

# TAEDA

SI VALES, BENE EST. EGO VALEO | IF YOU ARE WELL, EVERYTHING'S OK.

## Advice Column

Marcus: "Catullus, Cicero's relationship advice didn't make any sense. I don't want to be single. Please send help."

Catullus: "*Odi et amo*, my friend. I hate this yet I love it. You think I know anything that works? Go ask Ovid, he wrote a whole book on it."

(Catullus 85: *Odi et amo, quare id faciam fortasse requiris / nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.*)

Julia: "Apple products are getting so much more expensive. I can't even afford the new iWax tablet. What should I do? I don't want to go back to papyrus!"

Cicero: "If you have a garden in your library, you'll want for nothing."

(i.e., papyrus is the way to go.)

(*Si hortum in biblioteca habes, deerit nihil.*)



## About TAEDA

*Salvete omnes!*

The TAEDA, Latin for *torch*, is the Michigan JCL's newsletter for conference updates and officer-contributed articles on the classics. Our goal is to shed light on interesting topics in classics that are also relevant to our world today.

Our journal will regularly feature articles on different topics relating to the classics written by each of our members. We'll also include a bit of humor with each issue, whether it be an advice column from ancient authors or a section for puns.

This issue contains articles on Roman manners, triumphal arches, classics reading recs, and translating Cicero.

Hope you enjoy the issue, and stay tuned for more! *Valete!*

- Maria Cheriyan, TAEDA Editor

## Arches to Arguments

In this issue, you'll read about Roman manners, Cicero's speech *In Catilinam*, and triumphal arches. Our editor has also put together a list of some favorite Greek and Roman writings!

## Our Contributors

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Hope you're enjoying the issue! Feel free to reach out at [michiganMJCL@gmail.com](mailto:michiganMJCL@gmail.com).

## *Manners in Ancient Rome*

*Sophia Tesic*

While today we might consider using napkins, silverware, and a polite attitude as conveying manners, this was not the case in Ancient Rome. In fact, the dinner parties of today and ancient times are an excellent example of the different sense of manners between the two time periods. Today, it is considered polite to maintain a clean mouth and fingers while eating a meal, typically with the help of a napkin. The Romans, however, did not see this action as a necessity. Eating with fingers was expected of every attendee at a dinner party and napkins were not used for cleaning. People in Ancient Rome would bring napkins only to carry leftover food back home with them.

Furthermore, while burping is considered impolite and distracting in many places today, the Romans did not feel the same way.

Enthusiastic dinner party guests were encouraged to burp during the meal to convey their enjoyment of the food. Another seemingly drastic difference in how Ancient Romans

viewed manners is in the practice of not leaving the dinner party room, even to use the restroom, until the event was over. Instead of excusing themselves from the meal, as is common today, Romans were expected to summon slaves to bring pots to them in order to relieve themselves.

To top it all off, a guest at a Roman dinner party was expected to never be full and continue to eat through the duration of the party, unlike how the practice of avoiding over-eating is used today. Interestingly enough, the Ancient Romans would go to extreme lengths to follow this tradition and avoid seeming rude by refusing food. Once a guest felt unable to consume more of the dinner, they would tickle the back of their throat to trigger vomit and free more space for additional food. In a way, the Romans could be considered just as dedicated to following a set of manners as we are today, even though those manners were very different ■

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## Summer Reading: Maria's Ancient Reading Recs

Maria Cheriyan

**“Reading ancient literature has also really broadened my perspective on the diversity of thought...”**

Now that you're out of school, you might have more down time to read. Here's a list of some things I've read by classical authors that I really liked! In my experience, it's been really interesting to see how different ancient authors respond to the different wars or other momentous events during their time.

Reading ancient literature has also really broadened my perspective on the diversity of thought in the ancient world — there are definitely trends among ancient authors, but each one brings something new to the table.

“De Amicitia”, Cicero

This isn't a full-length novel — it's an essay (that's free online!) about friendship. I think some of the things Cicero says are really sweet, and definitely very quotable (as you can see in the advice column...) “De Amicitia” is worth reading because of that, and it'll definitely give you another perspective on historical friendships.

*The Oresteia*, trans. Anne Carson

*The Oresteia* tells the story the house of Atreus — a family cursed by an unquenchable desire for vengeance. When Clytemnestra kills her husband, her son feels forced to avenge his father and kill her, but he has to deal with the consequences. The three great Greek playwrights, Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus, all wrote about the story of the house of Atreus — Anne Carson's *Oresteia* is a collection of their plays.

Honorable Mention — *Circe*, Madeline Miller

I'm putting this up here as honorable mention because it's not technically by a classical author, but it offers a new perspective on the myth of Circe and her experiences before and after Odysseus. While the plot moves slowly at first, I became quite invested in the main character at the end of the book and appreciated the ending. I'd definitely recommend it if you like more modern writing ■

## *Triumphal Arches*

*Sophia Tesic*

In Europe, Asia, and Africa, the presence of triumphal arches attracts tourists and historians alike -- and for good reason. Apart from their awe-inspiring detail, triumphal arches are interesting to visit because of the history associated with each arch. As the name would imply, triumphal arches were often built to commemorate victories. Due to the strength of the Roman army, these victories were often military ones. Within the lands of the Roman empire, where the practice of building triumphal arches is believed to have originated, arches dedicated to military success included not only ornate relief sculptures but Latin inscriptions. These inscriptions were used to clearly dedicate the arch to an important person or event.

For example, on the Arch of Constantine, which stands next to Rome's Colosseum, there are inscriptions on both sides of the arch which dedicate the monument to Constantine for his victory over the previous emperor Maxentius at the Battle of Milvian Bridge. For those visitors who cannot read the Latin inscriptions, the relief sculptures on every side of the arch make for an easy way to appreciate the significance of the monument. In addition to reliefs portraying battle scenes, mythological figures such as Apollo or Nike make an appearance on the arch.

Today, many of the standing triumphal arches were not constructed in ancient times but found inspiration in the architecture of arches which were. Examples of these arches can be found in London, Paris, and St. Petersburg. Ultimately, triumphal arches are fabulous monuments to visit and should be appreciated for both their appearance and historical significance ■

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## *Collusions with Catiline: On In Catilinam*

*Maria Cheriyan*

At first glance, one might think that Cicero really needs to be told “talk less, smile more.” Any Hamilton fans?

Cicero's word order doesn't especially help that. Nor do his frequent uses of assonance, asyndeton, and alliteration. Don't know what those terms mean? Neither did I when I first started translating his most famous speech, *In Catilinam*, in class. But because of the skill he put into crafting his speech, with his oratorical devices and metaphors, I realized that there was a method to his madness.

In 68 BC, Cicero wrote the speech to convince the rest of the Senate that a senator named Catiline was conspiring from within to bring down all of Rome. Sounds like an emergency, right? It was, but the rest of

the senators (at least according to Cicero) were acting like a bunch of teenagers procrastinating by checking Instagram. The Senate was caught up in its own irrelevant affairs, and Cicero needed to give them a wake-up call so they would recognize that Catiline was a more imminent threat. Soon after Catiline attempted to assassinate Cicero, Cicero gave *In Catilinam* in front of the Senate.

I don't know about you, but if I was a Roman senator, and it was a really hot day, and Cicero was taking forever to finish his sentences, and I was hungry and distracted by lunch with my best amicus Marcus Marcus Marcus, I wouldn't want to listen to a speech about some conspiracy. So to counteract the apathetic Roman senators, Cicero used as many rhetorical devices as he could in his speech. His elisions

**“Cicero really needs to be told ‘talk less, smile more.’ ”**

made the words blend together and heightened the emotional impact of what he was saying by allowing him to speak in strings. His anaphoras emphasized his main points over and over again. His asyndeton, a lack of conjunctions, also allowed him to string words together.

Cicero also used very intense imagery in his speech... which I'll leave you to read on your own for time's sake. But no matter how wordy Cicero was, when I translated him, I could almost imagine him speaking through the page. If I was actually a Roman senator, I would love to sit in on *In Catilinam*. Even if I couldn't understand exactly what Cicero was talking about until the end of the sentence, I would be able to read the emotions on his face and emphasis in his voice as he defended his country and his people ■

**THANK YOU FOR READING | GRATIAS AGIMUS TIBI ET VALE!**