

TAEDA

JANUS GEMINUS | WELCOMING THE NEW YEAR

Advice Column

Sextus: "I got this really bad gift from my friend for Christmas. What should I do?"

Catullus: "Write him a scathing poem and hope it was a regift! Because if he actually went and *bought* it for you..."

Sextus: *cracks knuckles* "He's gonna get it—"

(inspired by Catullus 14: The Worst Saturnalia Gift Ever)

Acme: "It's way too cold in the winter! All I want to do is curl up with a hot cup of soup!"

Aristophanes: "HAVE YOU EVER FELT A SUDDEN LUST FOR SOUP? **SOUP!** ZEUS-A-MERCY, YES, A THOUSAND TIMES!!!!!"

Acme: "...oookay, I'm just going to head to somewhere warm. Time to escape Greece and Rome (and playwrights!) for a while."

(Aristophanes' quote is from *The Frogs*, one of his comedies).



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.

In this issue, we'll cover different facets of life in ancient Greek and Roman society — from education and bathing to the myths, legends, and authors that Romans would have known by heart. We'll even take a look at *Hadestown*, a modern musical inspired by Greek myths!

Take a moment to look over the review guide — as our 2020 MJCL conference approaches, you'll find it very useful!

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

- Maria Cheriyan, TAEDA Editor

Culture and Comites

In this issue, you'll read about some of the most important cultural phenomena in Rome and the most famous literary figures of the age.

Our Contributors

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Hope you're enjoying the issue!
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Education in Ancient Rome

Sophia Tesic

Undoubtedly, the people of Ancient Rome led lives with parallels to the present day. One of these parallels is schooling, which is the center of the lives of many kids today.

While Rome never required children to go to school, many children did receive some form of education. For families able to afford the relatively low cost of tuition, the benefits of learning how to read and write were enough to convince many parents to send their children to school. Although it was not uncommon for girls to go to school, boys were generally the ones to receive an education in the traditional sense. Typically, schools were small, with only about enough students to fill one classroom today.

“Ultimately, every level of education was considered valuable ... [teaching students] how to function in society, similar to education today.”

Just as many students today attend an elementary, middle, and high school, there were three divisions of school in Rome. The closest equivalent to elementary school was a *ludus*, where a student would go from the ages of seven to eleven. Children would learn the basics of reading and writing in both Latin and Greek, often by practicing

copying letters onto wax tablet. Some examples of such tablets may still be seen today because the writing becoming hardened in the wax lends well to being preserved. After learning how to read and write, many students from more humble backgrounds would stop their schooling after finishing at a *ludus*.

Other students from wealthy families would typically move up to attending a school taught by a *grammaticus*, where, as the name would suggest, they learned more advanced levels of grammar as well as literary analysis. Basic geography and history were also taught in order to provide the background knowledge necessary for reading various Greek and Roman works. At this level of

schooling, competition between students was encouraged. Successfully completing impromptu assessments was the way in which many students measured their achievement and compared themselves to their peers.

Finally, a small group of students moved onto the last level of education in Rome. Taught by a rhetor, the focus of this level was to teach students effective public speaking. Public speaking was important because the students who reached this level of education would most likely deal with law and government as adults. Ultimately, every level of education was considered valuable in Rome and the goal of each level was to teach students how to function in society, similar to education today. ■

Roman Baths

Dalia Housey

One facet of Roman life I have always found interesting is their public baths. Going to the baths was a favorite past time of Romans. Not only were the baths used to maintain hygiene, but people also went there to improve social relations. One such large and famous bath are the Baths of Caracalla. The Baths of

“The cisterns held an estimated 2,113,376 gallons of water (8,000,000 million liters) ... the baths were used... up until the year 537.”

Caracalla are the second largest of the baths in Rome; the largest are the Baths of Trajan, however, the Baths of Caracalla are in much better shape.

Constructed between the years 212 and 216 under the direction of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, more commonly known as Emperor Caracalla. The Baths of Caracalla were built on an artificial platform that covers an area of 1,076,391 square feet (100,000 m²). At any single time the baths could hold about 1,600 bathers, and around 8,000 a day. Due to the volumes of people using the baths the cisterns held an estimated 2,113,376 gallons of water (8,000,000 million liters). The baths were used until the sixth century up until the year 537; they were shut down after the aqueducts that supplied water to the city were destroyed by Barbarians.

Despite just under \$400,000 of restoration, the remains of the baths were well preserved. In fact, when built most walls were just over a 130 feet tall (40 m), and before the restoration some of the baths walls were still around 100 ft (30 m) tall. The preservation of the baths is very impressive especially considering the baths are now 1,804 years old, also considering the fact that the baths were affected by a large earthquake in 847 which destroyed part of the structure.

The extensive and beautiful Baths of Caracalla are still open today for tours. For just a small admission fee, you can go on a self-guided tour of this ancient masterpiece. It is a wonderful place to visit if ever in the area! ■



THE BATHS OF CARACALLA; SOURCE:
www.afar.com/places/baths-of-caracalla-rome

Hadestown and Homeric Hymns: the Role of Persephone

Maria Cheriyan

In the spring of 2019, the jazz/gospel musical *Hadestown* took Broadway by storm. Perhaps the date is fitting; given the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice that *Hadestown* retells, the main antagonist Hades, and his wife Persephone, the musical's theme of death and rebirth arrived right when winter began to fade away. (Let's hope winter doesn't last long in Michigan, too...)

As someone who studies the classics, though, I wanted to see how closely *Hadestown* stuck to the original myth. Set in a Great Depression-era world, *Hadestown* tells the story of how a boy in suspenders named Orpheus tries to save his lover Eurydice from the mining camp of Hadestown, equipped only with a guitar and advice from Hermes. Hades is a tycoon of industry and production who orders his employees in the land of the dead — who have lost their souls and individuality due to their work — to build an endless wall. All of this sounds pretty familiar, but what stood out to me was the role of Persephone. In the original myth, Persephone was only present as the second person who heard Orpheus' case (along with Hades). In the musical, however, Persephone is vibrant, making use of her time on earth to host wild parties before returning on the train to Hadestown, and lamenting how her marriage with Hades has fallen apart due to his increasing greed.

“The messages of both the myth and the musical are universal — spanning from the 7th century BC in Greece to modern-day America.”

To be able to look at the differences in Persephone's character — and maybe figure out why the composer Anaïs Mitchell wrote her the way she did — I went back to one of the original Greek “death and rebirth” stories, the Homeric Hymn to Demeter (the translation I used, by Diane Raynor, is available for free here: <https://tinyurl.com/tp62nfa>). The Homeric Hymns are a series of 33 poems to the gods thought to have been written in the 7th or 6th century BC, around when the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were recorded. They range from 3 to

over 500 lines long (talk about variety!); the Hymn to Demeter is one of the longer ones, at 495 lines. It tells the story of how Persephone was stolen and Demeter's quest to find her.

After the inciting incident of the poem — when Persephone is stolen — the poet describes Demeter's long journey to find her daughter. For “nine days, Divine Demeter wandered the earth,” only stopping on the tenth day to talk to Hekate (l. 58). The stanza in the poem dedicated to Demeter's journey reminded me of the song *Wait for Me* in *Hadestown*, where Orpheus is searching for Eurydice (please listen to it, it's wonderful!) Both characters exhibit an unwavering passion that even surpasses death to find their loved ones.

Towards the end of the poem, Hades lets Persephone go from the underworld freely, only advising her that she would be well taken care of if she stayed with him. However, Hades uses her joy at the good news to distract her and feed her a pomegranate, binding Persephone to him forever. In *Hadestown* — and the broader myth of Orpheus and Eurydice — Hades also lets Orpheus go from the underworld with his lover, but there's a catch; Orpheus can't look back at Eurydice and has to trust Hades that he'll let her go too. Hades takes advantage of Orpheus' love and concern for Eurydice to ensure that he'll look back, thus making Orpheus' mission a failure. In both cases, human emotions — joy and love — separate the protagonists from their loved ones.



WAIT FOR ME SCENE; SOURCE: <https://www.wsj.com/articles/hot-hadestown-wins-eight-tonys-including-best-musical-11560138492>

But despite this, Persephone lets “hope yet charm her strong mind though she grieve[s]” (37). Hope that things will get better tides Persephone through all of this; eternal and determined hope also characterize Eurydice in the musical and even the tone of *Hadestown* itself. The musical opens with the narrator Hermes declaring that he knows the tale of Orpheus and Eurydice is a tragedy, but by singing it again, he hopes to bring more happiness into it and renew the hope that things can change.

Persephone, like Orpheus and Eurydice, is a character deeply connected to the themes of hope, death, rebirth, and humanity in *Hadestown*, as we've seen through the Homeric Hymn. It reinforces the theme of the musical to have added her as a character in the myth, since her story directly parallels that of Orpheus and Eurydice; Anaïs Mitchell really did her research. Either that, or the messages of both the myth and the musical are universal — spanning from the 7th century BC in Greece to modern-day America. ■

AP Latin and Certamen Review

Hans Liu

Happy Year 2020 everyone! Hopefully, everyone is enjoying the New Year and New Decade! A new year brings new fun: spring conference and the AP Exam (This is not as fun but knowledge from Certamen might be helpful).

Certamen is more than knowing trivia facts; it is about collecting knowledge. As the god of beginnings and transitions, Janus hopes that you all will have prosperous years to come even after all the crazy events of the past decade.

There are many areas that Certamen could cover ranging from grammar to mythology, to history, just to name a few. The AP syllabus only covers certain aspects of Vergil's *Aeneid* and Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*. This article is meant to serve as a review for the figures mentioned in both Vergil and Caesar while also providing some possible clues that might be used in Certamen.

Disclaimer: This article can be used no matter if you plan on doing Certamen or the AP. This is just for knowledge collecting only! ■

The Aeneid (books 1, 2, 4, and 6)

Aeneas	Full of Pietas (devotion to family, state, and Gods), son of Venus and Anchises, father of Ascanius (Iulus), Husband of Creusa (and later Lavinia), originally Trojan, meets Dido in Carthage, side kick is Achates, loses his helmsman Palinurus, Hector makes him cultural heir of Troy, denies the fact he married Dido, goes to the Underworld, got the Golden Bough, makes it to Italy and befriends Evander, Evander trusts his son Pallas to him, main rival is Turnus, kills Turnus at the end
Anchises	Father of Aeneas, dies in Sicily before the Trojans reached Carthage, has funeral games in honor of him in Sicily, meets Aeneas in the underworld to show him Rome's potential and also tragedies

Ascanius	Aeneas' son with Creusa and rightful heir, Cupid pretended to be him in order to charm Dido, given the name Iulus by Vergil in order to connect Aeneas' family to Augustus' family
Dido	Queen of Carthage from Phoenicia, escaped from her brother Pygmalion because he killed her crazy rich husband Sychaeus, swore an oath of loyalty to Sychaeus, fell in love with Aeneas after Cupid disguised as Ascanius weakened the oath, claimed to have married Aeneas after the hunt, kills herself after Aeneas leaves with his sword, ignores Aeneas in the Underworld, original name was Elissa, Dido means the wanderer
Anna	Sister to Dido, told Dido to fall for Aeneas since "the dead don't really have any feelings", also told Dido to weave in the causes of delay, Dido sends her out with a "shopping list of herbs", in the original story she falls in love with Aeneas
Iarbas	A noble savage, son of Zeus Ammon and a nymph, warned Jupiter that Aeneas was not doing his duty, wanted to marry Dido but she refused, negotiated that Carthage be a city with how much land encompassed by an oxhide
Cumaeen Sibyl	Aeneas' guide to the underworld, could only be persuaded with a golden branch, only got her gift of prophecy after agreeing to Apollo and then rejecting him
Juno	Main villain of the story, Chief Goddess of Carthage, fought for Greeks in the Trojan War, championed Dido and then later Turnus, asked Aeolus to unleash winds to destroy Aeneas' fleet, wants to do anything to prevent Aeneas from reaching Italy

Venus	Mother of Aeneas, was injured by Diomedes twice, daughter of Jupiter, poofed up a cloud so that Aeneas could escape from Diomedes in Troy and enter Carthage without being seen
Laocoon	Sacrificing a bull before death, sacrifice becomes sacrifice, Trojan priest who saw the horse was a ploy, tried warning the Trojans, he and his two sons were killed by two snakes sent by Minerva, had to die, Whatever it is, I fear the Greeks even bearing gifts
Sinon	Name means tricky one, "defected" from the Greeks to tell the Trojans about the horse, claimed Greeks bring gifts and it is ok if the city walls are opened and torn down
Turnus	Villain of the latter half of the poem, compared to a lion, promised to marry Lavinia before Aeneas arrived in Italy, Rutuli King, killed by Aeneas after seeing Pallas' belt
Evander	Founded a city near Tiber called Pallantium, hates the Latin people, allies with Aeneas, entrusts his son Pallas to Aeneas' care
Pallas	Son of Evander, killed by Turnus, Turnus takes his belt as a spoil, avenged by Aeneas

Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*

Gaius Julius Caesar	Nephew of Marius, builds a wall while trying to stop the Helvetians from crossing, narrator of the work, refers to himself in the third person, claims to be a military genius but is not that great a general, much better politician, royally messes up invasion of Britain because of bad intel but never claims it was his fault member of the first triumvirate, finishes his conquest of Gaul and then fights his son in law and former friend Pompey, defeats Pompey, makes himself dictator for life but is killed on the Ides of March
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Titus Labienus	Caesar's right-hand man who later defected, smarter in terms of military but Caesar steals all of his credit, was tribune in 63BC, defeated at Munda
Orgetorix	Helvetian tribe member, planned a great conspiracy, most noble of Helvetians, made himself Helvetian ambassador, possibly killed himself when his plan was discovered
Tenth Legion Eagle Carrier Guy	Jumps off a boat by saying "Jump down comrades unless you want to give up the eagle to the enemies; I certainly will have showed my duty to the republic and to the commander", tenth legion was Caesar's favorite because with him the longest
Druids	Weird hippies now, involved in religious business, don't need to fight in war, don't write stuff down although they remember a lot of stuff, a man for a man, wicker men, worship "Mercury", claim to be descended from Hades

THANK YOU FOR READING | GRATIAS AGIMUS TIBI ET VALE!
