

CJ FORUM ONLINE REVIEW
2009.02.02

Meeting the Challenge: International Perspectives on the Teaching of Latin. Edited by BOB LISTER. Cambridge Learning. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008. Pp. viii + 168. Paper, \$39.95. ISBN 978-0-521-69043-0.

If the title of this book—at least the first half—seems familiar to readers of this review, it may be because it was used, with a different subtitle, for a conference held in Venice, Italy, in 2008, whose call for papers on the Internet had an enticing photo of its venue, Venice International University, on the island of San Servolo. The book under review contains selected papers from an earlier conference, held at Cambridge University in 2005, devoted to new approaches to teaching Latin. The intent of the Venice conference was to continue and extend the conversation begun in Cambridge. If the more recent conference had any of the success of the previous one, it is greatly to be hoped that a volume like the one under review will be produced from it as well.

Meeting the Challenge: International Perspectives on the Teaching of Latin is, to put it simply, a wonderful read. For anyone interested in the teaching of Latin at any level, this book has much to offer. While some may want to focus more on one chapter than another, I found the entire volume an exhilarating exploration of the challenges, opportunities and successes of Latin teaching in current times. Each chapter has something to offer.

The volume, edited by Bob Lister of the Faculties of Education and Classics at the University of Cambridge and a former secondary school teacher, contains an Introduction by the editor; eleven papers from the Cambridge conference, appropriately modified for publication; and an Index. While “International Perspectives” would ideally be somewhat more geographically inclusive than this volume is—and perhaps that could be seen as a goal for future volumes on the teaching of Latin—the contributors do come not only from Europe, but from North America as well. North American readers in particular will be interested to note that Lister cites the American Classical League as “the inspiration for the conference in Cambridge” (p. 8). He writes admiringly of the presence of college and university faculty as well as school teachers at the ACL Annual Institute and mentions the continuing presence there of attendees from overseas (p. 1). While many who attend the Institute know its value, seeing this noted in a publication from overseas is noteworthy.

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The book is arranged according to four main topics: “Latin in the curriculum” (Chapters 1–3), “Developing independent readers of authentic texts” (Chapters 4–5), “ICT and Latin teaching” (Chapters 6–9), and “Advice for securing the future of Latin” (Chapters 10–11). These topics reflect the book’s attention to the current state of Latin studies in various places, new ways to teach students to read Latin, the importance of new technology, and the need to keep the study of Latin alive. While some chapters address broad issues and others focus on particular teaching initiatives, all touch in one way or another on what it means to teach Latin at this particular point in time.

David Taylor’s “Inspection and introspection: classics teaching in England over four decades,” which opens the section on Latin in the curriculum, offers an enlightening history of the many changes that have occurred in Latin instruction in England, especially starting in the 1960s and 1970s, from the perspective of a teacher and education overseer as A (Advanced) Level Chief Examiner, Executive Secretary of JACT (Joint Association of Classical Teachers), Her Majesty’s Inspector, and Director of Inspection for Ofsted, the official body for inspecting schools. [[1]] These changes include the introduction of the reading approach to Latin in *The Cambridge Latin Course*, and the later addition of *Ecce Romani* and the *Oxford Latin Course*; the dropping of the requirement that students at Oxford and Cambridge Universities have passed O (Ordinary) level exams in Latin (and the subsequent drop in pre-college Latin enrollments); and the more recent advent of the National Curriculum and its effect on the study of Latin. Taylor makes a compelling argument for the necessity of teaching Latin not only as a repository of grammatical information, but as a vibrant language with a literature to be understood and engaged with, if the field is to flourish and a wide group of students is to be taught successfully.

Panos Seranis, in “Poor relation or necessary evil? The place of Latin in the Greek curriculum,” offers a fascinating discussion of the place of Latin study in Greece today and the reasons for it. He argues that a suspicion of Latin developed from its position as the imperialist, barbarian language of the conqueror and continued historically through the separation of the empires into Greek East and Latin West, as well as the isolation of Greek from Latin Europe under the Ottoman Empire. While Latin was a required subject at one point, in 1967 it began to be taught only to students on the humanities route, about a third of the upper level secondary school population (p. 22). [[2]] This contrasts dramatically with the required and extensive study of Classical Greek. Seranis argues that the fixed grammar-

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translation approach does not lend itself to appreciating Latin as literature or as part of a larger cultural context. [[3]] Seranis points to the untapped value of Latin study as a tool for understanding the dynamic interaction of Greek and Roman culture, as well as for helping with the study of many modern European languages.

Laurien Crump, in “A contemporary subject for contemporary Europe: the much-disputed role and relevance of Latin at Dutch *gymnasia*,” moves the geographical focus from England and Greece to the Netherlands. She argues for the need to make the study of Latin in the selective *gymnasia* relevant in a post 9/11 world by incorporating more ancient and modern cultural connections into language study, as well as more independent thinking based on a “shift in emphasis from translation to interpretation” (p. 42).

The section on developing reading strategies for independent readers of authentic texts contains two complementary chapters. Deborah Pennell Ross’ welcome contribution, “Latin pedagogy at the University of Michigan, USA: linear reading using a linguistic perspective,” outlines an approach to the teaching of Latin, begun in the 1950s at University of Michigan, that has received less exposure than it should. Using insights from linguistics, the approach focuses on teaching students to read Latin in the order in which it is written. Utilizing features such as metaphrasing (which describes how a word functions) and pointing out linguistic features like gapping, this approach trains students to develop expectations about what will follow in a Latin sentence. I found Ross’ description of “top-down” and “bottom-up” readers particularly interesting for its usefulness in identifying reasons for particular reading strengths and weaknesses. [[4]] The Michigan Latin Templates, designed to incorporate these techniques, regardless of textbook used, especially with secondary school teachers, could be quite valuable. [[5]]

Toon Van Houdt’s “The strategic reading of Latin (and Greek) texts: a research-based approach,” emerges from a project at the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium to develop a new course for first-year students who have already had the basics of the languages at secondary school. Using some of the same techniques that Ross describes (attention to top-down and bottom-up issues) and attempting to model good reading strategies in order to develop independent readers, Van Houdt emphasizes how much teaching training is needed when a program revamps its pedagogical techniques.

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The volume's largest section is devoted to Latin and technology. In "Increasing access to Latin in schools," Will Griffiths, Director of the University of Cambridge School Classics Project (CSCP), the curriculum used in the majority of schools in the UK that offer Latin, discusses recent and not so recent crises affecting Latin enrollment in UK schools (cf. Ch. 1), including the 1988 introduction of the Education Reform Act, which forced all state-maintained schools to teach specific subjects. Since Latin was not included as a major course, enrollments understandably dropped. One response to this crisis was the development of CSCP's Online Latin Project, with support from a government funded initiative involving e-learning materials. This project involved blended learning (use of electronic and non-electronic materials), many non-specialist teachers, and attention to independent learning. According to Griffiths, much remains to be done to make Latin available to the whole student population, not just those of high ability. He argues that the presentation of the language as too difficult for the general population has led to its decline.

In "Did you catch that word? *Latinum electronicum*: an interactive online Latin course for university beginners," Irene Burch, Simone Hiltcher and Rudolf Wachter discuss a web-based course for teaching beginning Latin to university students at four Swiss universities. Like the CSCP's Online Latin project, the course received government funding under a program designed to encourage the introduction of e-learning, and also involves blended learning. Its aim was to maintain high quality instruction with an increase in class size. This course was uniquely designed for native speakers of three different languages, Italian, French and German.

Steve Hunt, in "Information and communication technology and the teaching of Latin literature," shares his experience using whiteboard technology and English translations to speed up the Latin learning process, make it more collaborative, and develop a deeper appreciation and understanding of Latin literature in his secondary school classroom in the UK. One feature some may find surprising is that students are provided with a copy of a published English translation of the Latin text on which they are working. Hunt finds that this helps the students to become familiar with the material before going into it in depth in Latin and provides them with something for comparison as they compose their own translations.

In "Technology is culture: a new opportunity for teaching and learning Latin," Licia Landi articulates successfully the ways in which the use of ICT can and should affect our pedagogy. Utilizing

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electronic sources for a wide range of texts, as well as teaching techniques that help students use these sources intelligently (her class project involved Cicero and the notion of *humanitas*), Landi shows how student learning and research can be transformed in a positive direction through effective use of ICT.

The volume's concluding two chapters, which look to the future, "Latin and European language history" by Rudolf Wachter and "Promotion of the classics in the United States: new initiatives for a new millennium" by Kenneth Kitchell, are smart, enthusiastic and practical appeals to the profession for keeping the study of Latin alive and growing. Wachter, who is project leader for *Latinum electronicum* (cf. Ch. 7), and Kitchell, who was president of the American Classical League at the time of the original Cambridge conference, are appropriate voices to issue a call to future work. Wachter argues that Latin must be sold to volunteers as an exciting subject. Its appeal can be as the mode of mediation of Greek thought, but also as the experience of a language that had great impact on Europe and beyond. Using the Internet and other sources, classicists must convince others that the study of Latin can be "*fun, easy and useful*" (p. 139). Kitchell traces the history of Latin studies in his lifetime in the USA from its relatively secure place in the curriculum to its steep decline in the 1970s, and the efforts that then developed to actively promote the study of the language. Kitchell pays tribute to Richard LaFleur, who helped guide many of these efforts, such as the formation of the Committee for the Promotion of Latin. Strategies noted by Kitchell include combining wide publicity about the value of Latin study with information for local schools and increased cooperation between the American Classical League (the North American classics organization with a more pedagogical orientation) and the American Philological Association (one with a more scholarly orientation). In addition, the very popular (and now international) National Latin Exam, begun in 1977, and the Junior Classical League have had a substantial effect upon interest in and success with Latin studies for a wide group of students at the secondary level. An important new initiative is the National Latin Teacher Recruitment Week, which attempts to focus attention on the Latin teacher shortage in the USA. Kitchell points out that the decline in Latin enrollments at the secondary level means that many classics majors in college start their Latin there, and that this in turn has an impact on both college and graduate classics programs. Kitchell sees "outreach and promotion as global concerns" (p. 163), which is perhaps a fitting conclusion not only to his chapter, but to the volume as a whole.

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Although I wondered a few times whether enough room had been provided in the programs under discussion for interrogating as well as valuing the legacy of Roman society and culture, the overall impression this book provides is of an exciting, appealing and energetic field. Perhaps the volume's greatest contribution lies in broadening our perspective on what it means to teach Latin. No single "right way" of teaching Latin emerges, thank goodness. But each contributor is self-consciously aware, in a refreshing way, of the need to articulate problems, goals, outcomes and opportunities. I recommend this book most highly to anyone interested in how Latin is being taught today and/or in how it could or should be taught in the future. Its move towards a more global perspective is welcome and timely.

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[[1]] A glossary of terms for the whole book would have been helpful. Not all readers will know what A and O levels are, or be familiar with the terms comprehensive school, state school, Ofsted, etc. While some information is provided to help readers unfamiliar with local terms and practices such as these, more detailed explanations could have served the profession by teaching us one another's "language" for the purposes of both the present volume and future international contact.

[[2]] It would have been interesting to know whether or not this educational change was connected with the arrival of the junta in 1967.

[[3]] A full citation for the Latin textbook that the Ministry of Education has been using for over 25 years would have been helpful (p. 22 n. 2).

[[4]] Top-downers emphasize meaning over form and bottom-uppers, the reverse. Obviously both techniques are needed for successful language acquisition.

[[5]] Publication or availability details would have been helpful.