

# LATIN VIA OVID

*A First Course  
Second Edition*

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## PREFACE

This text is designed to teach the student to read Latin with ease and enjoyment. To read with ease requires a mastery of basic Latin vocabulary and structure; enjoyment should result from mastery if the reading material is sufficiently stimulating to capture the imagination of a twentieth-century student. We chose abridged versions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for the readings, both for their value as background in mythology and for their rich, narrative style, which should impel the reader to continue his pursuit of meaning in a foreign language. The student who already knows the story of Latona and Niobe will be pleased to reread in Latin an already familiar tale, and the one who has never experienced the tragic love story of Pyramus and Thisbe can meet it for the first time in Ovid's own language.

The chapters are divided into sections of Dialogue, Reading, Vocabulary (Verba), Structure, Exercises, and Etymology. Each lesson contains a brief dialogue of a few words of basic communication, not in the foolish notion that twentieth-century students will ever be called upon to speak the language, but so that they can appreciate the beauty of its sound and, through oral repetition, can lessen the tedium of learning. The teacher who wishes to do so may gradually conduct the class in Latin, adding the dialogues as they appear, to greet the class, take roll, give directions for finding page and sentence numbers in the text, open doors and windows, give the assignment, and dismiss the class. After the first twenty chapters are completed, the class can be conducted in Latin for the most part, with English employed only where necessary. Hearing and speaking the language aloud should further an appreciation of its sound and aid in mastery of the forms. To this end a set of tapes excerpting dialogue, reading, vocabulary, drills, and exercises will be available. We hope that students who have facility with language can develop fluency and that students who have had little experience in pronouncing a language—even their own English language—will, in the privacy of the laboratory booth, overcome their fears about making errors and have their “tongues loosed.”

The readings begin with abridged and simplified versions of stories from the *Metamorphoses*. We attempted so far as possible to cling to the original to illustrate Ovid's imagery and graceful style, but we also tried to employ prose forms that the student will need to recognize when he later encounters the works of other authors. As the readings progress, the vocabulary depends more and more heavily upon Ovid; in the early chapters, the substitution of basic vocabulary was frequently necessary.

The vocabulary is classified according to Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives, and Other Words, so that the student can quickly identify and classify the words acquired with each lesson. The introduction of about thirty new words in each chapter should give the student an adequate vocabulary for reading basic Latin. We included not only vocabulary that would help prepare the student to read Latin prose authors but also some variety to put flesh on the basic skeleton of the language.

For easy reference, the structure sections are numbered consecutively throughout the book. They proceed inductively, with structure material based on the grammar situations that appear in the readings. A more deductive, summary-of-forms method of teaching is introduced in Chapter III to meet the student's need for an over-all view of the material. The grammatical summary and paradigms are repeated in the Appendix. The gradual acquisition of the ideas of structure in Latin is accomplished through a mastery of each lesson's grammatical material. The forty chapters of the text should provide sufficient grammar and reading for the first year of college-level study, along with exercises to give the active drill that learning a language demands. The text has been used profitably several times in experimental form at Wayne State University. It has also been used twice for the summer intensive course where it has proved successful, although the extended vocabulary sections make its use better suited to the work of a normal academic year.

The exercises begin with a series of Latin questions to be answered in Latin sentences, with the aim of teaching the student *to comprehend ideas and to express ideas simply and directly in Latin*. Subsequent exercises provide drill in conjugations and declensions, changing singular ideas to plural, changing cases, supplying the correct cases, changing tenses, changing voice, and changing mood. Although a complete avoidance of drill in forms is impossible, we tried to avoid rote drill and to emphasize *using* knowledge of the material. Where the drills concentrate on conjugations and declensions, we hope they will be rapid-fire.

Each set of exercises includes sentences to be translated into Latin for practice in composition. These often repeat ideas from the reading, with minor changes so that patterns of expression can be rehearsed with some variety. Exercises to teach pronunciation, syllabication, and accent are also included in the first eleven chapters. Before the twelfth is introduced the antepenultimate rule should be an integral part of the student's language experi-

ence, from having heard each lesson read aloud by the teacher and by the class, from having practiced in the language laboratory, and from having drilled in the exercises on the means of determining accent. From this point on, oral reading should provide sufficient practice in pronunciation.

The etymology sections are intended to enrich the student's English vocabulary and word-building awareness. Each section works both with the principles of word development in English by means of roots, prefixes, and suffixes, and also with specific words from the lesson which, when doubly acquired through the reading of the Latin story and the English derivatives, make valuable additions to the student's general knowledge. Where appropriate, the Etymology section relates to the story—words from the world of music for the Orpheus episodes and Tombstone Latin for the Achilles' ghost section, for example.

In the sections on Roman life, we expanded the Etymology to add a note on Roman education, names, food, clothing, and housing, as the excitement of explaining *pedagogue*, *Caesarean* section, *gustatory* experience, *tunic*, and *atrium* spilled over into brief summaries of each of these subjects. The sections on Latin in law, medicine, mathematics, and the sciences have been researched from teachers in the professions who helped select the terms included.

Macrons (the long marks over the lengthened vowels) are a convenience used in teaching elementary Latin for clarity in accent and pronunciation. As the student develops skills in reading, these artificial aids in the text are no longer necessary. The vocabulary and structure sections continue to provide the macrons, but the reading and the exercise sections are presented without the macrons beginning with Chapter XXI. The Interim Readings also appear without macrons. The tapes and classroom drills provide sufficient practice to reinforce the rules learned in the early chapters.

Chapter XXXI introduces a change in format to meet the unique problems encountered in studying poetic content and form. Each page of the text is accompanied by the relevant footnotes and vocabulary. Because it is admittedly difficult to begin reading "real Ovid" in a first year course, the first several sections of Chapter XXXI are adapted as prose; only in 31e do the poetic verses appear. The students will quickly adapt to the new style and feel success in mastering the original. As the format of chapters XXXI–XLV follows that of the series edited by the late Thomas M. Cutt, and revised by Jacob E. Nyenhuis: *Cena Trimalchionis* of Petronius and *Amphitruo* of Plautus (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), *Latin via Ovid* may serve as a first-year preparation for these second-year readers.

Interim Readings appearing occasionally between chapters provide an opportunity to read an exciting tale without having to master new grammar. Vocabulary is supplied in the footnotes to each page. We selected the tales of Daedalus and Icarus, Phaethon, The Rape of Proserpina, Medea's Evil Deeds, and Ceyx and Alcyone because of the dramatic content and because

Ovid cast the speeches of these vivid characters so excitingly. The teacher can improvise means of extending the stories for exercises if desired, but since the aim is reading for pleasure, no further exercises are provided.

To the students who suffered through early typed editions, making valuable suggestions and diagnosing errors of omission and commission, we owe endless thanks. Particularly, thanks are due to Christine Renaud, who helped in the careful editing of the last twenty chapters. To the secretaries who have helped type both the early and the revised manuscript, we wish to express our gratitude for their secretarial and language skills, their good judgment and common sense: Carol Bartley, Marijo Duprey, M. Jura Kaupas, and Alesia Vaughn. To Emily Batinski, who helped prepare and proofread the vocabulary sections, we wish to express our thanks both for her knowledge of Latin and her careful editing.

Michael Rossi, who twice used the text in experimental form, has offered many valuable suggestions. His skillful teaching, his encouragement and enthusiasm, and his assistance in preparing laboratory tapes to accompany the experimental text deserve a special expression of gratitude. We thank Professors Harry Evans and Richard Minadeo for their assistance in preparing laboratory tapes of the poetry sections.

We acknowledge also our indebtedness to our colleagues at Wayne State University and Hope College who have helped in revising the earlier printings, making many substantive suggestions to improve the text: Professors Albert Bell, Joel Itzkowitz, Richard Minadeo, Maura Reynolds, and Ladislav Szymanski. We wish gratefully to acknowledge careful editing of the text by Professor John G. Fitch of the University of Victoria, British Columbia, by the late Professor Edward Phinney of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, and by Professor Fred Mench, Jr., of Stockton State College in Pomona, New Jersey. For expert editing of the Second Edition we thank these professors at the University of Kansas: Oliver Phillips, Peter Golembiewski, Deborah Porter, Charles Schleicher, and Bruce Wood. For further helpful changes we acknowledge Ronnie Ancona and students from Hunter College in New York.

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To our students and to their pleasurable acquisition of skill in reading Latin we dedicate the textbook.

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