

TAEDA

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Culture and Comites

In this issue, you'll read about some of Rome's cultural and social history and how Roman culture is present in society today!

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Hope you're enjoying the issue! Feel free to reach out at michiganMJCL@gmail.com.



ABOUT TAEDA

Salvete, omnes!

The TAEDA, Latin for *torch*, is the Michigan JCL's newsletter for conference updates and articles written by the officers on the classics. Our goal is to inform others about interesting topics in classics that also connect to our current world.

In this issue, we'll cover a variety of topics. You can read all about Roman cuisine, or learn more about the ancient festival Lemuralia. We'll even explore the mythology in Marvel's Eternals!

Take a moment to read these articles and learn more about ancient Greek and Roman culture. We hope you enjoy this issue of the TAEDA, and stay tuned for more! *Valete!*

- Caitlin Condon, TAEDA Editor

The Festival of Lupercalia

Caitlin Condon

As you celebrated Valentine's Day this past month, have you ever wondered how this holiday came to be? Have you ever wondered how long it has been around, or when it was first celebrated?

Lupercalia is an ancient Roman festival that some believe gave rise to our modern celebration of Valentine's Day. This ancient festival took place on February 15th and was celebrated every year in honor of Lupercus, the god of fertility.



“Lupercalia is an ancient Roman festival that some believe gave rise to our modern-day celebration of Valentine’s Day.”

The festival began by going to the Lupercal, the legendary cave where it is believed that Romulus and Remus were suckled by a she-wolf. It started with an act of sacrifice, typically a dog and a goat. Goats were often used because they were symbols of sexuality and fertility. Priests of the god Lupercus, called the Luperci, would take off their clothes and slaughter these animals, and then smear the blood on the foreheads of young men who would prance naked around the Palatine. They would also cut the goat's skin into strips and use it to strike women as they ran.

The runners making their way through the streets and whipping whomever they met was the main attraction of Lupercalia. Some women even volunteered to be whipped, because it was believed to bring fertility and that they would then give birth to more children.

Many people today believe that this ancient festival is connected to Valentine's Day, but the overlap is likely a coincidence. The last record of the celebration of Lupercalia is around the same time that Pope Gelasius I created a holiday for Saint Valentine. However, there is no indication that it replaced Lupercalia, and the two events have very little in common besides sharing a calendar date in mid-February.



Household Pets: Just as Common in Rome as They Are Today?

Katherine Young

Pets are an integral part of households today, with animals ranging from snakes to our immediate thought, dogs. These spoiled family members were just as important in ancient Roman households as they are today. Present-day life happens to mirror ancient Rome, with the most common pet being a dog. The Romans had a wide array of dog breeds, but the most popular breeds were the greyhound and Maltese. Dogs were not only kept as house pets but were also used for jobs. These jobs would include guarding the property, protecting the home from thieves, and hunting and herding. Dogs were even so popular that many statues were erected and discovered in ancient Roman cities and towns.



“In ancient Rome, wine was used to please guests and demonstrate status and wealth.”

Although dogs were wildly popular, they were not the only pets found in ancient Roman households. Other household pets included cats, birds, ferrets, and monkeys. Birds were especially favored by Roman women. For women, birds were the most important household pets, especially birds that primarily remained in cages. Popular birds included magpies, starlings, crows, and peacocks. Depending on the type of bird bought and the style of cage used, these feathered friends could be used as a symbol for economic status. Some Roman households would purchase birds that could talk to teach them to hold a conversation.

Of course, exotic animals were also found in ancient Rome. These exotic animals included lions and tigers, which were always exported from places like southern Egypt or North Africa. These exotic animals were sometimes kept as pets by the emperor and used for extravagant parties. Ancient Roman households may have loved their pets, but this love would not have been shown directly from their masters. Household slaves were the main caretakers of any pets. Many dogs were left alone to complete their jobs of guarding the home against passerby in the *via*, the street, or herding cattle out in the *agri*, the fields. Whether Roman pets were kept for decoration or use, they were an important part of ancient life, with many homes calling an animal their own.



Galen: The Foundation of *Marissa Malleck*

Galen, a Greek physician, writer, and philosopher was born in 139 CE and died in 216 CE. Galen largely influenced modern medical theory in practice for over 1300 years. He studied medicine at Pergamon, his hometown, at Smyrna, and finally at Alexandria in Egypt, which was the greatest medical center of the ancient world. He served as chief physician in Pergamon to the troop of gladiators maintained by the high priest of Asia.

Galen moved to Rome in 162. Galen's public demonstrations and disagreement with popular views on medicine made him unpopular with other doctors practicing in the city. When his teacher, the philosopher Eudemus, became sick with quartan fever, Galen provided him with treatment. Some Roman physicians criticized Galen for his use of prognosis in his treatment of Eudemus. Galen focused on the symptoms of disease rather than following the current standard practice, which included divination and mysticism.

Galen considered anatomy to be the foundation of medical knowledge. Galen is well known for performing vivisections, live dissections and experiments on animals such as the Barbary ape and pigs. Galen advocated for dissection to improve surgical skills and to advance research. One of Galen's most important demonstrations was that the arteries carry blood, not air, despite the concept of air having been taught for 400 years before his discovery. However, he incorrectly believed that the blood was formed in the liver. Galen was hampered by the prevailing social taboo against dissecting human corpses and the inferences he made about human anatomy based on his dissections of animals often led him into errors. Galen has influenced the foundations of human medicine.

