View in browser

Homo Legens



September Newsletter

Dear Friends of Lingua Latina,

The heat has finally given way to fresh autumn air, the new academic year is under way, and that longed-for “back to school” energy has arrived at last. This month we bring you two pieces of our own – a new guided reading and a new podcast episode – and, for the first time, a warm recommendation of someone else’s work: an app we think many of you will love.

Visit Homo Legens



This Month's Guided Reading: Erasmus and the Shipwreck

On the blog this month, we've published a guided reading from Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Colloquia familiaria* – specifically the dialogue *Naufragium*, "The Shipwreck," which first appeared in 1523. The *Colloquies* began life as innocent model phrases to drill schoolboys in spoken Latin, and grew, edition by edition, into one of the sharpest and most mischievous books of the century – so mischievous that the Paris theologians condemned it and the

Church placed it on the Index, all while schoolmasters went on happily setting it for their pupils.

Our excerpt finds the ship holed and the mast broken, and it is almost entirely concerned with what the passengers do with their religion when they are convinced they are about to drown. They sing the Salve Regina; they pour oil on the waves and pay the sea compliments; they promise pilgrimages, candles, and monastic vows to saints whom they locate, with comic precision, in particular churches. Adolphus reports it all straight-faced – and when he is finally pressed on what he himself did, he gives, in two sentences, the answer the whole catalogue has been preparing us for. It is very funny, but it is also an argument with a moral.

This is upper intermediate Latin (B2). Dialogue is in some ways kinder than continuous prose – the clauses are short and the speakers interrupt one another – but Erasmus writes a deliberately classicizing Latin thick with idioms and allusions, reaching constantly into Roman law, Roman religion, and the liturgy for his jokes. The analysis focuses there, and also flags the early modern spelling so nothing trips you up. You'll find the full text and commentary in the Readings section of our website.

Visit Homo Legens



New Podcast Episode:

Mappa Mundi — The Only Flat Earth

Episode 6 of *Latin with Marina and Marcus* is now live – and it begins with a provocation: every map is a lie, and every map is an argument, and the interesting question is never whether a map is accurate but what it is trying to say.

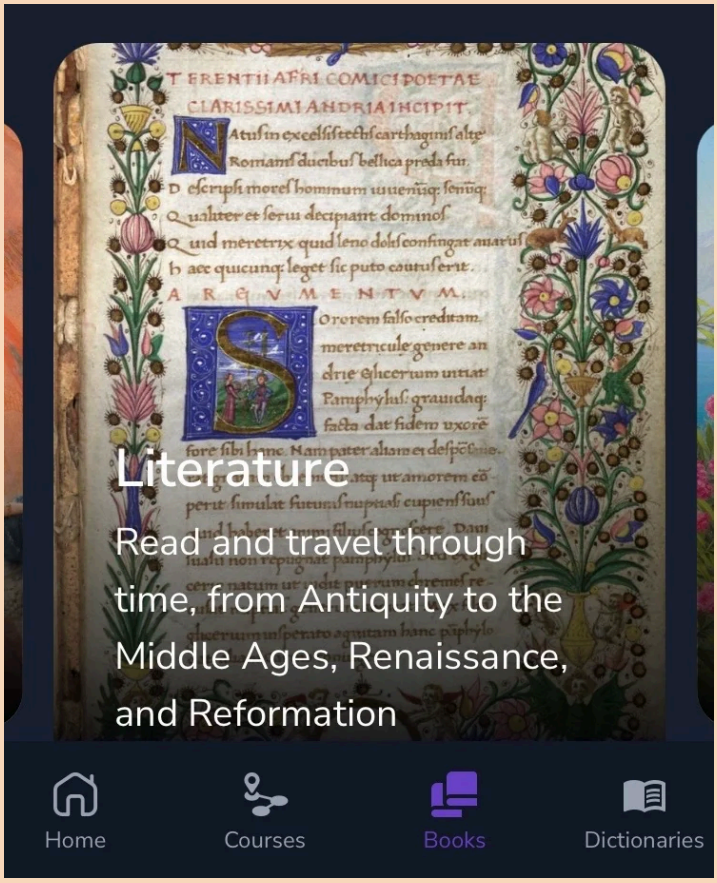
Marina and Marcus travel from Ptolemy's coordinate tables and the gloriously distorted Roman road map to the medieval *mappa mundi*, which is not a failed modern map but a different genre entirely. The word *mappa*, after all, means cloth, a table napkin; our whole word "map" descends from Latin table linen. Along the way, the Latin quietly runs everything: *oriens* and *occidens*, *meridies* and *septentrio*, the directions themselves built out of the sun and the stars before anyone drew a line.

The episode ranges widely and generously – the Hereford and Ebstorf maps, the sophisticated Islamic tradition that put south at the top, the astonishingly accurate grid maps of China, and Matteo Ricci moving the Pacific to the centre of the world so that China could sit where it expected to. There is Mercator, whose surname is simply Latin for "shopkeeper," and the printing accident that named

two continents “America” after changing Amerigo’s gender. It closes with a lovely reflection: the blue dot on your phone has quietly put you where Jerusalem used to be – *hic sumus*, here we are – because a map always starts where the person drawing it happens to be standing.

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

Visit Homo Legens



A Recommendation: Legentibus

This month we’d like to try something new and point you towards a project we genuinely admire. Regular readers know that the heart of Homo Legens is the conviction that Latin is best met as a living language – read, heard, and enjoyed rather than merely parsed. That is exactly the spirit of Legentibus, a Latin reading app made by

Daniel Pettersson and Amelie Rosengren of Latinitium, and we think it deserves a place on your phone.

The idea is simple and beautifully executed: a growing library of Latin texts paired with clear, expressive audio, so you can read and listen at once. The narration is highlighted word by word as it plays, you can tap any word for a dictionary entry, and many texts come with English or interlinear translations and notes on grammar and background. The catalogue spans everything from gentle beginner stories built on a hundred or two hundred words, through Ørberg's *Familia Romana* and the *Fabulae Faciles*, to Cicero, Seneca, Ovid, Jerome, and on to Petrarch, Erasmus, and Melanchthon – the same medieval and early modern range we love here. Books are downloadable for offline reading, playback speed is adjustable, and a free selection lets you try before you subscribe.

The reception speaks for itself: the app holds a 4.9-star rating from several hundred reviewers, who single out the clear, unmelodramatic narration and the sheer pleasure of following a narrator while reading. One calls it simply "my go-to Latin app," a fantastic source of comprehensible input in one place; others describe listening on their commute or over breakfast. For anyone who wants more Latin in their ears during the day, Legentibus is a wonderful companion. You can find it on the App Store and Google Play, or at legentibus.com.

Thank you, as always, for being part of the Homo Legens community. Whether you're sympathizing with Erasmus's drowning passengers, following Marina and Marcus across the medieval world, or settling in with a story on Legentibus, we're delighted to have you with us. Here's to a rich and rewarding academic year – see you next month!

Warm regards,

Marina Schumann

Homo Legens

https://homolegens.io

Visit Homo Legens

HomoLegens

Zagreb, Croatia

You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

Unsubscribe

SENT BY mailer lite