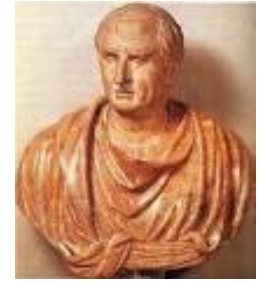


# Gazette Tulliana

SOCIETE INTERNATIONALE DES AMIS DE CICERON  
INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF CICERO'S FRIENDS  
SOCIETÀ INTERNAZIONALE DEGLI AMICI DI CICERONE  
YEAR 6, ISSUE 1-2, 2014 - ISSN 2102-653X



## OUR JOURNAL IS ARRIVING!

Dear friends of the SIAC,  
Three years ago, from these columns (*Gazette Tulliana* Year 4, Number 1, Spring-Summer 2012, p. 1), I gave news of the imminent launch of a Ciceronian journal; with an optimism that now sounds naive after many years, I imagined seeing the first issue published already in 2013, which unfortunately did not happen. Numerous difficulties have in fact slowed the path, but we have not given up; more recently (*Gazette Tulliana* Year 5, Number 1, Spring-Summer 2013, p. 1) I laid stress on the priority of this scientific initiative within the SIAC and today - finally! - I present the first concrete and tangible step. But before we do here is the situation in a nutshell: the journal was born from an agreement between the Centro di Studi ciceroniani di Roma and we of the SIAC, proposed by Carlos Lévy and thanks to the commitment of many, among whom I would like to mention L. Gamberale, G. Garbarino and R. Pierini. In this way in the chest of a new on-line journal could still beat the glorious heart of *Ciceroniana*, the series that for 13 issues published the *Atti dei Colloquia Tulliana* until 2009. Now that the climate has waned, the system of open access journals of the University of Turin hosts us at <http://www.ojs.unito.it/index.php/COL/index>, thanks to the work of a young editorial board and all-female (Alice Borgna, Linda Cermatori, Barbara Del Giovane, Mélanie Lucciano). While this issue of the *Gazette* is published, we are finishing the archiving of the previous numbers, so far available only on paper, and are preparing to launch the first volume of the new series, for which we obviously need unpublished articles on Cicero and Roman thought: those who want to collaborate can find all the necessary information above..

*Ermanno Malaspina*  
President of the SIAC scientific committee

## REREADING THE ANCIENTS WITH PETRARCH

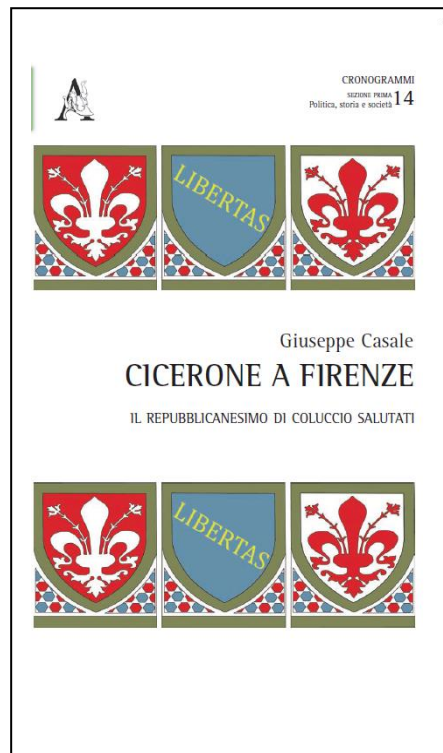
The *Familiars* of Francesco Petrarca comprise 24 books of letters in Latin sent from the poet to a very large number of recipients. There are even ten letters in which he imagines that he writes to some of the most important men in classical antiquity, from Virgil to Cicero, Horace to Seneca. It is known how significant these letters are for understanding the Latin Petrarch and for the study of his relations to ancient authors, but, paradoxically, there are still relatively few scholarly works on them, either by classicists or Italianists, particularly when compared with his vernacular productions. For this reason and with the desire to deepen knowledge of a Latin text not normally belonging to the *institutio* of Classics, the Department of Humanities of the University of Turin developed a joint seminar of Latin and Italianist scholars in 2013 led by Andrea Balbo and Sabrina Stroppa, a Petrarchan expert. The meetings, born as sessions in a series of seminars dedicated to the translation of the Latin to Italian were led by Balbo and were open to undergraduates, graduate students and students eager to explore the issues of translation. They examined the *exordia* of the *Familiars*, comparing them with the theory and practice of ancient rhetoric and medieval models, like those of Conrad von Mure, and analyzed the rhetorical and argumentative aspects of the openings of the letters. The group, made up of a dozen people, mostly Latin scholars, showed considerable enthusiasm and vivacity, resulting in discussions on the letters, the literary models, Petrarch's attitude toward the classics and on specific aspects of exegesis. The results so exceeded the expectations of the two leaders that Sabrina Stroppa, associate editor of the journal "Petrarchesca", proposed to incorporate some of the reports as articles or notes within the laboratory section in the 2015 number, which has been recently printed (<http://www.libraweb.net/sommari.php?chiave=120>); the strict evaluation of the referee then allowed the selection of contributions, bringing the total to five: the young authors are Alice Borgna, Carlotta Donna, Anastasia Mellano, Vincenzo Del Core, and Micaela Scarafia. I wish to emphasize, beyond the final result that will be evaluated by scholars, how successful this model was: it chose to introduce students to search freely and without tangible benefits in terms of "points" on their exams, it bypassed the university logic of payment and accounting so prevalent today and returned that element of humanistic disinterest that seems too absent from many academic considerations. Young people have responded very well, demonstrating commitment, generosity and passion: hope for the future, and – personally - a joy and a consolation, a moment of confidence in the ability of the university to form, as well as to educate. The seminar continued in 2015-16 on the *De viris illustribus* between Petrarch and classic models.

*Andrea Balbo, vice president of the SIAC*

# Scientific section – The Ciceronian Moment

## CICERO, SALUTATI AND THE DAWN OF THE REPUBLICAN TRADITION

It is not easy to study and reconstruct the extent and depth of the impact of Cicero on the history of political thought. You might be caught in a kind of agoraphobia, noting the large number of thinkers and doctrines which have ancestries in Cicero. Yet the selection - which is primarily methodological - of a specific occasion to test the "impact of Cicero" not necessarily remains a prisoner of the antithesis (based on a fragment of Archilochus and returning to the historical view of Tolstoy) that Isaiah Berlin identified between the fox, who knows many small things, and hedgehogs, who understand a single, but larger, reality (1). The allegory of Berlin describes, in fact, the difference between those who (like the fox) insist on particular phenomena and authorial expressions of specific cultural eras, and the perspective of those (like hedgehogs) inclined to systematic visions, focusing on turning points, traditions, ruptures and continuity. In spite of this duality, I intended to treat the thought of Salutati, Chancellor of the Florentine Republic from 1374 to 1406, by taking it as a "sample" by which to test the extent to which Early Renaissance civil humanism recovered the figure of the Ciceronian political figure, thus enhancing and delivering incipient modernity. In particular, the field of investigation is engaged in what, in the history of political thought and in



Anglo-American Political Science, now goes by the name of the *Neo-roman theory of liberty*. Therefore, situating Salutati in the transformations of the fourteenth century, the volume *Cicerone a Firenze. Il republicanesimo di Coluccio Salutati* (Arachne, Rome 2013), examines the Republican declension of Aristotelian political science solicited by the reception of Ciceronian ethics during the crisis of the Middle Ages. Moving from studies of Ronald Witt and Daniela De Rosa, confronting the theses of Hans Baron, John Pocock and Quentin Skinner, inspired by the public law reconstructions of Francesco Ercole and

the theological-legal ones of Ernst Kantorowicz, finally in dialogue with the recent attention of overseas political theory on the pre-liberal genesis of the idea of freedom, the study traces the reasons why it was recognized in civil Humanism, a decisive articulation in the history of ideas. However, considering the Ciceronianism of Salutati without seeking evidence even in the controversial treatise *De tyranno* would appear an incomplete analysis. For this – by a curious coincidence, five hundred years after *Il principe* of the famous Florentine, Machiavelli – “Caesar must die.” *Autorità e “stato di eccezione” nel realismo di Coluccio Salutati* (Drengo, Rome 2013) attempts a reconnaissance of Ciceronian republicanism among the opinions of the chancellors on the regime changes, the conspiracies, the usurpation and the conquest of power. Starting in many ways from critical judgments of the Arpinate on Julius Caesar, the latter figure, elevated to the paradigm, would ultimately express the "necessary utility" of a *pharmakon* that, although poisonous, in the right doses can return citizenship to civilization. In spite of those identified as mere autocratic and anti-republican inspiration, the “therapeutic” strategy justified by the treatise, in conclusion, is traced to an implicit confidence in the practical wisdom of the people who, in the fateful hour of crisis, can dis-

# Scientific section – The Ciceronian Moment

## CICERO, SALUTATI AND THE DAWN OF THE REPUBLICAN TRADITION

cern ways and time to arise and to obey, recognizing those who must rebel and those who grant a "saving" consent, in order to be ultimately deserving authors of their own history. Nevertheless, the controversy led by Salutati against Cicero ends paradoxically to enhance the realism exhibited by the *Philippicae* in deciphering "exceptional" institutions covered by the republican constitution of Rome - while contradicting previous anti-Caesarianism naivete. Ultimately, another opportunity to sample the variety of ways in which the presence of Cicero has been deployed, in history, as a tool to illuminate the political classes in their concrete application to the facts. I can only hope that there is an increasingly keen interest among scholars to detect this kind of evidence, so as to clarify the matrices and trajectories of the Republican tradition

Giuseppe Casale,  
Università di Roma  
"La Sapienza" (tr. T. Fracel)

(1) See I. Berlin, *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy's View of History*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London 1953. An interesting essay by Mark Jurdjevic applied this distinction in the field of philosophical historiography and politics on the Renaissance, declaring the opposition between the ranks of "hedgehogs" as Hans Baron, Eugenio Garin, Quentin Skinner and John Pocock, and the ranks of the "foxes", including Paul Kristeller, Jerrold Seigel, Ronald Witt, James Hankins, Riccardo Fubini and others: see M. Jurdjevic, *The Hedgehogs and the Foxes: The Present and Future of Italian Renaissance Intellectual History*, in "Past & Present", LVI, 2007

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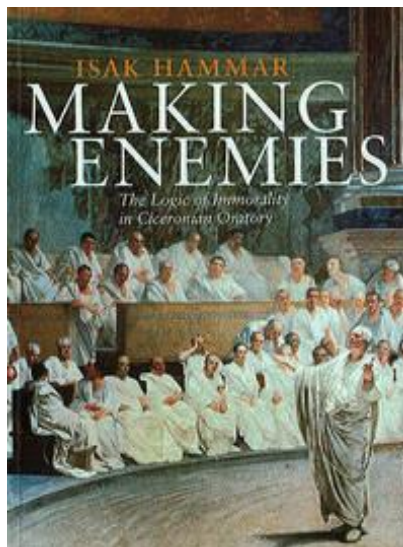
Stefano Rozzi and Andrea Balbo

# Scientific section – Ciceronian defendants and defenders in a recent monograph

## ISAK HAMMAR, MAKING ENEMIES. A STUDY ON ORALITY AND IMMORALITY

*Making Enemies. The logic of immorality in Ciceronian Oratory*, ISAK HAMMAR, Lund University 2013, pp. 381.

The substantial monograph of Isak Hammar (IH), the first work derived from the doctoral thesis of the young Swedish scholar, explores Ciceronian orations according to the macro-category of morality, rarely considered by studies over topical elements. According to the methodology and the goals of the 'New Cultural History', in which IH expressly places his own contribution, the treatment aims to demonstrate the profound interrelationship between Roman culture, political dynamics and legal proceedings. The central thesis is that the immorality of the defendants accused by the Arpinate (as well as the morality of those who were being defended), traditionally considered as the hyperbolic prerogative of the rhetorical goal of *movere*, has instead played a central role regarding the outcome of their trial. Although the book is divided into an introduction, six chapters and a conclusion, is actually structured as a diptych, which, in a long theoretical premise (where the basics of a speech are explained with a clarity of argument that is even easy reading for the non-specialist), follows the interpretation of the texts of Cicero, conducted with perfect balance



of accurate analyzes and unifying syntheses. The discussion proceeds chronologically, embracing the entire career of the orator, from the early years, with the defense of Sex. Roscius and the prosecution of Gaius Verres (ch. 3), through the years of political success, where the portrait of Catiline looms (Ch. 4), and those after the return from exile, with the stigmatization of figures like Gabinius, Piso and especially P. Clodius (Ch. 5), up to the violent head-on collision in the *Philippics* against M. Antonius (ch. 6). IH demonstrates step-by-step how the calibrated Ciceronian *ethopoiai* respond to a subtle logic of pseudo-rational links and inferences, while effective from the persuasive point of view because based they are founded on a strong

shared cultural substratum, characterized by a logic of determinism. Sins and crimes, in a public horizon as that of Rome, eventually converge, so that a story of depravity cannot help but only correspond, with a logical leap as instrumental as it is effective, also as a criminal history, dangerous for the *res publica*. Therefore, the public dimension is of great importance: as the vice does nothing but generate another vice it becomes essential to create a cordon sanitaire that isolates the offender from the *boni viri*, before the contagion spreads. And this is precisely the aim pursued by the orator: to show publicly the otherness of the accused from the standard of a *vir Romanus*. In conclusion, even if at times IH exhibits excessive attention to the articulation of a speech *more geometrico demonstrato*, sometimes risking being repetitive, it is certain that his work stands out as a successful general overview of Ciceronian oratory, offering an innovative key for interpretation that can account for a large amount of textual data. A very rich and updated bibliography also rounds out the volume, useful for those who want to have an overview of all socio-cultural Ciceronian studies.

Matteo Dessimone Pallavera  
(tr. Tom Frazel)

# Scientific section – Benefit, gift, exchange: the rules of relationships at Rome

## A NEW KIND OF COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST BOOK OF SENECA *DE BENEFICIIS*

Giusto Picone (a cura di), *Le regole del beneficio. Commento tematico a Seneca, De beneficiis, libro I*, Letteratura classica 38, Palumbo Editore, Palermo 2013, 205 pp.

The main feature of the text, as the title suggests, is its very nature of a thematic commentary. From a brief introduction follow fifteen chapters, corresponding to the fifteen chapters of *De beneficiis* Book I. Each of them, in addition to taking into account the relevant textual issues, carries out its analysis of the Senecan text by operating a continuous transition from one topic to another. The structure – to which I will return later – is not the only interesting feature of this work.

"To renounce authorial identification – to make clear – is a choice decidedly counter to the rules of behavior more common in the world of scientific research and academic practice. To all the participants in this enterprise that choice seemed an opportunity not to be missed, and share with all the readers of this book, the rewarding feeling of having put first place, in a scientific project, the development of knowledge and quality of the relationship between all researchers." This commentary is, in fact, the result of the work of three research units: one in Palermo (formed by G. Picone, A. De Caro, P. Li Causi, R.R. Marchese, R. Marino, S. Rampulla, G. Raspanti, L. Scolari); in Siena (formed by L. Beltrami, A. Accardi, M. Lentano); and Verona (formed



by L. Ricottilli, E. Calabrese, E. Dalle Vedove, R. Raccanelli). The members of these groups have, however, renounced the 'principle of authorship', so that the various contributions are not accompanied by the name of the authors.

Yet, the choice to let these merits be lost in anonymity – or, rather, in the community of the group – can only be admired. It is in fact a uncommon sign of modesty, because not everyone can stand apart from their creation without succumbing to the temptation to vindicate publicly fatherhood or motherhood. And especially praiseworthy is the reason behind this choice: namely the desire to put the spotlight on the importance of teamwork and scientific knowledge. Knowing that it was decided to convey this through that particular structure, the reader takes in a totally spontaneous complete assimilation of the various concepts and type of treatment that Seneca utilizes for

the outline of each theme. You could get this result through another structure – although with the necessary precautions, namely, the inclusion of precise and constant references to various chapters in which the same theme is developed and the highlighting of the specific contribution made by each resumption of the given question – but with a much lower capacity and effectiveness. Therefore, the user, hit all at once by the repetitions that occur in the text, finally understands how they should be used to their full benefit, as it is related to a precise strategy; functional, as has been said, in a spontaneous and complete assimilation.

Although only at first glance, so it is natural that the reader wonders if he would have to avoid imitating Seneca in his not depleting certain topics within a single chapter. If it is not timely comment for entries to be able to face any kind of question, it would have to be a differently structured work, sequentially developing issues deemed relevant to a particular section of the text, but condensing what emerges in the various chapters in one place. If, in short, the thematic grids – aimed, as explained, to make the text "fully readable and interpretable" – would not have been able to be even more effective in the case where they had undergone full development and immediate conclusion to each theme. Questions such as these, understandably

# Scientific section – Benefit, gift, exchange: the rules of relationships at Rome

## A NEW KIND OF COMMENTARY ON THE FIRST BOOK OF SENECA *DE BENEFICIIS*

come up, at pp. 59-61, in the section "Oblivion and Memory" and then, at pp. 93-94, in the section "Memory and Oblivion", the contents almost identical, although one refers to chapter II and the other to chapter IV of the *De beneficiis*. And see how the discussion on allocution and exhortation is addressed several times, rather than once (see, e.g., pp. 58-59; 79-81; 108-109; 138); and, in particular, finding more scattered pages dedicated to the concept of the primacy of giving (see, e.g., pp. 26-27; 56-57; 120-121; 152-153), in place of an uninterrupted discussion of the matter.

Not just these doubts are dispelled in the user, when he comes to the end of the comment and, as noted, by virtue of this structure and also of repetitions, a perfect acquisition of the content has taken place in him.

We should note the bibliography of this text, since it is stated as constituting only "a selection as far as possible from the more extensive bibliography that over time has grown on the work and the author": in fact it includes only studies cited in the work (88 in number). Its normal extent, neither reduced nor excessive, along with mention of the selection made, must not led us to think that the text does not stand solidly on adequate knowledge of earlier arguments, because, in fact, this commentary is a sort of summary and

compendium of previous reflections; without any loss in originality and novelty. Some further bibliographic reference would still be useful for university students of the humanities, who would be counted among the main possible users of the text: especially in conjunction with some key concepts of Senecan thought.

As well as, toward the goal of a more immediate understanding of the issues analyzed text, the presence of the critical apparatus, just after the Latin text. Even if a student is to use the certainly not hard to find critical edition of Préchac of 1926-1927 used by scholars, to assist in reading the text. Its content, purpose (to function as a thematic commentary to Book I of *De beneficiis*), structure and guiding principles (in essence, the priority of the importance of scientific knowledge, rather than the emergence of the individual) in short make this a very fine work. In fact, it makes respectful reference to works almost coeval of M.T. Griffin and P. Li Causi. Moreover, much of what we read in the latter finds itself - and not only when it is mentioned - in the work of the scholars of the three research groups: oblivion and memory, correct and incorrect procedures of giving and receiving, the figures of Socrates and Aeschines, for example, are already extensively discussed in their work, dated a year earlier

than our volume.

Moreover, it is difficult to establish the mutual debts and influences: Li Causi himself says that his work "would never have seen the light without the conversations held over the years with G. Picone [...] and, in general, with all members of the research unit PRIN of Palermo, Siena and Verona." Contacts such as these - contrary to what, perhaps, one might think - do not end up making unnecessary the reading of both texts, because, in fact, they are perfectly integrated one with the other

*Valentina Scaringella*  
(tr. T. Frazel)

# Didactic section – Ciceronian *Certamina* between France and Italy

## FROM THE VATICAN ARCHIVES NEW LIGHT ON THE SPREAD OF CHRISTI- ANITY IN KOREA

The Vatican Archives still hold surprises for researchers. The work of our Korean SIAC partner, Jae-won Ahn, made it possible to discover and to bring to the knowledge of scholars a number of manuscripts containing data on the persecution against converts to Catholic Christianity by the authorities in Confucian Joseon period. Ahn has highlighted how the texts were accompanied by a French and Latin translation for the archives and written between 1882 and 1925. The testimonies were collected from the Saint and Korean martyr, Hyeon Seok-mun, in the years following the two anti-Catholic persecution of 1839 and 1846. Since its introduction in Korea in the eighties of the eighteenth century, Catholicism was opposed by the authorities, as it was perceived as a threat to order and social cohesion. The massacres began in 1791 and, according to the Korean bishops' conference, more than 10,000 Catholics were killed just between 1801 and 1866. In addition to their religious significance, the manuscripts are of fundamental importance from the historical point of view, because they reveal the modernization of Korea and the struggle for freedom of speech and religion in Korea.

*Editors (tr. T. Frazel)*

## THE IX<sup>TH</sup> EDITION OF PRIX CICERO 2014

On Friday, September 26, 2014 in the Julien Gracq Hall of the Lycee Henri IV in Paris, P. Voisin presented the awards of the Cicero competition. The ninth edition was a great success, with the participation in France of 436 competitors tested on culture and of 186 in the language, from as many as 45 schools or universities. Many competitors from other countries took part in the event too, including the UK, Spain, Serbia, Italy, Tunisia, Australia, United States and South Korea, for a total of more than 700 students. Well over 66 won awards or were honored with honorable mentions, a success that testifies to the quality of the competitors and the interest in the competition throughout France and around the world. As part of the competition the now customary Tulliana prize of the SIAC was awarded which President P. Rousselot presented to Ms. Prudence Audié, a senior at the Lycee Henri IV in Paris, for translating the best version of the Latin. The prize consisted of art books. In 2015, the Cicero prize marks its the tenth edition: For information please visit the website

*Editors (trt. T. Frazel)*

## THE XXXI<sup>TH</sup> CERTAMEN ARPINAS (2014) SPEAKS TUSCAN

Jacopo Quaglierini was named the winner of the XXXIV edition of the *Certamen Ciceronianum Arpinas*, which was held at Arpino on 9-11 May 2014. The student, from the Liceo Classico "Virgilio" of Empoli got the better of numerous and well-trained competitors in the translation and commentary of a passage of *Laelius* 13-15, dedicated to the memory of Scipio Aemilianus. The *Certamen* has demonstrated its vitality despite the economic difficulties that led to the inevitable increase of entrance fees and that have been overcome thanks to the efforts of the organizers, who managed to organize the 2015 edition, to be held between May 8-10 [http://www.certamenciceronianum.it/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=100001](http://www.certamenciceronianum.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=100001).

*Editors (trt. T. Frazel)*

# Didactic section – Latin teaching in Brazilian schools

## TEACH LATIN TO PRIMARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS? IN BRAZIL THEY CAN AND WANT TO

How do you teach Latin to children nine-ten years old? Why should a “dead” language be of interest to teenagers from wealthy families or from ones in trouble? Above all, does the study of classical languages still have utility in our globalized and hypertechnological world? To answer these questions I had an exceptional opportunity in August 2014 to get away from the comfortable Eurocentric zone and relocate to a completely different context from my experience of the world. I was able to get to know some interesting projects in Brazil in the city of São Paulo.

This was possible thanks to the project of International Cooperation (Uni.Coo) of the University of Turin, in conjunction with the local Department of Humanities and the *Departamento de Letras Clássicas e Vernáculas de la Universidade de São Paulo* with the support of the *Sociedade Brasileira de Estudos Clássicos* and under the responsibility of Professors Ermanno Malaspina and Marcos Martinho. This was the first, and so far, only case in which the University of Turin has funded a collaborative project for the development not on food, health or citizenship, but on the relationship between the ancient world and contemporary reality. Among the activities was the study of Latin teaching at two schools of São Paulo: the *Escola*



*Festa da Cultura 2013 - Mundo Antigo: Grécia e Roma, Escola Desembargador*

*Antoinette e Leon Feffer* and the *Escola Desembargador Amorim Lima*. The *Escola Feffer* ([www.alef.org.br](http://www.alef.org.br)) in its current form dates back to August of 2012, but it comes from the *Colégio Bialik*, founded in 1943 by a group of Jewish immigrants. In the *Ensino Médio* (the course for students aged 15 to 17 years) the study of Latin was reintroduced for two years and is inserted between the core subjects of the first two years of the course. In this context, I attended some classes and I met with the teachers, in particular, Prof. Alexandre Pinheiro Hasegawa. Learning Latin is perceived as very useful in order to develop a meta-linguistic reflection in students, a better command of grammar and syntax, and a deeper knowledge of the Portu-

guese language. I noticed in the students a general curiosity and a good interest in the discipline, supported by a particular methodology: explanations are alternated with individual exercise with a concluding metacognitive discussion. In addition, the *Escola Antoinette and Leon Feffer* has for two years opened a branch in the district of Paraisópolis, the second largest *favela* of São Paulo in terms of population. The project provides an opportunity to a group of students to encounter, in a secure environment and with qualified teachers, the course of study of the *Ensino Médio*. In particular, I attended a lecture in Portuguese (Latin is not among the subjects taught at school) and I have found great interest in the students, along with excellent knowledge and con-



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siderable attention. The school, in fact, is considered an important opportunity for social improvement. The second institution that I attended is the *Escola Desembargador Amorim Lima* (<http://amorimlima.org.br>), a municipal institute for primary education with children aged six to fourteen. Since 2005, the school is distinguished by its educational plan: it aims to personalize the education and teaching of each student, who chooses autonomously in what order and how soon the proposed topics are addressed and

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implements his own path through the completion of a single issue dossier prepared by the teachers. In particular, I have followed the project *Minimus*, begun two years ago under the direction of Professor Paula Correa da Cunha, which provides for the teaching of Latin to the children in fourth grade. The groups of students follow the Latin lessons for two hours a week, during which they perform individual work by reading the textbook, doing the exercises in the manual and a specially prepared piece. The method used is that proposed by *Minimus* ([www.minimus-etc.co.uk](http://www.minimus-etc.co.uk)), a well-known English book translated into Portuguese for this project. The children appear curious and interested, while the teachers point out that this material has a positive impact on their knowledge of Portuguese. Ultimately, I came back to Italy with a suitcase full of emotions, colors, words, faces, strong bonds of friendship and think back

often to the children who greeted me with a *Vale!*, the children of the *favelas* who gave their maximum in the hope of a better life, the students of the Jewish school who, between their messages to each other on the *Facebook*, diligently annotated the declinations explained by their *morè* ("teacher"). It certainly was useful to compare teaching methods with Brazilian colleagues, but also, thanks to them, I realized the need to develop a widespread awareness of the benefits of language learning and literature, not only among the privileged social groups, but also at the disadvantaged: Latin is still essential for a more conscious cultural and civic awareness..

*Amedeo Alessandro Raschieri*

(tr. T. Frazel)

# Didactic section – Antiquity and the contemporary world in today schools

## ANTIQUITY AND THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD IN THE EYES OF THE HIGHSCHOOLERS OF TORTONA

*The students of the V class of Liceo Classico "G. Peano" in Tortona (Alessandria), sociiuniores of the SIAC, led by their teacher, Prof. Maria Cristina Torchio, were asked about some very important cultural issues. We provide below only a part of the interview, which will be published in full on [www.tulliana.eu](http://www.tulliana.eu)*

*1. It is often said that Classics are one of the constituents of the roots of Europe: on the threshold of the State Exam, what benefit do you draw from these years of study of classical languages and literatures? What values, ideas, seem to you to find their roots in classical antiquity?*

"Thinking back to our studies over the last five years, it is natural to say that Classics understood as the study of languages and, especially, of Greek and Latin cultures, is the launch point necessary for the study of any other discipline. First, the Italian language: despite the fact Latin language is a "dead language," it is thanks to it that we can understand the past and the evolution not only of Italian, but many European languages, and so to be aware of how close other cultures are. Then philosophy, which

it is impossible to understand fully without being able to translate directly and to analyze the thought of those who were the founders; or science: for example, the Greeks were the first to express the concept of atom. Besides all this, Classics is intrinsic to our daily lives, since it teaches all those values, such as hospitality, courage, piety, modesty, that have always been the foundation of our society and embody the values of a united Europe. At the end of our journey we feel we fully understand the need to know our origins and the responsibility to pass on this teaching, which is the fundamental basis of our society."

*2. Lately, the Italian school has experienced a reform that has greatly affected the study of Latin out of the Liceo Classico. After five years of versions, what do you think? Do you agree or disagree with all these voices, not only Italian, who believe the Latin and, more generally, the classical studies are "lost"?*

"We do not agree. Latin and classical studies in general are part of the history of our culture, are its roots and, as such, can not be described as "lost." We know that there are many who

do not share that thought, especially in recent times, but we think they are superficial people who judgment tied to considerations purely practical and concrete, without thinking about what is behind the study of Latin, the cultural baggage that we, "classicists" carry with us, knowledge and skills that are definitely not immediately but in the long run set us apart. "

*3. Classical languages: if Latin today risks being pushed more and more to the margins of education, it may not be able to defend itself effectively. To students, how has the teaching of classical languages not been able to catch up? What solutions do you propose*

"For students of the *Liceo Classico* in 2015 we do not believe that Latin has not been able to defend itself. Unlike science, human sciences or foreign languages, Classics, being, in fact, classic and therefore ancient, they can not be updated in terms of topics and content. However, the method of teaching can be renewed. We began our course of study in 2010 and, in almost five years, we have means to learn these disciplines differently from our parents, even from our own teachers. The documents attached to the books in the online ver-

## Didactic section – Antiquity and the contemporary world in today schools

### THE VA OF LICEO CLASSICO “G. PEANO” FROM TORTONA (ITALY) ABOUT CLASSICS

sions allow us to broaden our range of topics and especially of texts of various authors; interactive whiteboards, which allow us to analyze periods of sentences, break down the verbs and save the various activity to recover in subsequent lessons. We can also look for more information during the lesson with the same professor, getting more clarification. Latin and Greek can not, therefore, be regarded as modern languages, but they can be treated in an equally modern way."



4. *Which texts of Cicero have you dwelt on in particular?*

"The main texts of Cicero on which we focused were, from the *orationes*, *Catilinaria* I and II, but also the attack on Clodia, taken from

the *Pro Caelio*; from the philosophical works, the prologue of *Tusculanae Disputationes* and, above all, the *Laelius De Amicitia*". [...]

(tr. T. Frazel)

Aristi Giulia, Bellato Elisabetta, Bina Beatrice, Biondini Matteo, Bonzani Martina, Callegari Filippo, Elettore Alessandra, Garofalo Lucrezia, Gemme Irene, Guagnini Benedetta, Gugliada Filippo, Guidotti Martina, Meyer Elisa, Osmani Romina, Pederzini Martina, Petraglia Michela, Plumeri Cecilia. Silvano Giovanni, Torti Gaia, Torre Arianna, Zitarosa Nicolò

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