

DIURNA III

Newsletter of the 20th Latin Summer School MMXIV
Dies Mercurii, Januarius XXII



Alexander the Great and Darius' Family from the History of Alexander the Great series, after cartoons by Charles Le Brun. Flanders, Brussels, Jan Frans van den Hecke workshop

Mary Beard, Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town (Profile Books, 2008, The Folio Society London, 2013) Reviewed by Robert Forgács

While there are many books on Pompeii, Mary Beard's study is one of the most recent and detailed. In addition, the recent Folio Society edition of her book is the most lavish and beautiful. Beard is Professor of Classics at Newnham College, Cambridge; this book won her the Wolfson History Prize in 2008. It is easy to see why. Her style is straightforward and engaging, her presentation of the subject matter is always interesting, even breezy and racy at times, but without superficiality. Clearly, she knows Pompeii very well. Through her numerous references to Latin literature, she reveals a huge amount about the everyday life of a comfortable Roman city like Pompeii. Also, the book dispels many myths about Pompeii, particularly the easy and often inaccurate assumptions repeated from one guide book to another, and that are still common in guided tours of the city. Beard defines Pompeii as a disrupted 'city of surprises'. She notes that the disastrous end of the city's life in August 79 AD was preceded by an earlier very damaging eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 62 AD, from which the city had barely recovered, and that before extensive excavations began in the 18th century, looters had been at work, some of them as early as the 1st century AD. Indeed, some of the bones discovered in the city may not be those of fleeing inhabitants, but of luckless adventurers. The pathos of the city's destruction is brought out strongly, but counter-balanced by fascinating asides about the daily routine, which ranged from the sophisticated and elegant to the squalid and vulgar. One very important point Beard makes is that the population of Pompeii at the time of its demise is still unknown; the remains of c.1,100 bodies have been found, but the total population was between 6,400 and 30,000! Most must have escaped. Also fascinating is the detail that Beard presents on the various graffiti found on the outside and inside walls of buildings, both public and private - the ancient equivalent of modern posters/advertisements. The book concludes with an excellent three-page guide to the city, listing the author's must-see sites. One of these is the well-preserved temple of Isis, about which she comments: "In the 1760s, the Temple of Isis was among the first buildings fully excavated...It was a lucky find and it instantly captured the imagination of European travellers. True, a few killjoys found it disappointingly small. But for most it offered double excitement: simultaneously a glimpse of ancient Egypt and of ancient Rome. Exotic and a little bit sinister, it gave Mozart, who visited Pompeii in 1769, ideas for the Magic Flute."

DAY 3 – SCHOLAE POST PRANDIUM

Latin Pronunciation

New Law LT24, Dexter Hoyos

UFO's, aliens and China: some unusual Roman encounters

Old Geology Lecture Theatre, Andrew Miles

Pompeii (March release anticipated)

American disaster-adventure film co-written, produced and directed by Paul W. S. Anderson, set in the days leading up to the eruption of Mt Vesuvius which destroyed the ancient city of Pompeii. Milo (Kit Harington) is a slave turned invincible gladiator who finds himself in a race against time to save his true love Cassia (Emily Browning), the beautiful daughter of a wealthy merchant who has been unwillingly betrothed to the corrupt Roman Senator Corvis (Kiefer Sutherland). As Mount Vesuvius erupts, Milo must fight his way out of the arena in order to save his beloved as the once magnificent Pompeii crumbles around him.

<http://youtu.be/t6TRwfxDICM>

LSS Choir

The choir will be rehearsing in the Old Teachers' College Hall at 12.50 pm each day, preparing an item for the final meeting. Lisa Aronson will be directing.

Honey for sale

Mella purissima venalia \$7 per jar, novae copiae cotidie – supplied by Ian McLeod.

Challenge 3

Write up your answers and hand them in on Thursday.

1. Which 18th century artist had a father who ran a Latin-speaking coffee house in London?
2. On which momentous occasion did Pliny the Elder quote these words from the playwright Terence: "fortes fortuna adiuvat"?
3. Which 18th century composer wrote an intermedium in Latin when he was 11?
4. Which 4th century saint had a dream in which the words were addressed to him: "Ciceronianus es, non Christianus"?
5. Which Roman emperor is credited with the last words: "Vae, puto deus fio"?
6. Which Roman philosopher wrote "Errare humanum est"?
7. Which Renaissance humanist translated the opening of St John's Gospel into Latin as "In principio sermo erat"?
8. Who is supposed to have uttered the words "Non angli, sed angeli" on seeing some English boys in Rome?
9. Which Renaissance artist has an epitaph which includes the following tribute: "timuit quo sospite vinci rerum magna parens et moriente mori"?
10. Which Roman poet wrote regarding his own fame: "Non omnis moriar"?
11. To whom was Hugh of Avalon, bishop of Lincoln, referring when he rebuked some clergy with the words: "Credite mihi, non hoc erat, quod eum sanctum fecit"?