

BELLARIA (XXII)



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

Colloquia (1)

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 CAD, 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 *Bellaria* 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.

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. ἐγερθεὶς ἐκάθισα ἐπὶ τοῦ ἐνηλάτου τῆς κλίνης. ἤτησα ὑποδήματα καὶ περικνημίδας· ἦν γὰρ ψῶχος. | 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. |

ὑποδεθεῖς οὖν
ἔλαβον ὠμόλινον.
ἐπεδόθη
καθαρόν.
προσηνέχθη ὕδωρ
πρὸς τὴν ὄψιν
εἰς ὀρνόλην.
ᾧ ἐπιχυθεῖς
πρῶτον χειῖρας,
εἶτα κατὰ τὴν ὄψιν
(ἐνιψάμην)·
καὶ τὸ στόμα ἔκλεισα.
ὀδόντας ἔτριψα
καὶ οὖλα.
ἐξέπτυσα
τὰ ἄχρηστα
ὥς τινα ἐπήρχοντο,
καὶ ἐξεμυξάμην.
ταῦτα πάντα
ἐξεχύθησαν.

ἐξέμαξα τὰς χειῖρας,
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
καλῇ κληδόνι,
ἀκολουθοῦντός μοι
παιδαγωγῷ,

calciatus ergo
accepi linteum.
porrectum est
mundum.
allata est aqua
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,

*But no top! Presumably something was
lost here*

So then having been shod
I received a linen towel.
A clean one was handed [to
me].

Water was brought
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,

ὀρθῶς διὰ τῆς στοᾶς
ἤτις ἦγεν
εἰς τὴν σχολήν.

εἴ τινές μοι γνωστοὶ
ὑπήντησαν,
ἤσπασάμην αὐτούς· καὶ
ἐκεῖνοι ἐμὲ
ἀντησπάσαντο.

ὥς δὴ ἦλθον
πρὸς τὴν κλίμακα,
ἀνέβην διὰ τῶν βαθμῶν,
ἀτρέμα, ὥς ἔδει.

καὶ ἐν τῷ προσχολίῳ
ἀπέθηκα βίρριον.
καὶ κατέψηξα
τρίχας.

recte per porticum
quae ducebat
ad scholam.
sicubi mihi noti
occurrerunt,
salutavi eos; et illi me
resalutaverunt.

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

et in proscholio
deposui birrum:
et demulsi
capillos.

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.

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, παῖ 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 <i>This wealthy pupil owns books and small notebooks</i> |
| 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 is medieval, its meaning not 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⟩ Ῥωμαῖστι 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 the school</i> |
| Διδάσκω σε, ἐάν με πρόσσχης. | Doceo te, si me attendas. | ‘I [shall] teach you, if you pay attention to me.’ ‘Look, I’m paying attention.’ |
| Ἴδού, προσέχω. Καλῶς εἶπας, ὡς πρέπει τῇ εὐγενείᾳ σου. ἐπίδος μοι, παῖ, τὸ ἀναλογεῖον. | Ecce, attendo. 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 (heavier) codex, not a papyrus roll, but see revolve 5b</i> |
| ταχέως οὖν ἐπίδος | cito ergo porrige | So, quickly hand [me] |

τὸ βιβλίον,
ἀνείλησον,
ἀνάγνωθι μετὰ φωνῆς,
ἄνοιξον τὸ στόμα,
ψήφισον.

librum,
revolve,
lege cum voce,
aperi os,
computa.

the book,
turn [to the right place],
read aloud,
open your mouth,
count.

Perhaps the first exercise

ἄρτι καλῶς ποιήσον
τόπον, ἵνα γράψῃς
ἄμιλλαν.

modo bene fac locum,
ut scribas
dictatum.

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

Ἐστὸν μισθὸν
οὐκ ἤνεγκας;

Mercedem
non attulisti?

'Didn't you bring the
tuition money?'

Always an issue in private schools

Ἦιτησα τὸν πατέρα
καὶ εἶπεν·

Petivi patrem
et dixit:

'I asked my father,
and he said,

Ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἐλεύσομαι
ἐκεῖ ἅμα.
θέλω γὰρ
καὶ ἀπόδειξιν
λαβεῖν.

Ego ipse veniam
ibi noviter.
volo enim
et experimentum
accipere.

"I myself will go
there at once.
For I want to have a
demonstration [of your
progress] too."

Πρᾶξον οὖν ἐπιμελῶς,
ἵνα ἐτοιμὸς 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.*

Ἐτοιμὸς εἰμι· ἦψα γὰρ
τὸν λύχνον καὶ νύκτωρ
ἐμελέτησα.

Paratus sum; incendi
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

λευκάνον τὸ πυξίον,

dealba buxum,

'Whiten the tablet,

κάθησο καὶ γράψον.
ὀρθὸς
ἐνεάζεις;
τὰς κεραίας ποίησον
τῶν γραμμάτων.
<εἰς> τὸ μέλαν
τὸ σὸν ὕδωρ ὀλίγον
<βάλε>.
ἰδοὺ ἄρτι καλῶς ἔχει.

sede <et> scribe.
rectus
stupes?
apices fac
litterarum.
<in> atramentum
tuum aquam paucam
<mitte>.
ecce modo bene habet.

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.

<Ἐπίδος> τὸν κάλαμον,
ἐπίδος τὸ σμιλίον.
Ποταπὸν θέλ(ε)ις;
Ὅξὺ θέλω
(ἢ ἀμβλύ).
Ὅξὺ θέλεις;
διὰ τί;

<Porridge> cannam,
porrige scalpellum.
Quale vis?
Acutum volo
(aut hebes).
Acutum vis?
qua re?

See, now it is fine.’
*The ink thickened as the water
evaporated out*
‘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?’

*Pens were made of e.g. reeds, soon
blunted on e.g. ostraka*

The Truant

Ἐχθὲς ἤργησας
καὶ δείλης
εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν
(ἔπαιζες)
οὐκ ἦς.
ἐγὼ σε ἐζήτησα
καὶ ἤκουσα πάντα
παρὰ τοῦ τροφέως
σου, ἅπερ ἐποίησας.
Ψεύδεται
ὃ σοι εἰπὼν,
ἦγεν γὰρ με
ὁ πατήρ μου
εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον
μεθ’ ἐαυτοῦ.

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.

‘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.e. the provincial governor’s
headquarters*

προσηγορεύθη
ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχόντων
καὶ ἐπιστολὰς ἔλαβεν

salutatus est
a magistratibus
et epistulas accepit

He was greeted
by the magistrates
and he received letters

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| ἀπὸ τῶν κυρίων τῶν ἐμῶν τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων· καὶ εὐθέως προῆλθεν εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ ἔθυσεν τῷ αἰωνίῳ καὶ τῇ νίκῃ τῶν αὐτοκρατόρων, καὶ κατήλθεν. | a dominis meis imperatoribus; et continuo ascendit in templum et immolavit pro aeterno et victoria imperatorum, et descendit. | from my masters the emperors; and immediately he went up to the temple and made a sacrifice for the eternity and victory of the emperors, 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. Ἀφορμὰς ζητεῖς πράττ(ε)ιν καὶ οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι αἱ ἀργίαι τοὺς παῖδας ἀπαιδεύτους ποιοῦσιν. δ(ε)ῖξον, ἴδω, πῶς ἔγραψας; καλῶς λίαν; ἄξιός εἰ δαρῆναι. ἰδού, συγχωρῶ σοι. σήμερον δὲ ὑπάγε καὶ ἀρίστησον, καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀρίστου ταχέως ἐλθέ. καλὰς ὥρας. Καλῶς σοι γένοιτο. | hodie autem condiciones audit ab hora prima. Occasiones quaeris agere et nescis quod feriae pueros indoctos faciunt. 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. | But today he is hearing disputes from the first hour.' 'You look for pretexts for doing things and you don't know that holidays make boys ignorant. 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.' |

Next week: going to the baths, a trip to the bank, and visiting the sick.



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/