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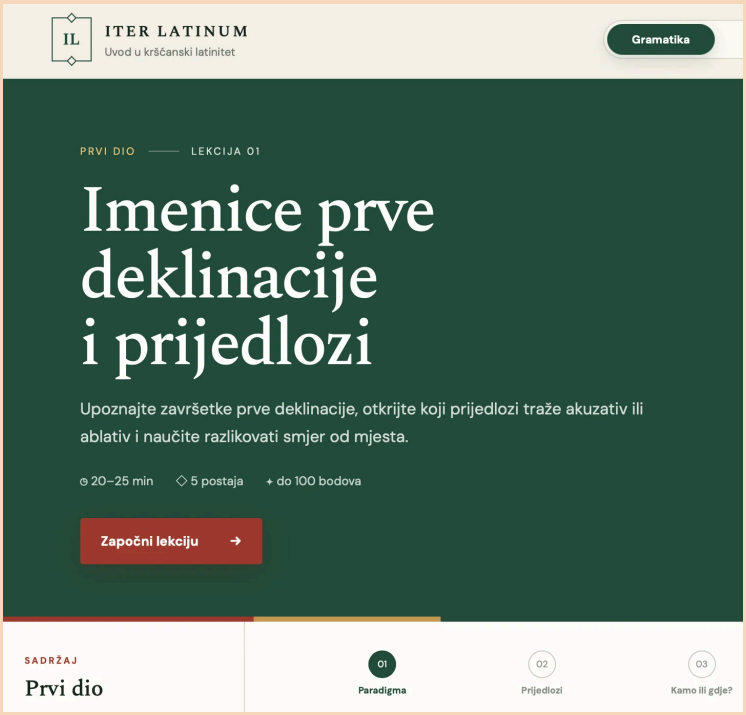
August Newsletter

Dear Friends of Lingua Latina,

As the summer heat finally begins to loosen its grip and thoughts turn towards the new academic year, we're delighted to bring you a

particularly full newsletter. This month we have three things to share: a brand-new interactive learning platform to accompany our Latin handbook, a new guided reading from one of the greatest works of Latin literature, and a podcast episode about the surprising history hidden in what Europe ate.

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New Learning Platform: Iter Latinum

We are thrilled to announce *Iter Latinum*, an interactive learning platform designed as a digital companion to the handbook *Uvod u kršćanski latinitet* (*Introduction to Christian Latinity*). Like the handbook, the platform is in Croatian and aimed primarily at students of theology, history, art history, and related disciplines who need a practical grounding in Latin – especially the Christian, late antique, and medieval forms of the language.

The platform follows the structure of the handbook's thirty lessons, and the first five units are now complete. They cover the first and second declensions, the four conjugations, the present and

imperfect tenses, the verbs *sum*, *possum*, and *eō*, the imperative, the personal, relative, and interrogative pronouns, numerals, and the foundations of subordinate clauses.

Rather than presenting grammar through static tables alone, each unit unfolds as a sequence of five short learning stations: classification tasks, form recognition, sentence analysis, contextual exercises, and a final challenge. Immediate feedback helps explain why an answer is correct, and progress is stored locally on your own device, so you can leave and return without creating an account or submitting any personal data. A separate vocabulary section lets you practise unit by unit or across everything you've completed, working from Latin to Croatian, Croatian to Latin, or both, with each card markable as 'to revise,' 'unsure,' or 'learned.' Verbs always appear in their full dictionary form, so the vocabulary stays useful as you advance.

As the course develops, *Iter Latinum* will grow to include all thirty lessons and their vocabulary. It is a genuine step towards making the handbook not just a book but a complete learning environment.

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This Month's Guided Reading: Augustine at the Theatre

On the blog this month, we've published a guided reading from one of the towering works of Latin literature: Augustine's *Confessiones*. The passage opens Book 3 and finds the young Augustine newly arrived in Carthage – sixteen or seventeen, soon fatherless, and, by his own account, "in love with loving." It contains one of the most quoted sentences in the whole work: *nondum amabam, et amare amabam*, "I was not yet in love, and I was in love with loving."

The second half turns to the theatre and asks a question that has never lost its force: why do we want to feel pain while watching a tragedy, when we would do anything to avoid suffering in real life? Augustine's analysis of why we weep at staged sorrows – and enjoy it – anticipates debates philosophers would still be having centuries later.

This is upper intermediate Latin (B2), though it is harder than it looks: the vocabulary is manageable and the sentences mostly short, but the density of antithesis, repetition, rhyme, and untranslatable puns is remarkable. For that reason, the analysis

spends less time on basic constructions and more on what the Latin is doing that no translation can show – beginning with the opening pun, where *Carthago*, the city's name, all but turns into *sartago*, a spitting frying-pan of scandalous loves. As our analysis notes: if you've ever stayed up too late finishing a film that was making you thoroughly miserable, Augustine had this argument with you around the year 397. You'll find the full text and detailed commentary in the Readings section of our website.

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New Podcast Episode: Companaticum, or What Went With the Bread

Episode 5 of Latin with Marina and Marcus is now live on Spotify – and this time, Marina and Marcus sit down to dinner. Food, as Marina argues, is a language, and Latin is the record in which a thousand years of European eating was written down, argued over, moralised, and occasionally concealed.

The episode ranges from *garum* – the fermented fish sauce the Romans put on everything, which survives today on supermarket shelves under a Southeast Asian label – through the only surviving Roman cookbook, known as the *Apicius*, to the great medieval fusion of the Mediterranean's bread, oil, and wine with the northern world of butter and meat, a divide Marina calls "the fat frontier," still visible on a map of how Europe cooks today. Along the way, bone chemistry reveals what people actually ate, and Church fasting rules turn out to have reshaped the ecology of an entire continent by driving the demand for fish.

The heart of the episode is a glorious detour to the monastery of Cluny, where a strict vow of silence produced not silence but an elaborate sign language – a silent menu of 118 signs. The sign for trout was made by miming the band women wore across the forehead, for the sole reason that *truta* is a feminine noun: a gesture whose logic runs straight through a declension table. And the whole thing builds to the best pun in the history of European food – how the Latin word *malum*, meaning both "apple" and "evil," quietly turned the unnamed fruit of Eden into an apple on every cathedral façade in Europe. Marcus, needless to say, has firm opinions throughout, and confesses by the end that he probably should have tried a tomato when he had the chance.

You can find the podcast on Spotify by searching for "Latin with Marina and Marcus" or directly through our website.

Thank you, as always, for being part of the Homo Legens community. Whether you're working through the new platform, wrestling with Augustine, or listening to Marina and Marcus argue about fish sauce, we're delighted to have you with us. Here's to the new academic year, and see you next month!

Warm regards,

Marina Schumann

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