



Homo Legens



## April Newsletter

Dear Friends of Lingua Latina,

Spring brings fresh energy to HOMO LEGENS. This month we're delighted to share a new podcast episode exploring one of the most fascinating aspects of medieval and early modern intellectual life, a dramatic piece of Church history on the blog, and news of a partner project that extends our work into new directions.

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## homo legens podcast

Latin with  
Marina and Marcus

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## New Podcast Episode: Peregrinatio Academica

Marcus, a sixteenth-century humanist who himself crossed the Alps from Florence to Basel, brings firsthand perspective to this discussion. Marina guides us through the phenomenon of *peregrinatio academica* – the “academic pilgrimage” – explaining how a Scottish student could show up in Bologna, a Hungarian in Padua, or a German in Paris and immediately join lectures, all because the language of instruction was universally Latin.

The episode traces this mobility from its early medieval roots through the rise of the universities in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, examining how Latin functioned as both an intellectual lingua franca and a practical necessity. We hear about figures like Gerbert of Aurillac, who travelled from the Auvergne to Catalonia and eventually became Pope Sylvester II, and countless lesser-known students who walked dangerous roads carrying nothing but books and hope.

Marina and Marcus discuss not just the opportunities this system created but also its limitations – who had access, who was excluded, and what it meant that higher education depended entirely on mastering a learned language. The conversation brings to life a world where intellectual community transcended political borders, where friendships formed in lecture halls could last across continents, and where a shared language created something genuinely international.

You can find the podcast on Spotify by searching for “Latin with Marina and Marcus” or directly through our website. Future episodes will continue exploring how Latin shaped medieval and early modern intellectual life.

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**This Month's Guided Reading: Innocent III and the Fourth Crusade**

On the blog this month, we've published a guided reading from one of the most dramatic episodes in medieval Church history: Pope Innocent III's furious letter to the crusaders who, instead of liberating the Holy Land, conquered and plundered the Christian city of Zadar in 1202 before proceeding to sack Constantinople in 1204. Innocent III was one of the most powerful popes of the Middle Ages – a trained theologian and canon lawyer who viewed papal authority as supreme over the Christian world.

When the Fourth Crusade veered catastrophically off course, attacking Christian Zadar (under Hungarian protection) and eventually sacking Constantinople itself, Innocent responded with extraordinary force. This letter, sent from the Lateran in February 1203, employs Biblical imagery to devastating effect. The crusaders have become “followers of Satan” rather than “soldiers of Christ.” Like Lot's wife, they looked back toward destruction. Instead of ascending to Jerusalem, they “descended again into Egypt.” The Latin is forceful, emotional, and theologically dense. Innocent demands restitution, repentance, and a solemn vow never again to attack Christian lands.

The text offers insight into papal authority, crusading ideology, and the moral contradictions that emerged when holy war turned against fellow Christians. The conquest of Zadar also holds particular significance for Croatian history, as it put an end to the conflict that had been ongoing since 1181. The guided reading includes full historical context, vocabulary support, and grammatical analysis. You can find it in the guided readings section of our website.

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## Partner Project: Classics of Protestantism

We're pleased to introduce a partner project published by the University Centre for Protestant Theology Matthias Flacius Illyricus: *Klasici protestantizma* (Classics of Protestantism), available at <https://www.tfmvi.hr/klasici-protestantizma/>. Launched in 2024, this digital library publishes Reformation texts and later Protestant heritage works in their original languages alongside Croatian translations. While the primary target language is Croatian, many texts are in Latin, making the project valuable for Latin readers interested in Reformation theology and history. Each text is equipped with scholarly introductions presenting the authors and historical context, illustrations, information about original editions and modern critical editions, and bibliographies for further research. The project aims to bridge linguistic barriers and facilitate scholarly work at the intersection of historical research, linguistic analysis, and theological discourse. The collection includes works by major Reformation figures and provides access to sources often difficult to find in translation. For readers of Homo Legens interested in

sixteenth-century Latin, Reformation theology, or Central European religious history, this resource offers substantial primary material with solid scholarly apparatus.

Thank you for your continued engagement with Homo Legens. Whether you're listening to the podcast, reading along on the blog, or exploring related projects, we're grateful to have you as part of this community dedicated to making Latin accessible, interesting, and alive.

Warm regards,

Marina Schumann

Homo Legens

<https://homolegens.io>

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