	... τῷ στήθει φροντίδας
228	tristior et lacrimis oculos suffusa nitentis	στυγνοτέρα καὶ δακρύοις τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑποκεχυμένη τοὺς λάμποντας
229	alloquitur Venus, 'o qui res hominumque deumque	προσλαλεῖ ἡ Ἄφροδίτη 'ὦ ὅστις τὰ πράγματα τῶν ἀνθρώπων τε καὶ τῶν θεῶν
230	aeternis regis imperiis et fulmine terres,	αἰωνίαις εὐθύνεις ἐπιταγαῖς καὶ κεραυνῶ πτοεῖς,
231	quid meus Aeneas in te committere tantum,	τί ὁ ἐμὸς Αἰνείας εἰς σε ἀμαρτῆσαι τοσοῦτον,
232	quid Troes potuere ...	τί οἱ Τρῶες ἐδυνήθησαν ...

Aeneas and faithful Achates, made invisible in a cloud, make their way to Dido's palace and to their amazement find the men they had thought lost approaching Dido, asking for help and being given a warm welcome. At once, they are made visible:



Aeneas appears before Dido

### Translation

588 Aeneas stood there resplendent in the bright light of day  
589 with the head and shoulders of a god. His own mother  
590 had given beauty to his hair and the bright glow of youth  
591 and the sparkle of joy to his eyes, and shone it all on him.  
592 It was as though skilled hands had decorated ivory or with yellow  
593 gold, silver or Parian marble had been gilded.  
594 Then he addressed the queen and suddenly, to all,  
595 unexpectedly spoke out: 'The man you seek stands before you,  
596 Trojan Aeneas, saved from the Libyan sea.  
597 And you, Dido, alone pitying the unspeakable griefs of Troy,  
598 and us, remnants of the Greeks, by land and sea  
599 drained by every calamity, having lost everything -  
600 you welcome us to your city and home. To repay you as you deserve  
601 is not within our power, nor could whatever survives  
602 of the Trojan race, scattered as it is over the face of the wide earth.  
603 May the gods, if there are any who have regard for goodness, if any  
604 justice in the world, if their minds have any sense of right,  
605 bring you the rewards you deserve. What happy age has born  
606 you, what manner of parents have produced such a daughter?

[Based on David West's Penguin translation]

## Latin

588 restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit,  
589 os umerosque deo similis; namque ipsa decoram  
590 caesariem nato genetrix lumenque iuuentae  
591 purpureum et laetos oculis adflarat honores:  
592 quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flauo  
593 argentum Pariusue lapis circumdatur auro.  
594 tum sic reginam adloquitur, cunctisque repente  
595 improuisus ait: 'coram, quem quaeritis, adsum,  
596 Troius Aeneas, Libycis ereptus ab undis.  
597 'o sola infandos Troiae miserata labores,  
598 quae nos, reliquias Danaum, terraeque marisque  
599 omnibus exhaustos iam casibus, omnium egenos,  
600 urbe, domo, socias, grates persoluere dignas  
601 non opis est nostrae, Dido, nec quicquid ubique est  
602 gentis Dardaniae, magnum quae sparsa per orbem.  
603 di tibi, si qua pios respectant numina, si quid  
604 usquam iustitia est et mens sibi conscia recti,  
605 praemia digna ferant. quae te tam laeta tulerunt  
606 saecula? qui tanti talem genuere parentes?'

588	restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit	ἀπέστη ὁ Αἰνεΐας καὶ ἐν καθαρῷ τῷ φωτὶ ἀντέλαμψεν
589	os umerosque deo similis; namque ipsa decoram	τὸ πρόσωπον καὶ τοὺς ὤμους θεῶ ὅμοιος· καὶ γὰρ αὐτὴ εὐπρεπῆ
590	caesariem nato genetrix lumenque iuuentae	τὴν κόμην τῷ παιδὶ ἢ γεννῆτειρα καὶ φῶς τῆς νεότητος
591	purpureum et laetos oculis adflarat honores:	πορφύρεον καὶ ἰλαρὰς τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς προσπεπνεύκει τιμάς·
592	quale manus addunt ebori decus aut ubi flauo	ὅποῖον χεῖρες προστιθέασιν ἐλεφαντίνῳ ὀστέῳ κόσμον ἢ ὀπηνίκα ξανθῷ
593	argentum Pariusue lapis circumdatur auro.	ἄργυρος ἢ Πάριος λίθος [. . .]
594	tum sic reginam adloquitur cunctisque repente	τότε οὕτως τὴν βασίλισσαν προσφθέγγεται σύμπασιν τε αἰφνιδίως

595	improvisus ait: 'coram, quem quaeritis, adsum	ἄποπτός φησιν' 'ἐνώπιον ὄν ζητεῖτε πάρειμι
596	Troius Aeneas, Libycis ereptus ab undis.	ὁ Τρωϊκὸς Αἰνεΐας, τῶν Λιβυκῶν ἐξαρπασθεὶς ἀπὸ τῶν κλυδῶνων.
597	o sola infandos Troiae miserata labores,	ὦ μόνη τοὺς ἀθεμίτους τῆς Τροίας οἰκτεῖρασα καμάτων,
598	quae nos, reliquias Danaum, terraeque marisque	ἧτις ἡμᾶς, τὰ λείψανα τῶν Ἑλλήνων, τῆς τε γῆς καὶ τῆς θαλάσσης
599	omnibus exhaustos iam casibus, omnium egenos,	πάσαις ἐξαντληθέντας ἤδη συμφοραῖς, πάντων ἐνδεεῖς,
600	urbe, domo socias – grates persolvere dignas	τῇ πόλει, τῷ οἴκῳ ἐταιροποιεῖς – χάριτας διευλυτῆσαι ἀξίας
601	non opis est nostrae, Dido, nec quicquid ubique est	οὐ τῆς περιουσίας ἐστὶν τῆς ἡμετέρας, ὦ Διδώ, οὔτε ὅ τι δήποτε καὶ ὅπου δήποτε ἐστὶν
602	gentis Dardaniae, magnum quae sparsa per orbem.	τοῦ ἔθνους τῆς Τροίας, τὸν μέγαν ἧτις διέσπαρται ἀνὰ τὸν κύκλον.
603	di tibi, si qua pios respectant numina, si quid	οἱ θεοὶ σοι, εἴ τινα τοὺς εὐσεβεῖς ἐφορῶσιν θεῖα, εἴ τι
604	usquam iustitiae est, et mens sibi conscia recti	[ . . . ] καὶ διάνοια ἐαυτῇ συνειδυῖα τοῦ ὀρθοῦ
605	praemia digna ferant. quae te tam laeta tulerunt	ἔπαθλα ἀξία κομίσειαν. ποῖαί σε οὕτως ἰλαραὶ ἤνεγκαν
606	saecula? qui tanti talem genuere parentes?'	γενεαί; τίνες τοσοῦτοι τοιαύτην ἐγέννησαν γονεῖς;'

Here we bid farewell to Pseudodositheus.

It has been a very great pleasure working with Professor Dickey on this little taster. She has been endlessly patient and helpful, and I have learned a lot. I strongly recommend the three spin-off books from her scholarly editions, mentioned at the head of each *Bellaria*.





## ***VERSE COMPOSITION***

There was a time when the ability to compose in Greek and Latin verse was seen as the *ne plus ultra* of the classical scholar. Now it is rather sniffed at, however much pleasure it brings to those who try it. That said, to do it really well requires a broad and deep technical mastery and feeling for verse far beyond the reach of most of us.

This one-off *Bellaria* showcases the extensive work of two modern masters of the art, Colin Leach (Emeritus Fellow of Pembroke College, Oxford) and Armand D'Angour (Jesus College, Oxford), and individual contributions from David Butterfield (Queen's College, Cambridge) and Ronald Knox. Armand has also provided some of his own translations of others' compositions.

The Betjeman version was specially commissioned for this *Bellaria*.

## **SUN AND FUN**

John Betjeman

Note: 'baby 'pollies' are small bottles of Apollinaris water



*I walked into the night-club in the morning;  
There was kummel on the handle of the door.  
The ashtrays were unemptied.  
The cleaning unattempted,*

*And a squashed tomato sandwich on the floor.* 5

*I pulled aside the thick magenta curtains  
—So Regency, so Regency, my dear—  
And a host of little spiders  
Ran a race across the ciders  
To a box of baby ‘pollies by the beer.* 10

*Oh sun upon the summer-going by-pass  
Where ev’rything is speeding to the sea,  
And wonder beyond wonder  
That here where lorries thunder  
The sun should ever percolate to me.* 15

*When Boris used to call in his Sedanca,  
When Teddy took me down to his estate  
When my nose excited passion,  
When my clothes were in the fashion,  
When my beaux were never cross if I was late,* 20

*There was sun enough for lazing upon beaches,  
There was fun enough for far into the night.  
But I’m dying now and done for,  
What on earth was all the fun for?  
For I’m old and ill and terrified and tight.* 25

heus redeo Phoebo squalentem oriente tabernam  
et video putri limina inuncta mero;  
sordibus asparsas patinas sine lege repletas  
aspicio et foedo fusa alimenta solo. 5

continuo currit trans limen aranea multa  
dum resero solita vela superba manu. 10

aestas, quo refugis, quae me vitare videris,  
omnia dum currunt ad freta salsa maris?  
plaustra ruunt requiem sonitu: cur, Phoebe cruenta,  
lumina deflendam me tetigisse vetas? 15

Gallus habet bigas, ingentia jugera Marcus  
possidet, et me illuc unus et alter agit .  
excitat os flammis, vestis solet esse cupita;  
tarda feror? veniam dat mihi cunctus amans. 20

sol nitet ut lenta quondam spatiabar arena;  
nocte Venus lusus dux erat ipsa mei.  
nunc moritura queror, ‘quid profuit illa voluptas?’

**C.L.**

### **BORIS ON THE ZIPWIRE**



*Boris dangling on a zipwire  
sets the media on fire;  
he'll do that per diem  
if he becomes PM.*

ἴδου κρεμαστὸν τῆδε δήμαρχον βαρύν,  
ὥσθ' ἡ πόλις γέγηθεν εἰσορωμένη·  
οὗτός γε δήπου κρεμάσεται καθ' ἡμέραν  
εἴ πως ὁ πρῶτος ἐν πόλει γενήσεται.

**A.D'A.**

*Indeed! All London praises Boris in the sky:  
Or will it soon be carrying/bringing sticks flying high?*

ναιχί, πόλις σύμπασα Βόριν μετέωρον ἐπαινεῖ·  
ἢ ταχέως οἶσεῖ σκῆπτρα πετεινὰ πόλις;

**C.L.**

Note: Professor Leach is sure the 'flying *skêptra*' ['staff, stick, baton'] had some contemporary relevance, but cannot remember what! Were they to be thrown *at* him?

### **GARDEN HAPPINESS**



*Who plants a garden plants delight:  
its pleasant lawns enchant our sight—  
its fragrant flowers, and borders lined  
with thronging trees of every kind.*

hortum serentes laetitiam serunt:  
iucunda semper prata videbimus  
fioresque olentes atque silvas  
arboribus variis repletas.

**A.D'A.**

## **SIR JEREMY MORSE**

Memorial poem



*At first, you impress as a learned young man,  
and girded with praise, you win honours, and more.*

*Next, weighty, responsible work you conduct  
for the good of us all: what a burden you bore!*

*Then, back to the studies you loved—and support:  
we rightly now honour your life as we ought.*

imprimis iuvenis doctissimus esse videris;  
laudibus accinctus praemia multa capis.

posthac pondus habens operosa negotia rerum  
pro populo tractas: quale laboris onus!  
denique tu revocas studiorum largus amorem:  
iure tuam vitam nos celebrare decet.

5

**C.L.**

## HOW TO LEARN A LANGUAGE



As his very recent obituary in *The Times* (September 28 2020) explained, Derwent May was told by a 'French lady acquaintance ... that to perfect the language he should change his mistress as often as his sheets. He achieved passable French'.

Lesbia ait: 'Graecam si vis ediscere, Gai,  
multa puellarum basia quaerere opus'.

Gaius, a, periit, multis defletus amicis:  
Graece composuit carmina pulchra satis.

**A.D'A.**

*'Gaius, if learning Greek's your aim' (his Lesbia said),  
'Persuade Greek women by the hundred into bed'.  
Bewept by many now, he's passed away.  
His Greek was pretty good, is what they say.*

## A BREXIT LAMENT

*What does Brexit mean? What Brexit is actually an exit?  
How, where, when will Britain Brexit?  
Now, after 45 years, it's necessary to Brexit (if that's the verb):  
for wasn't the remain-supporting vote less than that for leave?  
Yes, the voice of the people is the voice of god; but a voice repeated becomes  
[an echo: 5  
surely referendums of the people shouldn't be referred back to them?  
Now it's much better for Britons to look to the future:  
what novelty will a life outside bring?  
I could ask more questions, but prefer to seek after better things:  
it doesn't befit Europhiles such as us to complain incessantly.*

10

*For, after Brexit from Europe, our song in praise of them will retain thereafter  
no small drop of love, favoured by winds from the East.*

Quid sibi uult Brexit? qui Brexitus exitus ipse est?  
quomodo, qua, quando terra Britannia Bregat?  
nunc post lustra nouem Bregere—an Brexire?—necesse est :  
parsne fuit Remanens parte Abeunte minor?  
uox populi, diui est; at uox repetita fit echo : 5  
num referenda hominum sunt referenda retro?  
est grauius multo spectare futura Britannis :  
quid referet nobis exera uita noui?  
quaerere plura queam; meliora requirere malo:  
Europhilos ut nos dedecet usque queri. 10  
nam, Brecta EUropa, non paruam noster amoris  
stillam Euro paeon inde fauente teget.

**David Butterfield**

#### MEMORIAL FOR XANTHE WAKEFIELD

μνήμα τόδε Ξανθῆς καλλισφύρου, ἧ ποτ' ἔδωκε  
Ζεὺς φρένας· ἀλλ' αὐτὰς ρεῖ' ἀπόφερσεν Ἔρως.  
*Remembering lovely Xanthe, to whom once Zeus above  
Gave a mind, too easily swept away by Love.*

**C.L.**

#### AN OLYMPIC EXCHANGE (2012)



*Men greet the Games with unrestrained delight,  
and give no thought to all the money splashed.  
For those now cheering looms an endless blight:  
impoverishment, debt — and London trashed.*  
πάντες Ὀλυμπιακοῖσι διηνεκὲς ἄνδρες ἀγῶσι  
τέρπονται, δαπάνης δ' οὐ τις ἔχει μελέτην.  
τοῖσι δὲ νῦν χαίρουσι μένει ποθὲν ἄσπετος Ἄτη—

τὸ χρέος, ἢ πενία, χῆ πόλις οὐλομένη.

**C.L.**

*But those who triumph in the Muses' game  
will earn not money, but unstinting fame.*

ἀλλ' ἐν Πιερίδων εὖ νικήσασιν ἀγῶνι  
ἔσσεται οὐ κέρδος γ' ἄφθονον ἀλλὰ κλέος.

**A.D'A.**

## **CENTENARY POEM**

The Roman Society to the Classical Association

*Long-lived and venerable patron  
of the Latin language, we piously honour you,  
freely providing (as you do) fine  
precedents for our Society.*

*Wherever the learned hold colloquia,  
it is organised with you, where  
frosts descend on the shivering Brits,  
or the sun warms*

*grateful limbs in kindly regions.*

*Ever unmoved 'in difficult times'  
in war, in peace, you stood fast.*

*And now through ten times ten years  
you flourish. If the study of Latin thrives  
(though lacking the support of the Senate),  
it will be a fitting tribute to your learning  
to celebrate you in our song.*

longaeva faulrix et venerabilis  
linguae Latinae, te colimus pii  
    exempla nostro porrigentem  
    clara Sodalicio libenter.  
quacumque docti colloquium parant,  
tecum peractumst, sive ubi frigora  
    urgent rigescentes Britannos,  
    sive ubi sol calefactat artus  
gratos benignis in regionibus.  
immota semper 'rebus in arduis'  
    per bella, per pacem stetisti.  
    iamque decem decies per annos  
flores: Latinae si studium viget  
(quamuis senatus subsidio carens)  
    insigne doctrinae decebit



carmine te celebrare nostro.

**C.L.**

### SUTCLIFFE AND NIELSEN

τίς σύ; φονεύς. καὶ τίς σύ; φονεὺς ἐγώ, ὃς μάλα πολλοὺς  
ἔκταν'. ἐγὼ πολλάς· χαῖρε, φίλ' ἠδὲ φονεὺ!

*'Who are you?' 'A murderer. And you?' 'A murderer too—  
who killed many men.' 'I, many women.' 'Dear murderer, toodle-oo!'*

**C.L.**

### JOHN OWEN (1616-83)



An independent-minded theologian—‘The Calvin of England’ (and the Martial?)— he was made Dean of Christ Church by Oliver Cromwell. Here are some of his amusingly curmudgeonly squibs (*squibo squibere*), translated by **A.D’A.:**

*‘tempora mutantur; nos et mutamur in illis.’  
quomodo? fit semper tempore peior homo.  
‘Times change and we all change with them along’;  
How? Human beings just go from wrong to wrong!*

*esse in natura vacuum cur, Marce, negasti?  
cui tamen ingenii tam fit inane caput.  
‘Nature abhors a vacuum.’ Marcus, that what you said?  
Of course it does, and there’s no vacuum greater than your head.*

*Orpheus uxorem raptam repetiuit ab Orco;  
duxit ab inferno femina nulla uirum.  
Brave Orpheus brought his wife back from the Underworld, they tell:  
No woman that I’ve heard of ever spared her man from Hell.*

Libertas—carcer, pax—pugna, dolenda uoluptas.  
spes metuens, mel—fel, seria—ludus: Amor.  
*It's freedom-gaol, war-peace, hell-heaven above,  
Hope-fear, sweet-sour, a deadly game: that's Love.*

uno non possum, quantum te diligo, uersu  
dicere; si satis est distichon, ecce duos.  
*I love you so, one line of verse won't do;  
Perhaps a couple will? Well, here are two.*

### THE THREE FATES

Author Unknown



*I am grateful, genitive Lachesis, for thine having  
Chosen also me from myriad millions for the  
Precious gift of nascent living and life intending.  
To thee, Clotho, who allowed me to weave my little  
Thread into the Cosmic Tapestry, having lived a  
Life beyond my share and even my hopes transcending.  
Near life's close, I thank thee, Atropos, certain that thou  
Will bestow on me that last of all earthly blessings  
Shearing short the dreadful prospect of life unending.*

πρῶτον μὲν Λάχεσιν ζωήφορον αἰνέσω, ἥπερ  
πρόσθ' ἀπὸ μυριάδων κήμοι ἔδωκε βίον.  
Μοῖρα, γέρας παρέδωκας ἐμοὶ μάλα τίμιον, ὥστε  
νῦν ἐνὶ γηγενέταις ἡρέμας εὐθαλέω.  
εἶτα πρέπει, Κλώθω, δαῖμον πολύσεμνε, σ' ἀείδειν  
ἥπερ ἐμοὶ βίον μακρότερον παρέχεις  
ἐνθάδε γηρασκόντι παρ' ἐλπίδας· ὥστε συνῆψας

κῆμὸν ἐς ἀθανάτων νῆμά τι μικρὸν ὑφάς.  
νῦν δὲ καθιστάμενόν με μόρου πέλας, Ἄτροπε, λεύσσεις·  
ναιχί, πολύμνηστος σοὶ χάριν οἶδα, θεά,  
δωσοῦση μοι ἄριστα καὶ ὕστατα δῶρα· τὰ ποῖα;  
μὴ ζῆν ἀτλήτως αἰδίδιον βίοτον.

C.L.

### ODYSSEUS TO PENELOPE: From inside the Wooden Horse Obviously Ovid ...



Mykonos Museum

*Dear Wife, This letter comes to you from near the Trojan shore,  
where I'm concealed inside a jerry-built machine of war.  
Excuse the awful handwriting, it's all over the place:  
the reason is, my elbow's jammed in Demophöon's face.  
You'll notice that the ink I'm writing with is mixed in blood; 5  
don't worry, it's his leg, not mine, that gives a steady flood.  
The fact is this: I'm stuck inside a giant wooden horse  
constructed by Epeus—'laced with oaken ribs', of course.  
We chose the crew by throwing lots, the hardest lads together;  
I only wish the hardest lads weren't all as tough as leather. 10  
To what should I compare the situation that we're in?  
It feels as if we're packed like bloody sardines in a tin.  
The tickle up my nose from Thoas' crest I can't abide,  
And now Thersander's quiver's poking holes in my backside.  
The Trojans rolled us into town, they heaved us rough and quick; 15  
I've always hated sailing; as you know, it makes me sick.  
Right now they're throwing spears into the horse's flank to check;*

*at any moment soon, I'm sure, I'll get it in the neck.  
Penelope, farewell. If I get out of here alive,  
I'll only ever go by foot, I swear, and never drive.*

20

**A.D'A.**

hanc tibi Troiano chartam de litore mitto:  
machina me belli subtilis, uxor, habet.  
quod prave scribo, quod linea saepius errat,  
urgebat cubitus Demophoonta meus:  
neve atramentum timeas de sanguine factum,  
hunc laticem illius, non mea, crura dabant.  
scilicet in magno (nuper fabricavit Epeus  
intexens costas ilice) condor equo:  
corpora lecta virum sortiti immisimus illuc;  
lecta utinam minus his corpora dura forent!  
haud secus angustae conferti in finibus ollae  
Sardinii pisces, squamea turba, latent.  
titillat nasum misero mihi crista Thoantis,  
Thersandri pungit tota pharetra latus:  
hinc illinc mediam volverunt Troes in urbem;  
pessimus, heu, semper (scis bene) nauta fui;  
nunc etiam missis tentant hastilibus alvum:  
haesura in bracis iam puto iamque meis!  
Penelope, valeas; hinc me si fata benigna  
protulerint, ibo tempus in omne pedes.

5

10

15

20

**Ronald Knox (*Salopian* magazine, 1921)**

### **ETON'S 550TH ANNIVERSARY, 1990**



A classroom

*It will be a pleasure to celebrate your five hundred years  
to which ten lustra are now added.  
If anywhere monuments to famous men arise,  
The greatest share of glory will—believe it—be yours.  
How many leaders, kind patron, did you nurture for us,*

5

*whom you steered with no harsh guiding hand?  
It was a pleasure to see many boating triumphs on the river:  
many a laurel was given to your crew.*

*Look! The game is on with bats on no unyielding pitch:  
more often was Harrow laid low at your feet.*

10

*Here the devotion to learning had its own rewards:  
More learned yourself, you moreover supplied the  
[learned to the populace.*

saecula quinque tibi celebrare, Etona, placebit,  
lustra quibus iam sunt accumulata decem.

sicubi clarorum surgunt monumenta virorum,  
pars decoris semper maxima, crede, tuast.

quot proceres nobis, o faulrix alma, fovebas,  
quos regis haud dura tu moderante manu?

5

flumine remorum placuit vidisse triumphos  
multos; remigio laurea multa datest

luditur en! clava necnon glomeramine duro;  
saepius ante pedes sternitur Herga tuos.

10

doctrinae studium hic habuit sua praemia: doctos  
praeterea populis, doctior ipsa, dabas.

**C.L.**

### **ON THE ELEVATION OF LORD KREBS**

(Principal of Jesus College Oxford 2005-15):



olim Cancer erat, sed solum nomine prauus:  
nobilis, ecce, redit qui modo Cancer erat.

*There was a man whose name was Krebs,  
but crabby just in name.*

*He who was 'Crabby' once, behold,  
a noble Lord became.*

**A.D'A.**

## MOTTO FOR A HOME FOR RETIRED ACTORS

*uitae uela prius nemo scaenamue relinquat  
primas quam partes egerit arte sua.*

From life's bright stage let none release their soul,  
Till on the boards they've played a starring role.

**A.D'A.**

## THE MAD GARDENER'S SONG

Lewis Carroll



He thought he saw an Elephant  
That practised on a fife:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A letter from his wife.

'At length I realise,' he said,  
'The bitterness of Life!'

ἐλέφαντ' ἔδοξε μουσικὸν σκοπεῖν τότε  
αὐλοῦντα ταῖς σύριγγιν εὐηχὲς μέλος·  
ἔργω δ' ἐπιστολή τις ἦν ἀλόχου πάρα·  
'τέλος δ'', ὅδ' εἶπε, 'πικρότητ' ἔγνω βίου.'



He thought he saw a Buffalo  
Upon the chimney-piece:  
He looked again, and found it was  
His Sister's Husband's Niece.  
'Unless you leave this house,' he said,  
'I'll send for the Police!'

ἔστηκεν ὡς ἔδοξεν ἐστίας ὑπερ  
ταῦρός τις. ἔργω δ' ἦν ἀπωτέρω γένει  
ἀδελφιδῆ. 'τόνδ' οἶκον ἐκλιπεῖν σε χρῆ,  
ἀλλῶς δέ,' φησί, 'δεῖ καλεῖν τοὺς τοξότας.'

He thought he saw a Rattlesnake  
That questioned him in Greek:  
He looked again, and found it was  
The Middle of Next Week.

'The one thing I regret,' he said,  
'Is that it cannot speak!'

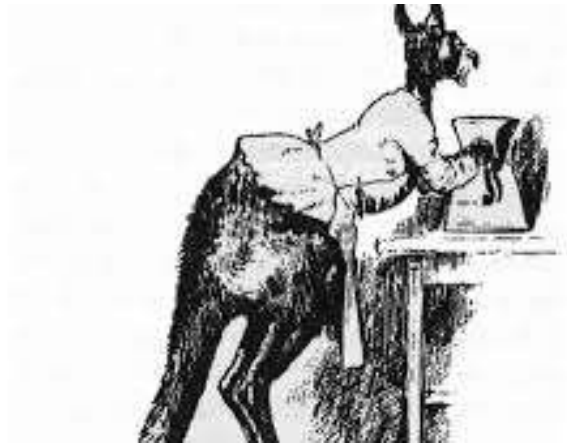
ὄφιν νοσῶδη προσδοκᾷ σκοπεῖν ποτε  
ἐλληνικῶς λέγοντά θ' ἱστοροῦντά τε·  
ἔργω δ' ἀελπτῶς μῆν' ἐπιόντα πως ὄρᾳ.  
εἶπεν δέ, 'κείνου δυσφορῶ τῷ μὴ λαλεῖν.'



He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk  
Descending from the bus:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Hippopotamus.

'If this should stay to dine,' he said,  
'There won't be much for us!'

ἔδοξ' ὄνειρῳ γραμματέως ὄρᾳν κάρᾳ  
ἐκ τοῦ πορείου καταμολεῖν εἰς γήπεδον.  
πάλιν σκοπῶν εἰσεῖδε ποτάμιον μέγα  
δάκος. 'μεθ' ἡμῶν', φησὶν, 'εἰ δειπνεῖν θέλει,  
σ μικρ' ἂν τὰ λείψαν' ἡμῖν ἂν δήπου μένοι.'



He thought he saw a Kangaroo  
That worked a coffee-mill:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Vegetable-Pill.

‘Were I to swallow this,’ he said,  
‘I should be very ill!’

βλέπειν ἔδοξε θηρίου πηδήματα  
δεινοῦ νέμοντος μηχανὴν σοφώτατα  
ποτηματοποιόν· φάρμακον δ’ ὄντως ἔφυ  
φυτικόν· ‘νοσοίην κάρτ’ ἂν εἰ ῥοφῶ τόδε,’  
ὁ φιτοποιήτην φησί, ‘δυσθύμως πάνυ.’

He thought he saw an Argument  
That proved he was the Pope:  
He looked again, and found it was  
A Bar of Mottled Soap.

‘A fact so dread,’ he faintly said,  
‘Extinguishes all hope!’

ἔδοξεν ἐνθύμημα σημαίνειν τόδε·  
ὑψιστος ἱεὺς ἐστὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας·  
ἔργῳ δὲ ῥύμμ’ ἦν ποίκιλον. ‘τὸ χρῆμ’ ἀπλῶς  
δεινόν γε’, φησὶ δυσκριτῶς, ‘ἐλπίς δ’ ἐμοῦ  
φροῦδος τὸ πᾶν νῦν ἐστὶν· ὦ τάλας, τάλας.’

**C.L.**



## *BELLARIA XXVIII*



The next few *Bellaria* will range far and wide over the unexpected or not obvious derivations of those words taken into English whose roots lie in Latin and Greek.

But first, it is worth reminding ourselves of the broader picture of how English, a Germanic language, came to be so richly infiltrated with Latin and Greek, with such glorious consequences for the capacity of English to express different tones, shades, colours through its variety of different lexical bases.

### *DERIVATIONS (1)*

#### THE ROOTS OF THE ENGLISH 'CLASSICAL' VOCABULARY: A SUMMARY

The term 'Anglo-Saxons' covers Frisians from Holland, Saxons from North Germany, and Angles and Jutes from Denmark. All their languages are 'Germanic'. Since it is that language that the Anglo-Saxons brought over with them to these islands from the 5th C AD, displacing Celtic and whatever Latin was still spoken, English too is a Germanic language.

Till then, we were, as the Romans called us, *Britanni*, living in *Brit(t)an(n)ia*. They derived these names from the discoveries of the famous Greek explorer Pytheas (4th C BC). He called these islands *Pretannikê*, probably because the locals called themselves *Pretani* or *Priteni* ('painted people').



Pytheas: what the well-dressed traveller is wearing

Though in the classical tradition we still lived in Britannia, with the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons,

(i) we got another name, 'Engla Land'. ('England' is not recorded till the 16th C.);  
(ii) as a result of which, the Romans now called us *Angli*. Famous joke: when Pope Gregory (d. 604) first saw pale Angle slave boys, he was so impressed he said 'Not *Angli*, but *angeli*, if they became Christians'. The reaction to this screamer is not recorded.

(iii) Interestingly, the Roman historian Tacitus (c. AD 98) refers to a Germanic tribe called the *Anglii*, living on the south Denmark/north German border.



*Non angli sed angeli, si forent Christiani* (Westminster Cathedral)

### From Latin into Anglo-Saxon and English

The Anglo-Saxons who came here had been trading with Romans for a long time and their vocabulary had adopted a lot of Latin words. As a result, Anglo-Saxon gave us 'wine' (via Latin *uinum*), 'mile' (*mille passus*), 'beer' (*bibere*), 'street' (*strata*), 'cheap' (*caupo*), 'sock' (*soccus*), 'sack' (*saccus*).

### Church Latin and Greek, from the 6th C AD

From the 6th C AD these islands were Christianised, and the church brought with it a panoply of technical terms into the language, both Latin and Greek.

**From Latin:** mass (*missa*), altar (*altar*), preach (*praedico*), verse (*versus*), epistle (*epistula*), provost (*praepositus*), noon (*nona* 'the ninth hour'), creed (*credo*), disciple (*discipulus*).

**From Greek,** transmitted into Latin and latinized: school (Greek *scholê* 'leisure', Latin *scola*), apostle (*apostolos* 'sent out', *apostolus*), acolyte (*akolouthos* 'follower', *acolitus*), hymn (*humnos* 'song', *hymnus*), deacon (*diakonos* 'servant', *diaconus*), bishop (*episkopos* 'overseer, attendant', *episcopus*), psalm (*psalmos* 'plucking', *psalmus*), angel (*aggelos* 'messenger', *angelus*), martyr (*martus* 'witness', *martyr*), demon (*daimôn* 'divinity', *daemon*), paradise (*paradeisos* 'garden', *paradisus*), choir (*khoros* 'chorus', *chorus*).

Our 'church' has its origin in Greek *kuriakon* ('the Lord's House'), late Greek *kurikon*, Saxon *cirice*, German *Kirche*. The Latin for 'church' was *ekklêsia*, French *église*, Italian *chiesa*, our 'ecclesiastical'

### The Norman Conquest 1066

But the big one was yet to come. As a result of William Duke of Normandy's conquest in 1066—these Norsemen get everywhere—we *Englisc* were ruled by the French for some 300 years. French being a dialect of Latin, the result was a dramatic increase in Latin-based vocabulary. Thousands of words entered our language at this time via French; but—driven by the wider cultural world opened by the arrival of the French—also *directly* from Latin.



William the Conqueror

Asterisked words derive from Greek:

### From French 1150-1450

Constable, court, government\*, liberty, parliament, peasant, prince, revenue, statute, tax, tyrant\*; accuse, arrest, assault, convict, crime, decree, depose, evidence, fraud, heir, indictment, inquest, judge, libel, perjury, prison, punishment, verdict; abbey, anoint, baptism\*, cathedral\*, charity\*, communion, convent, creator, crucifix, faith, heresy\*, homily\*, mercy, miracle, religion, repent, saint, salvation, schism\*, theology\*, vicar, virgin, virtue; anatomy\*, calendar, clause, copy, gender, geometry\*, gout, grammar\*, logic\*, medicine, metal, noun, pain, physician\*, plague\*, pleurisy\*, poison, pulse, sphere\*, square, stomach\*, surgeon\*, treatise.

### Directly from Latin 1150-1450

Many of these words are of a professional and technical nature. They include:

#### *Law and administration*

Arbitrator, client, conspiracy, conviction, custody, homicide, implement, legal, legitimate, memorandum, pauper, prosecute, summary, suppress, testify.

### Science and learning

Allegory\*, comet\*, contradiction, diaphragm\*, discuss, equator, essence, explicit, formal, history\*, index, intellect, item, library, ligament, magnify, mechanical\*, prosody\*, recipe, scribe, simile.

The language alone tells us a lot about what is going on at this time. Some idea of the impact of this massive new vocabulary can be gathered from the prologue to Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* (AD 1400): in 858 lines, there are nearly five hundred French loan words.



'And that's one of the ones I borrowed on long loan. Very long loan.'

### Doublets

We now find the linguistic phenomenon known as 'etymological doublets' emerging. French derives from vulgar (i.e. 'every day', Latin: *vulgus* 'mob') Latin. By the medieval period, this Latin had undergone very considerable transformation in becoming French; and it was this French that William the Conqueror imposed on England.

Example: Latin *fragilis* means 'breakable'. In the course of its francification over hundreds of years, it became *fraile*. Thanks to William it entered English and became 'frail'.

But English also borrowed directly from the *original* Latin, and in that process *fragilis* turned into 'fragile'.

Here are two other examples:

Latin *traditio* became French 'traison', and our 'treason'; directly, it became 'tradition'.

Latin *pauper* became French 'pauvre' and our 'poor'; and directly, 'pauper'.

There is even an etymological triplet: Latin *ratio* became French 'raison' and our 'reason'; and directly from Latin it became both 'ration' and 'ratio'.

## The return of Greek 1450-1650

Another important development was the re-emergence of Greek into Europe. It had died out in the West with the collapse of the Roman Empire there in the 5th C, but when Ottoman Turks started to threaten Constantinople and its Greek libraries in the 14th C, a trade in Greek manuscripts started up in order to bring them to Italy and thence into the West, saving them from probable destruction.



The letter in which Cardinal Bessarion (d. 1472) announced that he was leaving his collection of manuscripts—482 Greek, 264 Latin—to the library of St Mark's in Venice

Given the deep respect in which the ancient world was held, it is no surprise that scholars, scientists and doctors now scoured ancient Greek for the language they needed to describe the dramatic developments in their disciplines at this time. For in the wider world, the Americas were being opened up (Columbus 1492) and Copernicus was re-organising the solar system (1543); and over the next few hundred years Aristotle, Hippocrates, Galen and Ptolemy would gradually be replaced as supreme arbiters of the physical, scientific and medical worlds.

So from this period we welcomed:

Adapt, agile, alienate, allusion, anachronism\*, anonymous\*, appropriate, atmosphere\*, autograph\*, capsule, catastrophe\*, chaos\*, climax\*, contradictory, crisis\*, criterion\*, critic\*, disability, disrespect, emancipate, emphasis\*, encyclopedia\*, enthusiasm\*, epilepsy\*, eradicate, exact, exaggerate, exist, explain,

external, fact, glottis\*, harass, idiosyncrasy\*, larynx\*, lexicon\*, malignant, monopoly\*, monosyllable\*, obstruction, pancreas\*, parasite\*, parenthesis\*, pathetic\*, pneumonia\*, relevant, scheme\*, skeleton\*, species, system\*, tactics\*, temperature, tendon, thermometer\*, tibia, tonic\*, transcribe, ulna, utopian\*, vacuum, virus.

By this time, a language recognisable as modern English had formed. This, after all, is the world of Shakespeare (1564-1616) and the Authorized Version of the Bible (1611). (The great journalist Frank Johnson once called it the 'St James' Version': *The Times* failed to correct it). And it still goes on, even faster and more urgently, to meet the increasing demands of the scientific, medical and technological worlds.

### The resistance

This new vocabulary was not universally welcomed. John Cheke was appointed first Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge in 1540 when Greek as a subject was still in its infancy. He inveighed against the pollution of English in his letter to Sir Thomas Hoby, July 16 1557:



What a Cheke

'I am of this opinion\* that our tongue should be written clean and pure\*, unmixed\* and unmangled\* with borrowings of other tongues, wherein if we take not heed by time, ever borrowing and never paying\*, she shall be fain to keep her house as bankrupt\*. For then doth our tongue naturally\* and praisably utter her meaning, when she borroweth no counterfeitness\* of other tongues to attire\* herself withal.'

I pedantically asterisk those words of non-Germanic origin.

Indeed, in 1573, Ralph Lever proposed a new series of delightful non-Latinate terms for the study of logic—'endsay' was proposed for 'conclusion', 'ifsay' for 'condition', 'naysay' for 'negation', 'saywhat' for 'definition', 'shewsay' for 'proposition' and 'yeasay' for 'affirmation'.

### Ancient linguistic 'purity'

Such debates continue to this day, but there is nothing new about them. Greeks and Romans had been arguing the toss over precisely the same issue—the ‘purity’ of language—since classical times.

Inevitably, it started with the Greeks. In the diversified world of the 5th C BC city-state, the Greek language was already expressed in many different dialects, which Greek ‘colonising’ settlers took all over the Mediterranean. When King Philip II’s Macedonian court conquered Greece in the 4th C BC, the decision was made to adopt Attic Greek (the dialect of the Athenians) as the standard dialect, which already enjoyed high prestige anyway as the literary language of the Greek world. So it was this dialect that was taken East by Alexander the Great on his way to conquer the Persians and then, of course, to march on as far as India, constructing a ramshackle ‘empire’ as he went.



Spot the Attic Greek

But what was the literary and intellectual élite of this new ‘Greek’ world, many of whom would not have had Greek as a first language, to make of this? How could they be certain they were speaking, but much more important writing, it correctly? What were the educational implications? *Hellênismos*, a Greekness ‘faultless in respect of rules and without careless usage’ became a priority for them. The Greeks even had an adjective for ‘speaking incorrectly’—*soloiikos* (cf. our ‘solecism’), said to derive from the Athenian colonists of Soloi in Cilicia (southern Turkey) what had forgot how to talk proper.

### **A Greek purist**

Take, for example, the 2nd C AD Greek grammarian Apollonius Dyscolus (‘the grouch’). Apollonius took strongly against ‘those who say there is no right and wrong in such matters, and assume that [linguistic] phenomena have all been established by chance, as unconnected’.

He argued that, if you examined traditional orthography, you could see that there were historical reasons behind word-formation and spelling. These generated rules that could then be learned. As a result, it was possible to identify spelling errors and correct them. If there were no rules, one could not do that.

The same, he argued, applied to every aspect of language. If you examined the whole tradition of language usage, you could see it was governed by rules, and rules could be applied, and ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ usage therefore established. Exceptions, as ever, simply proved that rules existed—otherwise how could you tell they were exceptions?



## Pompey's problem



Pompey the not so Great

The Romans followed suit. A splendid example is the problem Pompey came up against when he was preparing to consecrate his Temple to Victory in 55 BC. He wanted to say that he was 'consul for the third time'—but what case should he put it in? Should he be *consulem tertium* ('for the third time', accusative, expressing time 'throughout', i.e. consul throughout the whole of the year) or *consule tertio* (the ablative *tertio* expressing time 'when', i.e. consul in the year)?

Overwhelmed by the intractability of this apparently insuperable problem, he consulted widely but could get no definitive answer. So he gave up and went to Cicero to make the final decision. He mulled a bit and suggested he abbreviate it and write *cos. tert.* So he did. Years later, when the wall containing the inscription fell down and was rebuilt, the number of the third consulship was indicated by III.

### The educational implications

The Graeco-Latin based vocabulary listed above reads like a handbook of the language of secondary and higher education. The child who is to graduate successfully from its earliest lexical range—the basic Anglo-Saxon of primary education—to this increasingly Graeco-Latin 'register' of secondary and higher education will have no problems if that register is standard in their home. Those for whom this is not the case may well struggle. It is then up to schools to offer a linguistically rich environment accessible to everyone.

This clearly is a situation in which Latin and Greek can make an important contribution, as *Classics for All* has been demonstrating up and down some very deprived areas of the UK.



## DERIVATIONS (2)

The next few Bellaria will range far and wide over words whose roots lie in Latin and Greek, and were taken into English.

### Education

It is often said that 'education' derives from *êdûcô*, 'I lead out', because it 'leads out' our young into a wider world. But *êdûcô* is third conjugation, and its 4th principal part is *êductum*. In fact, 'education' derives from *êducô* (short 'u'), 4th p.p. *êducâtum*, meaning 'tend, support the growth of, nurture, rear', of animals and plants, as well as humans.



Education

## Selection

Debates about selective education do not go away, and ‘select’ is full of interest. It all goes back to *legô*, 4th p.p. *lectum*. Its basic meaning is ‘I gather, pick, pluck’, and gets its common meaning ‘I read’ because the reader *picks out* the letters to make a word.

Our ‘select’ derives from *sêligô*, 4th p.p. *sêlectum*, a combination of the prefix *sê* ‘apart’ + *ligô* (note *e* becomes *i*), i.e. ‘I pick out (and put) apart’, used primarily of weeds! E.g. Ennius: ‘When he found oat and darnel among the wheat, he *picked it out*, separated it off and carried it away’, an image from gardening. So that’s what selective education is all about—getting rid of unwanted weeds (and, presumably, wets).



Selective education

## Pupils

Ah, pupils! *Pupa* means ‘doll’ and in the diminutive forms *pupillus* and *pupilla* were used of a minor, under the care of a guardian. When Nero fell hopelessly in love with Poppaea but refused to divorce his wife Octavia because his mother Agrippina objected, Poppaea rounded on him, calling him a ‘*pupillus*, dependent on someone else’s orders, in control neither of your empire nor your freedom!’ (Agrippina did rather have that effect on people.) One can see how the word came to be used of the young in schools.

Incidentally, *pupa* came to be spelled *puppa* in everyday (‘vulgar’) Latin, and is the source of our ‘puppet’ and the endearment ‘poppet’.

But what has this got to do with the pupils of your eye? This is, of course, the black hole in the middle of the eye, through which light passes to hit the retina, enabling you to see. Evidently it is so called because when you look into someone else's eye you can see there a *diminutive* version of yourself or, in the case of James Bond, a villain creeping up behind to bean you.

Pliny the Elder commented that when a man lets go of a bird, it will usually make straight for his eyes because it sees there an image of itself which it knows and wants to reach.



Watch the birdie

## Discipline

Another word for 'pupil' is *discipulus*, from *disco* 'I learn', cf. 'disciple' and *disciplina*, which like our 'discipline' ranges from a 'subject of study' to 'orderly conduct'. In the ancient world discipline in that sense often meant physical punishment. But in the modern world, we take a gentler approach: we like to inculcate e.g. good learning habits. Actually, *inculco* 4th p.p. *inculcatum* meant 'I trample down on, tread in (with the heel)', hence 'impress on someone's mind'. It derives from *calx*, 'a heel, a kicking': Ouch.



Real teaching

## This sporting (educational) life

*Curro* means 'I run' and provides significant educational terms: 'course', from *cursus*, 'a run, progress, development, career'; *curriculum* 'a running, race, race-track, chariot', but metaphorically 'course of action, way of behaving', with *vitae* 'the life-

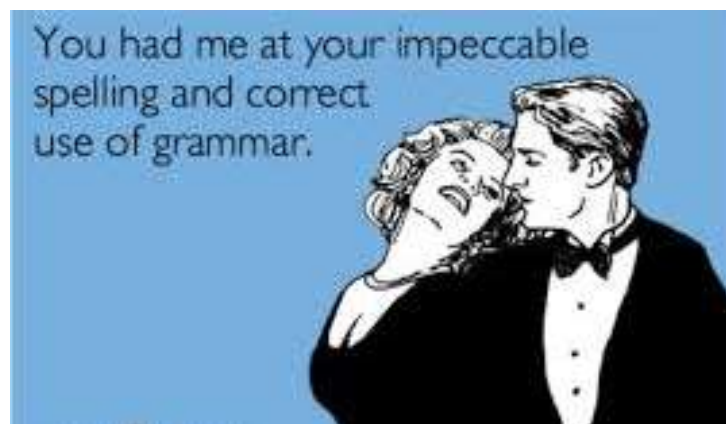
course you have run so far'. Chariot races were of course run in the *circus*, a circular or oval place where games were held. School as circus?



Latin class

### The beauty of grammar

Not many pupils would think of grammar as an alluring subject, but words have always been felt to hold some mysterious, even bewitching, occult power. The result was that the Scottish word 'gramarye', derived from 'grammar', meant 'magic, enchantment' and then 'magical beauty'. The so-called 'liquid' letters 'r' and 'l' are often interchanged, and 'gramarye' over time evolved into 'glamer' and finally our 'glamour'.



Glamour boy and girl

### Grade...

comes from Latin *gradus*, 'step', 'pace', 'rung' (of a ladder) and so 'a degree of relationship', 'position, rank', 'a degree of comparative quality'. The word derives from 'I step, walk', *gradior* 4th p.p. *gressus*—, producing *progredior* 4th p.p. *progressus* and with different prefixes e.g. congress, regress, digress, ingress, egress, etc.

### Numbers' game

Latin numbers are fairly common, but Greek comes into its own with the really big ones: when bytes are in the millions, they are *mega* (Greek *megas*, 'big'), in the billions *giga-* (*gigas* 'giant') and in the trillions *tera-* (*teras*, 'monster'). (Apparently byte is an intentional misspelling of 'bite' to distinguish it clearly from 'bit', a binary digit of value 0 or 1 on a computer. 'Bits' are usually formed into groups of eight to form a 'byte'.)



A petabyte swallowing a terabyte swallowing a gigabyte

**Note:** *Peta* is apparently ‘derived’ from πέντε (*pente*), meaning ‘five’, minus the ‘n’. It denotes the fifth power of 1000 (1000<sup>5</sup>).

## Computing

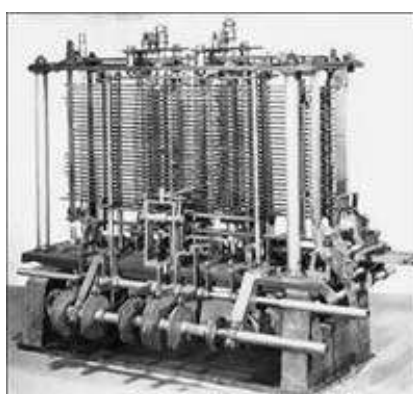
Which leads seamlessly on to computers. *Computo*, 4th p.p. *computatum* means ‘I calculate, reckon up’. Its root word *puto* ‘I think’ is basically another gardening image: it means ‘I prune, make clean, tidy up’; then ‘purify’ of gold, and also of financial ‘accounts’—‘tidying them up’, resulting in ‘assessing’ them.

Thinking, then, is a form of ‘tidying up’, ‘assessing’ what goes on in the brain. The prefix *con-* often expresses ‘completeness’—hence *computo*, thinking right through something to a conclusion, and so ‘I reckon up’.

## Digital Stone Age

Pliny the Younger mentioned a court case he conducted about a contested inheritance, and said at one stage he had to do some calculating (*computo*), and ‘practically demanded pebbles and a board’ (*calculos et tabulam*) to do it. He also talked of a man ‘moving his lips, twiddling his fingers ...’ as he does his sums (*computat*). Nothing new about the digital world, then (*digitus*, ‘finger’).

That word *calculus*, ‘stone, pebble’, give us ‘calculate’, of course. The Greek for ‘pebble’ was *psêphos*, with which jurors voted guilt or innocence, whence psephology—an attempt to give a *logos* (Greek ‘word, account’, ‘reckoning’, from Greek *legô* ‘I gather, pick, say’) of people’s voting habits.



Iron Age computer

## PIE

That's odd: why are Latin *legô* and Greek *legô* so similar in form and meaning? It is *not* because one derives from the other. It is because they both have a *common* linguistic ancestor—Proto-Indo-European, or PIE, as it is called. This is the name given to the *one* language from which the Latin, Greek, German and Sanskrit languages can all be proved to have descended. Linguists reconstruct the PIE form as \*leg-e/o 'collect' (\* denotes a non-existent reconstructed form)

## Molecules

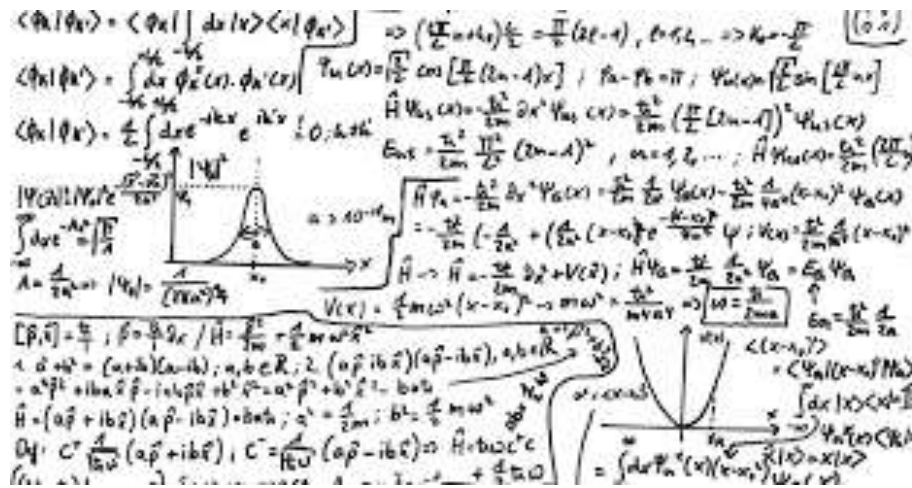
Hereby hangs a tale. Atomism was invented by the Athenians Democritus and Leucippus in the 5th C BC. Greeks up till then had faced a serious problem. If the world was basically made up of one stuff—which they apparently believed, for reasons that are unclear—how come the world appeared to be made up of thousands of obviously different stuffs? How could one stuff change into them all? Atomic theory explained that the one stuff was an *atomos*: below the level of perception, it could not be split, filled the universe, and formed all of the world's different substances by differing forms of aggregation and combination.

This theory did not catch on, largely because Aristotle rejected it: he clung to the old Greek theory that the world consisted of variations on the themes of earth, air, fire and water (he added aether), which held sway until the 17th C. That was when a manuscript of the Roman poet Lucretius (1st C BC) was discovered. It contained his extraordinary six-book poem *On the Nature of the Universe*, till then wholly forgotten. In it, he 'proved' that everything about the human and natural world could be explained by atomism. It was seized upon by scientists convinced that Aristotle was wrong—and atomic particle theory was founded.

In 1678 this new particle theory spawned the term *molecula*, 'molecule'. It was derived from the Latin *môlês* which meant 'a vast, gigantic, monstrous mass' (giving us our 'mole', a huge breakwater to hold back the sea). The *-cula* ending, however, is a diminutive. So *molecula* means 'a small vast, gigantic, monstrous mass'. Naturally, no Roman would ever have envisaged such an idiotic word. It was used to describe what atoms congregated into.

## Quantums

*Quantus* means 'of what size? How many? How great?', and gives us 'quantity' etc. It also gives us *quantum*. This is almost universally taken to mean 'big, huge', as in 'a quantum leap'. In fact, it means precisely the reverse. Quantum physics studies *quanta* (pl.), the universe's matter and energy at its minutest, most fundamental level, where the laws of physics are very different.



Spot the mistake

## Quotations

Classical Latin had many *quot-* words, asking questions about number, proportion, etc. (e.g. *quotiens*, our ‘quotient’). As a result, one might guess there was a Latin word *quoto*, 4th p.p. *quotatum*. There was, but it is medieval, not classical, Latin. *Quoto* derived from *quotus* ‘What position in a series?’, and meant ‘I distinguish by numbers’. From the 16th C it was used to mean ‘I mark with numbers in the margin’ and so ‘I cite, refer to’.

The sense of quote as ‘give us price for something’ (i.e. ‘give us a “how much?”’) is a 19th C invention, vaguely (but inaccurately) connected to *quot-* based words.

## Sceptics

Today, scepticism about our political decision-making is all the rage, because everyone except the government knows exactly how to handle the corona virus, and demonstrates it by refusing to do anything the government suggests, with what results we can see all around us.

But this is not what scepticism was originally all about. It was invented as a philosophy by the Greek thinker Pyrrho (360-270 BC). Since he wrote nothing himself, we depend on later sources, but broadly he believed that ‘suspension of judgment is the only justified attitude with respect to any proposition’ (including that proposition). The aim was to help people live at peace with themselves and not spend all their time worrying about right and wrong courses of action.

And the Latin for sceptic? *Pyrrhoneus*, a follower of Pyrrho. There is no Latin word *scepticus*. The word, in fact, derives from *skeptikos*, Greek for someone who is thoughtful and reflective. Its verb form is *skeptomai* ‘I look about carefully, examine, consider’ implying ‘without coming to a conclusion’.

Not many sceptics about today. *Everyone* (apart from the government) knows best.





I can't believe it's Tuesday *already*

## Philosophy in Latin

While we are on the subject of philosophy, there is a good reason why Greeks were the philosophers: they invented the subject and the language. It was Cicero who took the Greek and latinised it, providing us with a range of Latin options.

In some cases, the Greek word was simply written in Latin, e.g. *philosophia* from φιλοσοφία. But some words created problems. Cicero debated how to translate Greek *sôphrosunê* (σωφροσύνη), 'moderation, self-control' as follows: 'Sometimes I call it *temperantia*, sometimes *moderatio*, sometimes also *modestia*. But I do not know whether this virtue could better be termed *frugalitas*...'



I think I prefer *mediocritas*

## Some philosophical terms

As a result of Cicero's and others' efforts, the following technical terms came from Greek via Latin into English:

Greek *êthikos* (ἠθικός), 'to do with ethics' >*moralis*, 'morals';

Greek *philanthrôpia* (φιλανθρωπία), 'love of mankind' >*humanitas*, 'humanity';

Greek *epistêmê* (ἐπιστήμη) 'knowledge' >*scientia*, 'science';

Greek *hormê* (ὁρμή) 'energy, impulse' >*appetitus* (animi), 'appetite';

Greek *ousia* (οὐσία) 'unchanging reality' >*essentia*, 'essence';

Greek *poiôtês* (ποιότης) 'what-sort-of-ness' >*qualitas*, 'quality';

Greek *idiôma* (ιδίωμα) 'special character, unique feature' >*proprietas*, 'property' in a philosophical sense ('what is the property of electricity?').

## Terminology

'Terminology' is the -logy, Greek *logos*, 'a rational account of' a *terminus*. What on earth does 'terminology' have to do with King's Cross station? *OLD* is no help on this urgent matter.

Here I admit to consulting higher authority—the *Spectator's* Dot Wordsworth. She, unlike myself, has access to the full *OED*, whose entry she emailed. This sent me off to Liddell and Scott under ὄρος (*hóros*), 'boundary, landmark'. Lo, under ὄρος IV we find Aristotle using it to mean (a) 'term of a proposition', and (b) 'definition'; and *OED* goes on to say that the Roman philosopher Boethius (6th C AD) translated ὄρος by the word *terminus*.

So 'terminology' means 'giving a rational account of terms/definitions', from which 'term' was spun off in the 16th C. Note that word 'definitions' (Latin *definitio*)—all about *fines*, 'boundaries, limits'.



*End of the journey*



### ***DERIVATIONS (3)***

The next few *Bellaria* will range far and wide over words whose roots lie in Latin and Greek, and were taken into English.

One of the reasons for the success of Christianity was that Christians worked within the political, social and cultural framework of paganism, slowly reconstructing it as Christian. For example, D.O.M. is often seen on Roman inscriptions: *Deo Optimo Maximo* '[dedicated to] God Greatest Best', i.e. Jupiter, a very ancient form of address. Christians happily took it over, referring to the Christian deity.

## Churches

Christians regularly built churches on pagan sites, but they did not resemble Greek or Roman temples: they resembled the Roman *basilica* (via Greek *basileus* 'king'), a quasi-royal, magnificent double-colonnaded hall, used for legal and other civilian purposes but now taken over for Christian purposes, in particular, holding a congregation, and featuring an apse. Contrast pagan temples: they housed the god, who was worshiped outside, at the altar.



Santa Sabina (5th C AD)

## Vicars, dioceses and bishops

In the late third century AD, the emperor Diocletian faced a major financial crisis. In order to increase the tax take, he greatly enlarged bureaucracy across the Roman Empire. He replaced the original forty-two provinces with 120 areas, grouped into twelve 'dioceses' (*διοικêσις*, 'administration'), each led by a *uicarius*, 'deputy, substitute', an official taking over the role of a praetorian prefect. (And, incidentally, military command of these new regions was handed to *duces*, 'leaders, generals', whence our 'dukes'.)

Christians reworked these functions. Each of their new administrative 'dioceses' was overseen by an *episcopus* (Greek *episkopos*, 'overseer, guardian') i.e. bishop, who was Christ's *vicarius* 'substitute' on earth. ('Vicar' became the term for a parish priest, 14th C). 'Bishop' does actually derive from *episcopus*: Saxon English dropped e- and final -us, leaving *piscop*, softening the -sc- into sh.

## Zeus, god of diaries

What do the day, a journal, Diana, Zeus, *Iup(p)iter* (Jupiter), Jove, and the Latin for a god (*deus*) all have in common? Answer: the same PIE root.

That root is *\*dei-u-o-*. It seems to have meant 'bright sky', very appropriate for Jupiter and Zeus, who were gods of the bright sky. No surprise, then, that the Latin for 'day' was *dies*. *Diurnus* meant 'daily', and is the source of our 'journal', and *diarium* was indeed a 'diary'.

One can see how ‘Zeus’ (who in Greek was pronounced ‘Sdeus’) and Latin *deus* line up with \**dei-u-o-* + terminal *s*. But what about *Iuppiter*? *Iuppiter* is in fact a combination of \**dei-u-o-* + *pater* (‘bright sky’ + ‘father’). He sometimes appears in Latin as *Diespiter*.

Further, \**dei-u-o-* also produced the stem *diu-*, as in *diuinus* and the goddess *Di(u)ana*. That ‘u(v)’ appears again in the stem of *Iu-ppiter*, which was *Iou-*, → ‘Jove’. In astrology, birth under the planet Jupiter bestowed a cheerful frame of mind, → ‘jovial’.

## Temples

The derivation of Latin *templum* is not secure. It has been associated with Greek *temenos* ‘sanctuary, a place “cut off”’. When, for example, a priest examined the flight of birds to try to divine the will of the gods, the first thing he did was to use the correct procedure to ‘cut’ or mark out a space in the sky—the *templum*—where the relevant birds would appear. On land, a *templum* was a piece of ground marked out for the gods, and then the building constructed on it.

Our word ‘template’—a pattern or gauge for shaping a piece of work—derives from *templum*. So does ‘contemplate’, as in someone watching attentively for an augury from a *templum*.



Syracuse Cathedral, complete with columns from 5th C BC temple of Athena  
Photographed by Giovanni Dall’Orto (2008)

## Golgotha or Calvary?

In the crucifixion story, the Greek New Testament turned Hebrew ‘Golgolet’ into Greek ‘Golgotha’, and when that name is mentioned, the Gospel texts all explain the name - ‘which means/is called/is in Hebrew/ the place of the skull’ (Greek *kranion*, cf. ‘cranium’). But in *Luke*, Golgotha is not mentioned and the Greek simply says, ‘and when they came to the place which is called *Kranion*’. Which is wrong. It was called (in Greek anyway) Golgotha.

St Jerome produced the definitive Latin version of the Gospels, correcting the previous Latin ones and presumably using his knowledge of Greek in the process. He translated 'place of the skull' as *calvariae*, gen. s. of *calvaria*, 'skull'. Fine.

But when it comes to *Luke*, he translated it 'and when they came to the place, which is called Calvariae'—which the Authorised Version turned into 'and when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary'.

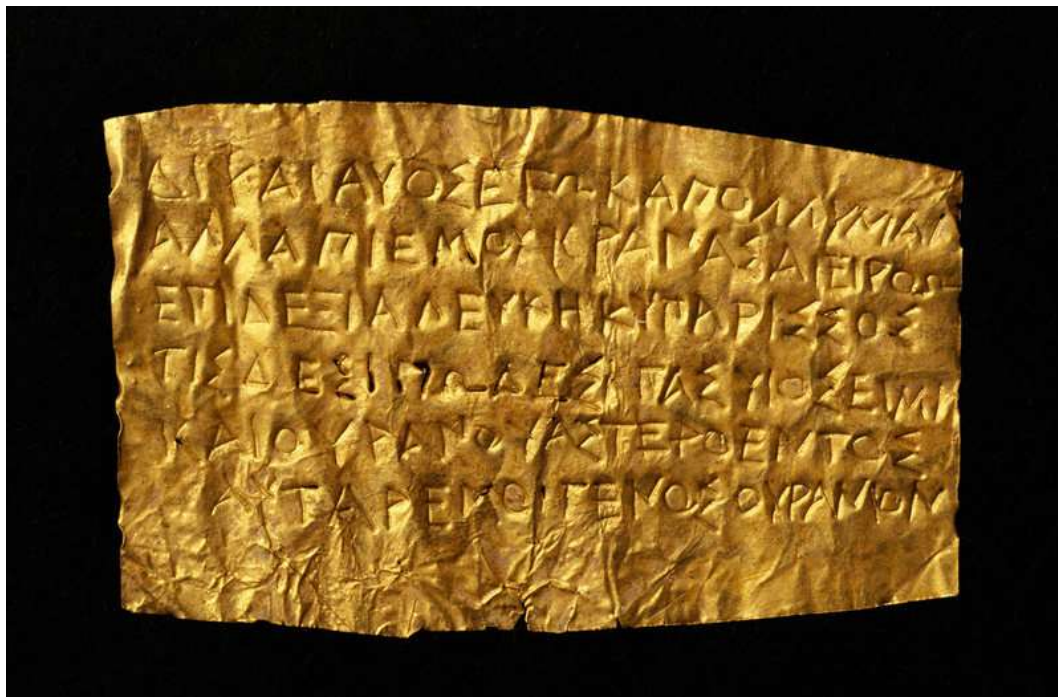
Modern translations have corrected this and translate 'which is called the Skull'. So, alas, Calvary is no more, together (I suppose) with all those hymns mentioning it. 'Skull' and 'cranium' do not have the same ring, somehow.



Golgotha: spot the skull

## Elysium

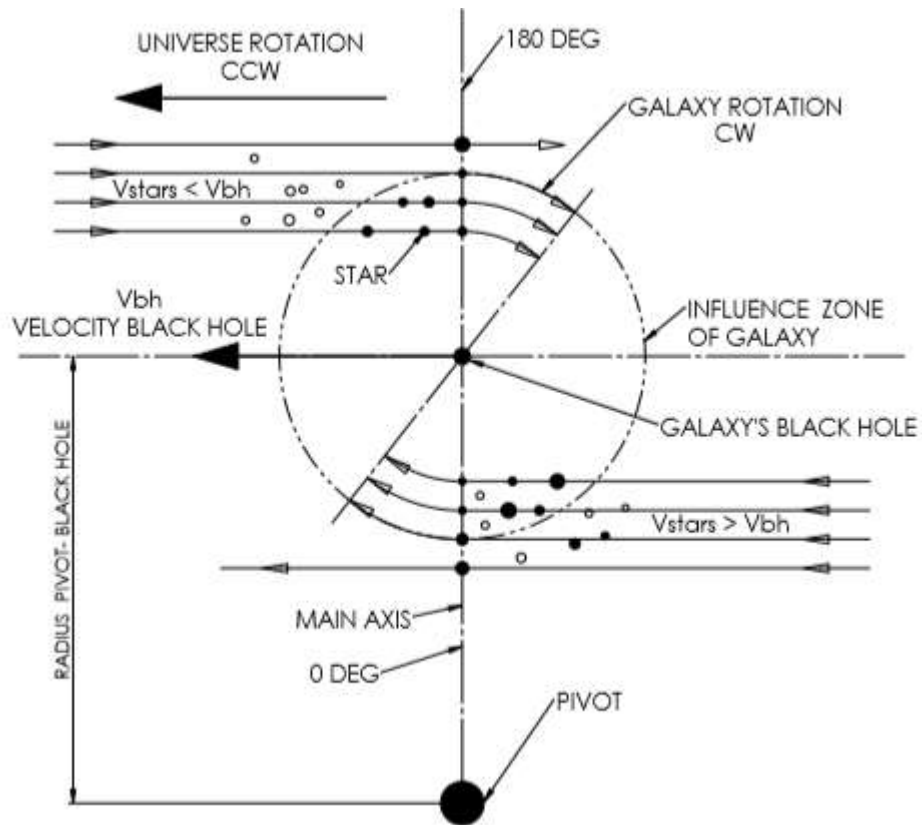
Used of the abode of the blessed after death (but this was just one of any number of pagan beliefs about the afterlife), *Élusion* was associated with places that were struck by lightning (Greek *êlusia*) and therefore set apart from worldly use—rather as York Minster was, when the genial David Jenkins, the bishop who 'did not believe in the Bible', was consecrated there as Bishop of Durham in 1984. Far from demonstrating divine wrath, it actually demonstrated divine approval...



Gold Orphic *lamella*, a passport to Elysium

### Cardinals, and others

Latin *cardo cardin-is* meant 'hinge, pivot' and was used of the pivots or poles on which the universe rotated round the earth; hence 'essential, principal', used of **cardinals** in the Catholic church as well as numbers, sins, virtues and points of the compass. **Angels** were messengers from God (Greek *angelos*, 'human messenger', 'envoy'); an **apostle** (Greek *apostolos*) was 'one sent out', 'ambassador', 'envoy' of God; an **acolyte**, Latin *acolytus*, a minor assistant in religious ceremonies, came from Greek *akolouthos*, 'follower'; the **devil**, Greek *diabolos*, 'one who slanders, accuses, misrepresents', became 'deofol' in Anglo-Saxon, whence 'devil'; **priest** derives either from Latin *presbyter* 'elder' → Anglo-Saxon 'preost' → 'pries't, or Latin *praepositus* (as in 'preposition'!) → Germanic 'prest' → 'priest', cf. 'provost'; clergy (cleric, clerk) all find their origin in late Latin *clericus* from Greek *klêros* 'voting token, lot; allotment, piece of land'—no one is clear precisely why; a **pagan** derives from Latin *paganus* 'countryman, peasant'. But it also meant 'civilian' as opposed to 'soldier'. Apparently, when Christians began calling themselves 'soldiers for Christ', *paganus* was applied to those who were not such soldiers, and therefore must be 'heathens'; finally **cretin** (French *crétin*) whose origin is uncertain but some derive it from *christianus*, first used in the eighteenth century to refer to mentally or physically disabled people, not to abuse them but to remind people that they were humans after all.



Pivot of the universe (a black hole)

## Chancel

At racecourses, courts and theatres, Romans put up barriers in order to control the crowds. These often took the form of grilles or gratings in a lattice or criss-cross pattern. The poet Ovid wrote a poem about going to the races to try to win the favour of his girl. They sat down in the front row, but her legs were too short to reach the ground. So, gentleman that he was at least pretending to be, he suggested she inserts her toes into the grating.

The Latin word for this grille/grating was *cancellus*, also used of the criss-cross lines on an elephant's hide and is the source of our 'cancel'—which you do by using a pen to *cross* things out. It also gives us 'chancellor'—these days a powerful governmental or university official, but originally a *cancellarius*, the humble door-keeper guarding the emperor's palace behind a grill, or a legal scribe sitting behind a grating separate from the crowds. The 'chancel' in a church was originally the lattice barrier that divided the choir and altar from the nave, and then became the term used of that protected space around the altar.





Chancel screen

### **Grace**

Our 'grace' in the sense of God's unmerited goodwill or favour derives from Latin *gratia*. Its Greek equivalent was *kharis* (χάρις, cf. 'charity'). Both words had meanings rooted in the idea of reciprocity, i.e. the social requirement to return benefits (or injuries) tit-for-tat. This was a key feature of ancient values. Christianity put a quite different gloss on the idea: God's favours, freely given, were impossible to reciprocate.

### **Religio**

The root meaning of pagan *religio* centred on ideas of constraint, impediment, prohibition and fear, evoking feelings of awe and reverence and on the other the need for appeasement through ritual, e.g. sacrifice, Latin *sacrifico* lit. 'I make something sacred' and therefore remove it from human use.

'Faith' did not come into it: acknowledging the existence and power of deities by carrying out the right rituals at the right time did. But the derivation *religio* remains a matter of guesswork: from *religo* 'I bind, constrain'? *Relego* 'I review, consider carefully' (Cicero's analysis, because the *religiosi* were people who 'rehearsed and studied afresh all the ritual involved in divine worship')?



A sacrifice

### **Superstitio**

In Latin *superstitio* meant 'irrational religious awe or credulity'. It derives, bafflingly, from *sto*, 'I stand', and *super*, 'over, above'; and its adjective *superstes* meant

‘survivor’. As an adjective *superstitiosus*, it meant ‘in a state of religious exaltation, ecstatic’. Deep derivational waters here, Watson: does it hide the idea that ‘proper’ religion took a long time to shake off all this original, superstitious stuff?

Literature tells us much about such superstitious practices: astrology, witchcraft, calling up the dead, curse tablets and voodoo dolls were all commonplace. In his *Characters*, Theophrastus (fourth century BC) described ‘the superstitious man’ as someone who went far beyond normal religious devotion, e.g. he would not walk on if a weasel crossed his path unless someone went before him, or he had thrown three stones across the road.

The first century BC statesman Cicero saw ‘*religio* as a term of respect, *superstitio* one of contempt’. He defined *superstitio* as ‘pointless fear of the gods’ and contrasted those who explained the world ‘through the superstitions of fortune-telling hags’ with those who did so ‘through explanations based on natural causes’.

In other words, the gods had ordered the universe so that it was comprehensible; and *religio*, with its various cults and ritual, reflected that ordered comprehensibility. Admittedly, Cicero still had doubts about taking auspices, for example, but thought on balance they were ‘harmless’.

Roman authorities, however, took *superstitio* very seriously if it seemed to threaten Roman order: magic books, the use of drugs for sinister ends, alternative religions (e.g. Christianity, Druidism) could all evoke the state’s intervention.



Devices against the Evil Eye (Antioch)

## Augury

The behaviour of birds was seen as a particularly potent indicator of divine (dis)pleasure. The religious official who worked bird-auguries was called an *augur*—its derivation from *augeo* ‘increase’ (if true) is hard to explain—or an *auspex* (*avis* ‘bird’ + *spex* ‘watcher’, from the *spec-* root → ‘inspect’ etc.). An augury gained from avian behaviour was an *auspicium*, whence our ‘auspices, auspicious’. The *haruspex* read entrails.



*Haruspex hard at work*

### Fascinating stuff

The poet Tibullus (first century BC) told how a witch had given him a spell with which he could bamboozle his lover's husband:

'I've seen her bringing stars down from the sky,  
reverse fast-flowing rivers with her song.

Her spells can split the ground, lure up the dead,  
summon bones from smoking pyres ...'

The Latin for 'casting a spell' was *fascinatio*, and a thing that cast a spell was a *fascinum* 'evil spell, bewitchment'. *Fascinum* also meant 'penis', and 'phallic amulet, worn round the neck as a charm'. Well, always worth a try, I suppose. Let Pliny the Elder expand on the matter:

'Infants are guarded by *Fascinus*, and so too are generals. *Fascinus*, dangling from under the chariot of a general celebrating a triumph, protects him from envy. The worship of *Fascinus* is overseen by the Vestal Virgins.'

We are told that a large version thereof was the object of their worship.



From Amazon (currently unavailable)

## **Numen**

Latin *numen* (our ‘numinous’) meant literally ‘nod’ and came to have a religious significance as a ‘divine or supernatural power or influence, divine presence, deity’. When two young Trojans in Aeneas’ army proposed a daring expedition against enemies in Italy, an old soldier praised the god under whose *numen* Troy had been sheltered for continuing to look after them. Ovid talked of places you saw of which you could say ‘there is a *numen* here’. Objects too could be imbued with *numen*.

## **Ritual**

This has connection with our ‘rite’, but not our ‘right’ (a Germanic word related to kings, cf. Reich). It comes from Latin *ritus*, ‘ceremonies, practice’, which shares links with Greek *arithmos* ‘number’, in the sense of counting things off in the correct order. Ceremony was popularly derived from Latin *caerimonia* (‘sanctity, reverence, rituals’), supposedly referring to religious rituals associated with the Etruscan town of Caere (the *-monia* ending is linked with activity as well as quality). But that is folk-etymology. Or, as the POTUS (though he doesn’t drink: so what is he on?) would say, ‘fake etymology’.

## **Cult**

*Cultus* derived from *colo*, ‘I inhabit, cultivate, adorn, look after, care for, practise, foster’ and embraced knowledge about, and active caring for, everything to do with the gods. This included caring for their holy places, such as temples and shrines, and the ceremonies and rituals with which they were worshipped.

## **Cult statues**

Our ‘statue’ derives from Latin *statua*, whose root was *sto* (*stat-*), ‘I stand’, and was something fixed in the ground to remain upright (one’s stature—*statura*—was and is one’s height in an upright position). To throw a *statua* to the ground was therefore to deny its very nature, a tremendous insult. When Roman emperors were thrown out of office in disgrace, their statues were usually uprooted—together with their status (same derivation), their ‘standing’, in the world.

A cult statue was normally called a *simulacrum*, a simulated image (*simulo*, ‘I pretend, counterfeit’), because one could not tell what a deity actually looked like; by contrast, the usual term for a human statue was *imago*, a ‘representation’, ‘reflection’, as in a mirror.



This is an extract selected for you as part of Classics for All’s ‘Bellaria’ series to cheer us up during the COVID-19 pandemic. The full series of weekly instalments may be found on our website [classicsforall.org.uk/bellaria/](https://classicsforall.org.uk/bellaria/)