



TEACHING CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

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M Using Manuscripts in the Latin Classroom

L Latin in the Homeschooling Community

R Reading the Aeneid with Intermediate Latin Students: The New Focus Commentaries (Books 1-4 and 6) and Cambridge Reading Virgil (Books I and II)



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Teaching Classical Languages welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek.

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Editor's Introduction

John Gruber-Miller

Earlier this fall, I took twelve students to Italy as part of my Roman Archaeology course. Walking the ancient triumphal way, seeing the Forum or the Colosseum, feeling the tufa and marble, hearing people hawk their wares makes the ancient city come alive, especially for the students, in a way that books cannot. At the same time, the ease of electronic communication in today's Rome—websites, mobile phones, email, Google maps and GoogleEarth—has transformed how we interact with each other and view the monuments. If we get lost, we call or look up our location on a small screen that shrinks the world into the size of our palm.

This balance of the tangible, concrete reality of Rome and the virtual world on our phones and computers is evoked in the articles in this issue of *Teaching Classical Languages*. Inspired by unexpectedly discovering a 15th century manuscript of Lucan's epic poem *Bellum Civile* in his university's library, Mark Thorne decided to share the excitement of seeing and touching this tangible link to the original text with his beginning Latin students. Prompted by his discovery he explored other manuscripts in the Chicago area, and in "Using Manuscripts in the Latin Classroom" he has created a guide for teachers who wish to make ancient texts come alive by exploring medieval manuscripts, their layout, marginalia, illuminations, and history. And while he encourages teachers to visit larger libraries that may have manuscripts for students to read and feel and turn the pages, he also includes many images and links to manuscripts that can bring these primary documents into the classroom, at least virtually. And manuscripts are hot. More continue to be scanned and uploaded to the web each day. Just last month, University College London [announced](#) the creation of an online digital library of Greek history and culture, including hundreds of rare manuscripts. Witness also the 2012 Pulitzer Prize for General Non-fiction, awarded to Stephen Greenblatt's [The Swerve: How the World Became Modern](#) (W. W. Norton). The book details the 15th century re-discovery of a manuscript of Lucretius' then-lost *On the Nature of Things*, traces the life-cycle of manuscripts, describes how the humanist font was invented, and more.

Our second author, Christine Hahn, teaches in a setting much different from the rest of us, the homeschooling community. She guides students as they learn Latin, both face-to-face in a homeschooling cooperative, but also online, answering their questions through electronic media. As she became more involved with this online community, she wanted to learn more about what motivates homeschooling families to insist on teaching their children Latin, how they teach it, and what textbooks they use. In "Latin in the Homeschooling Community," she reports on a survey of 349 homeschool families about the demographics, teaching methods, and motivations of this important group of Latin enthusiasts. Her survey poses important questions about how teachers in mainstream schools and colleges can welcome these students to our programs, what strengths they have as Latinists, and how homeschooling and traditional school communities can help each other succeed at teaching Latin more effectively.

Finally, in Antonia Syson's review article we come full circle to epic poetry and how well the new commentaries on the *Aeneid* succeed at making Vergil's poem accessible to Latin students coming to it at the intermediate level and beyond. Her wide-ranging review compares the new Focus series of *Aeneid* commentaries and the new Cambridge *Reading Virgil* to the older, standard commentaries of Pharr and Williams. Her ideal commentary asks students to read the text

in Vergil's word order, listen to the sound and meter of the poetry, and emphasize critical enquiry and substantive exploration of the multiple layers of texts and intertexts in the poem. To make the format of these new commentaries more concrete, Meghan Yamanishi, *TCL* assistant editor, has scanned sample pages from the new commentaries so that readers can gain a sense how the new format compares not only to Pharr and Williams, but also to the format of the illuminated Vergil manuscript illustrated in Figure 9 in Mark Thorne's article. I hope that you enjoy this journey from the tangible world of Italy and manuscripts to the electronic publication of these articles in this issue of *Teaching Classical Languages* complete with hyperlinks, illustrations, tables, and figures.

***Teaching Classical Languages* Mission Statement**

Teaching Classical Languages (ISSN 2160-2220) is the only peer-reviewed electronic journal dedicated to the teaching and learning of Latin and ancient Greek. It addresses the interests of all Latin and Greek teachers, graduate students, coordinators, and administrators. *Teaching Classical Languages* welcomes articles offering innovative practice and methods, advocating new theoretical approaches, or reporting on empirical research in teaching and learning Latin and Greek. As an electronic journal, *Teaching Classical Languages* has a unique global outreach. It offers authors and readers a multimedia format that more fully illustrates the topics discussed, and provides hypermedia links to related information and websites. Articles not only contribute to successful Latin and Greek pedagogy, but draw on relevant literature in language education, applied linguistics, and second language acquisition for an ongoing dialogue with modern language educators.