Royal Fireworks Language Arts by Michael Clay Thompson

THE WORD
WITHIN THE WORD III

Fourth Edition

Michael Clay Thompson

With historical perspective by Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

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Introduction

The Word Within the Word, Volume III, continues the focus on interdisciplinary vocabulary for advanced English. It is a tough program, designed to make students stronger in every subject. When I wrote *The Word Within the Word*, I had one goal: I wanted to create an interdisciplinary foundation for modern academic English that would put students at the top of all of their classes. I wanted students to be able to read *anything*. That same purpose extends through each of the three volumes.

The goal of this book is to prepare scholarly students for the highest end of intellectual life, to make them comfortable with the language of every subject. *The Word Within the Word* does that. I believe that advanced students want and deserve an ultra-rigorous, challenging word study.

In writing this series, I used the same method for all three books: I piled a table high with advanced textbooks from mathematics, science, history, literature, and every other subject. I borrowed texts from all of my colleagues. I poured through the vocabulary lists of the different disciplines and methodically amassed a foundation of vocabulary that would give power to an academic mind.

The interdisciplinary core of these books is their power. Their breadth is their strength. They will, without doubt, make you stronger in every subject. The science stems alone are a treasure that will propel you into a higher level of intellectual awareness.

The vocabulary is supplemented with photographs and essays by Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz, a historian by training and a photographer who took more than 100,000 photographs for this project. The material in this volume focuses on the Roman Empire. There has been a renaissance in educational theory emphasizing the importance of nonfiction readings—what some movements refer to as *informational* or *factual* readings—and the readings about Roman history and culture are perfect for that purpose. In these advanced readings, students can discover what it is like to leave basic schoolbook prose behind and begin to read real, grown-up history.

The purpose of this book, however, is not limited to history. The central strength of the stems is that they are interdisciplinary. Indeed, we also could have created a science edition, if we had wanted to, with great effect. *The Word Within the Word* is just as powerful a foundation for science or mathematics as it is for history. It provides superior intellectual training, giving it the ability to make students stronger in every subject.

Many school systems have used *The Word Within the Word* to help honors or gifted students prepare for national or state tests, such as the SAT, and I am happy about that, but test preparation is not my goal; I want to load your mind with word power. I want to give you an open gate to the life of the mind. As I said in my introduction to the first volume, to master a program this strong, you will have to study like mad. Good.

Michael Clay Thompson

A NOTE ABOUT THE ROMAN HISTORICAL MATERIAL

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

The Word Within the Word, Volume III, is a brilliantly innovative vocabulary textbook whose purpose is to help you to understand the academic English that is the medium of exchange for all learned people in our culture. Included in the book is a discussion of Rome in the period after the assassination of Julius Caesar. The purpose of this material is to broaden your understanding of the world that gave us so much of our language. This material is central to our purpose of helping you become an educated person, and we hope that it both informs you and arouses your curiosity, helps you to understand the Roman context and makes you aware of what you do not know.

In *Volume II* of *The Word Within the Word*, we looked at the history of Rome from its origins as a little mud village in the center of Italy to its emergence as the dominant power in the Mediterranean. The primary focus there was on what made Rome so successful, and we saw how the Romans took the central structure of their society, the patron/client relationship, and exported it to the wider world, thereby embracing the people in Italy they conquered and making them long-term allies rather than bitter and lasting enemies. We also looked at the process in which the divisions between factions of Romans destroyed the Republican government that had persisted for 450 years and that had been the foundation on which the Romans had built their successful domination of their world.

In this volume, we explore what the Romans did with their preeminence once they conquered the world around them. How did they end the divisions that reached their peak with the assassination of Julius Caesar on the floor of the Senate? The answer to that question lies in the victory of Octavian Caesar over all opponents, including Antony and Cleopatra, in a protracted process that took nearly fourteen years. The next question is: With what organization did they replace the Republic? The answer lies in the accommodations Octavian found with patricians of Rome. The more important question is: Once the Romans reached an end to their divisions, how did they change their world? The answer does not lie in stories of wars or of conquests or of palace intrigues. No, the answer we seek is far more tangible. It is about what the Romans developed and manufactured, about the physical structures they imposed on the world around them, about how they organized the prosperity that came with peace.

In *The Word Within the Word II*, we saw the prodigious powers of organization that the Romans possessed as they not only fought Hannibal to a standstill in Italy but also attacked overseas to the east and west at the same time, fighting wars on three fronts, finding for the first time in their history the resources for naval battles and amphibious invasions. In this volume we will see that same genius for organization put to use in peace to produce an unprecedented prosperity. In ways large and small, the Romans transformed the lives of the people in their world, and the success of their empire was built upon the benefits it brought to the inhabitants who for the most part willingly enjoyed them. Fascinatingly enough, the answers to how the Romans changed the ancient world can be seen in the buildings still standing and the artifacts to be found in thousands of archaeological sites throughout what was once the Roman world.

One of the most intriguing—and least known—aspects of ancient Rome is its performance as a center of business and as the greatest manufacturing power the world was to know until the Industrial Revolution of the nineteenth century. The patron/client structure that was central to Roman society and thinking provided an ideal organizational structure to allow wealthy patricians to invest in a variety of enterprises. They developed new methods of manufacture and new materials and processes to make their enterprises more efficient and effective. They produced manufacturing plants, the infrastructure for commerce and trade, articles for domestic consumption, and weapons for war with a sophistication and in quantities that the world had never seen before, that none of their contemporaries could match, and that posterity was unable to duplicate in many instances for more than a millennium after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Part of the story is the colossus that Rome was—in ways we might fail to appreciate if we do not look hard at what they have left us.

Latin stems are in standard style; Greek stems are in *italics*; newly introduced stems are in **bold**:

• per	(through)	perplex	• ob	(against)	ostentatious
• co	(together)	copious	• tens	(stretch)	ostentatious
• trans	(across)	traverse	• *micro*	(small)	microcosm
• *biblio*	(book)	bibliophile	• *cosmo*	(universe)	microcosm
• *phile*	(love)	bibliophile	• de	(down)	defenestrate
• *demo*	(people)	demography	• anim	(mind)	animus
• *graph*	(write)	demography	• *neo*	(new)	neophyte
• sangui	(blood)	sanguine	• *phyte*	(plant)	neophyte
• cred	(believe)	incredulous	• mens	(measure)	commensurate
• in	(not)	incredulous	• non	(not)	nonplussed
• **plex**	(weave)	perplex	• plus	(more)	nonplussed
• inter	(between)	interdiction			

perplex (confuse) Socrates was executed for perplexing the youth of Athens.

copious (abundant) Bottom's superfluous words were more copious than his ideas.

traverse (cross) Slowly, Hillary and his team traversed the face of the mountain.

bibliophile (book lover) The quaint old store was a Mecca for bibliophiles.

demography (study of populations) They examined the demographics of the school community.

sanguine (cheerful) His sanguine disposition encouraged the other survivors.

ostentatious (showy) The ostentatious home offended their subtle, refined tastes.

microcosm (small universe) She gazed at the squirming microcosm in the drop of pond water.

defenestrate (toss out the window) Defenestration was the preferred treatment for cheaters.

animus (intent or hatred) Katherine the Great sensed a disturbing animus in the English noble.

• • •

nonplussed (perplexed) The nonplussed anthropoid gazed vacantly at the skull in his hands.

interdiction (prohibition) Despite the interdiction, crowds protested before the Bastille.

commensurate (of like measure) The salary was not commensurate with the responsibility.

neophyte (beginner) She could not just relinquish the project to callow corporate neophytes.

incredulous (not believing) The incredible devastation left even Oppenheimer incredulous.

per

through • away

The Latin stem **per**, which we define as meaning *through*, actually can have a wide variety of meanings, including *through*, *throughout*, *away*, *thoroughly*, *completely*, and other related meanings. In most cases, the *through* idea seems to convey the meaning sensibly enough. Some of the English words that contain this Latin stem are provided below. Look up some of the most intriguing words, and note the way in which their definitions are functions of their etymologies.

peremptory: dictatorial or imperious. Her peremptory command made him jump.
perambulate: to walk through. They perambulated happily through the park.
perennial: perpetual. The quartet was a perennial favorite among the Vienna crowd.
perdition: damnation. Marlowe's Faustus is dragged away to perdition.
perfunctory: done in superficial routine. He gave the table a perfunctory wipe.
perfidy: treachery. In his perfidious act, he broke faith with his companions.
perfuse: pour over. The objects in the room were perfused with the red liquid.
permeate: penetrate and spread through. The ink permeated the cloth.
perpetrate: to do evil. In the dark of the moonless night, he perpetrated his foul crimes.
pernicious: destructive. The false rumor had a pernicious influence on the crowd.
peroration: conclusion of a speech. At length Pericles came to his sublime peroration.
perseverate: pathological persistence. He perseverated in his effort to speak to Moses.
persiflage: flippant style. Their sarcasm and persiflage carried them through the crisis.
perspicacious: insightful. Sappho's perspicacious poems have endured for millennia.
pertinacity: obstinacy. With grim-mouthed pertinacity, he refused to let go.
perforce: necessarily. After the debacle, he perforce went into hiding.
permutation: radical rearrangement. She marveled at the weird permutations of his ideas.
perpend: to ponder. "Perpend," said Polonius, as he held out Hamlet's letter.
perquisite: a privilege or benefit of title. The position included attractive perquisites.
perturbation: disturbance. Dracula detected the psychic perturbations in his victim's fear.
pervasive: spread throughout. Aristotle's influence was pervasive in Medieval theology.

1. The noun **microcosm** is contrasted with its opposite, **macrocosm**; under the microscope, we discover a microcosm in a drop of pond water, and this microcosm is remarkably complex and populous, a nutshell vista of phenomena and vitality. The excitement of modern science, of course, is that neither the microcosm nor the macrocosm seem to have apprehensible limits. Even one of the most minute organisms in a drop of pond water is itself another microcosm, filled with mysterious cells (though it may be unicellular) and curiously motivated protoplasm. And a tiny piece of this protoplasm is itself another microcosm, an animated universe of molecules and atoms, which are in turn whirling systems of even vastly smaller something or anothers that we metaphorically call *particles*. Where does it end? (Does it end?) Of course, it can be an acrophobic experience to turn around from the lens of the microscope and look up, only to see the great wheeling and sparkling dome of the macro universe overhead. Thoreau noted that we stand at the meeting of two infinities, but we also are caught at the meeting of two cosms; our human scale is a kind of intercosm between the microcosm and the macrocosm, each of which makes the other, and each of which we are made.

2. A **Micropoem**: To **perplex** someone is to confuse that person by complicating the situation, but the metaphor concealed in the word is one of tangles and knots, of strands that are twisted or woven (*plex*) through (*per*) each other into a snarl that can no longer be understood. The perplexed person is left hesitant, in doubt, confused by the complexity. Note the kinship between the words *perplex* and *complex*. The verb *perplex* and its variations, the adjective **perplexed** and the noun **perplexity**, are widely used in literature: Tom Sawyer's Aunt Polly looked perplexed, as did Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. My favorite example, however, comes from Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, in which "Kenneth was perplexed to pronounce of what disorder the master died."

3. When we think of the horror of a **sanguinary** battle, or of the familial comfort of **consanguinity**, we find it puzzling that the adjective **sanguine** means cheerful. Bloody cheerful, the British might think. The puzzle is solved by realizing that a cheerful and healthy person is traditionally known as rosy-cheeked—not gray and cadaverous but having the pink tone of good circulation. Kenneth Grahame's Toad, in *The Wind in the Willows*, is a "sanguine, self-satisfied animal."

4. A **Classic Word**: Although the verb **traverse**, from *trans* (across) and *vert* (turn), is not one that we hear in everyday conversational use, it has a venerable history in English speech and literature. It can mean to move across, to cross and recross, or even to oppose. We find it in 1667 in Milton's *Paradise Lost*, but we also find it in 1963 in Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. It has been used by Mary Shelley, Walter Scott, James Fenimore Cooper, and Mark Twain. H.G. Wells, Joseph Conrad, and even F. Scott Fitzgerald used it. We find characters "traversing with the decided step of one who remembered the way well" (Dickens), "traversing the country" (Defoe), "having traversed immense seas" (Mary Shelley), and "traversing the room with hasty strides" (Scott). In Mark Twain's *Tom Sawyer*, "Nudges and winks and whispers traversed the room," which is a beautifully creative use of the word, unless nudges and winks are more talented than I have heretofore suspected.

Though it is good to have a rich vocabulary, it is not good to abuse that vocabulary by writing verbose, sesquipedalian sentences. Those who overuse their vocabularies often do so at the expense both of clarity and of others' patience. Translate the following ostentatious, ponderous passage into graceful, direct English.

> Clinging to the face of the cliff, the neophyte rock climber had begun to lose his usual sanguine complacency and to develop an unwonted animus against the stubborn rock wall. Three attempts to traverse the face had left the climber perplexed and incredulous, glaring in frustration at the microcosms of lichen-covered granite that continued their montane existences two inches from his nose. What curious animal demography could describe the copious microorganisms that inhabited these microscopic gray landscapes?
>
> Far in the west, the incarnadine sun had set, and the azure sky had transmuted into a soft, purpling mauve. The temperature was dropping. Soon the ostentatious glitter of the Milky Way would taunt him with its own interdiction: Do Not Climb at Night. Somewhere above his head, a bird was engaged in twilight defenestrations, flinging from its nest the rubbish of the day's events. Bug legs. Broken feathers. Bits of bird debris that fell steadily on the nonplussed climber's head—more debris than seemed commensurate with the small projects of a bird.
>
> "In the morning," he thought as he checked his ropes and pitons and prepared himself to sleep on the rock face, "in the morning I will make it." But he knew that only a different synergism, a new combination of energy, coordination, and commitment, would get him safely across the difficult face and over the top of the cliff.

Reading Comprehension

1. For Translation #61, which of the following does the passage suggest?
    a. The climber is supremely confident.
    b. The climber is confident but realistic.
    c. The climber is terrified and is trying to convince himself that he will survive.
    d. The climber is confident but is deceiving himself about his skills.

2. Which of the following is the best title for Translation #61?
    a. An Incredulous Encounter with Mountain Microcosms
    b. A Sanguine Night on the Rock Face
    c. Keeping Defenestrations on Top of Things
    d. A Neophyte's Nonplussed Traverse

Analogies

3. **INCREDULOUS : INCREDIBLE ::**
    a. shock : disaster
    b. animus : hate
    c. perplexed : nonplussed
    d. microcosm : macrocosm

4. **BIBLIOPHILE : BOOK ::**
    a. music : audiophile
    b. book : page
    c. gastronome : food
    d. philosopher : logic

Antonyms

5. **NEOPHYTE :**
    a. tree
    b. virtuoso
    c. stoic
    d. phytotoxin

6. **COPIOUS :**
    a. myriad
    b. gnostic
    c. nonplussed
    d. sporadic

convergence

Of the words in List #61, select the one term that would be the best addition to your own frequently used vocabulary, and explain why. In what situations do you envision yourself using the word?

analysis

Using a dictionary for etymological assistance, explain why the word **ostentatious** means what it means, considering its Latin origins.

synthesis

We refer to the teeming microbiotic life in a drop of pond water as a **microcosm**, but we also use the word to describe such things as the small, self-contained community of an established college, where a professor might live, dine, work, and find most of the amenities and enjoyments of the academic life. As you think about society, history, and other world views, what other situations can you think of that would be aptly described by the word *microcosm*?

application

In brief definitions, the words **perplex** and **nonplus** seem to be perfect synonyms, but actually these two words are part of a family that includes **puzzle**, **confuse**, **confound**, **bewilder**, and **dumbfound**. A **perplexed** person is not only puzzled but may even be worried, whereas a **nonplussed** person is so perplexed as to be completely unable to proceed. *Nonplussed*, therefore, is a stronger term than *perplexed* and denotes a more affected state. Many dictionaries have synonym discussions explaining the fine differences between such near-synonyms. Find a dictionary that contains a discussion of the words mentioned above, and then use *perplex*, *nonplus*, and a few other synonyms in a paragraph.

imagination

Write a short story in which the primary scene concerns a person in a frenzy of **defenestration**.

Neologist's Lexicon

Use the stems in this list to create a new word (neologism). Give the word, the pronunciation, the part of speech, the etymology, and the definition(s). Keep a record of the neologisms you create from list to list. Here are some examples using stems from this week's list:

> **cosmoplexity** (koz mo PLEX ih tee) n. [*cosmo* (universe), *plex* (weave)] 1. chronic befuddlement over the meaning of life 2. extreme obsession with the size and scale of the universe, resulting in overwhelming feelings of insignificance
>
> **sanguigraphy** (san GUI graff ee) n. [*sangui* (blood), *graph* (write)] 1. writing in blood, as pirates' oaths and boys' sacred pacts

Sesquipedalian Emily Dickinson

Some people believe that Emily Dickinson is the greatest poetic genius that the United States has produced. My own view is that this status likely belongs to Walt Whitman, but if it is not Whitman, then Dickinson would be a powerful candidate for the honor. Certainly, her poetry is of first-magnitude genius. It is original, unique, filled with condensed flashes of unexpected sound and insight. And in her poetry, Dickinson consistently revealed a tough and unsentimental mind that stared powerfully at the truth of the world, however bitter or unpalatable it may be. In style, Dickinson was fond of brilliant rhymes and near-rhymes, in contrast to the *moon-soon* obvious rhymes used by lesser talents. Her large ideas were condensed into a poetic succinctness that at first seems almost sketchy but that magically expands to elaborate fulfillment in the process of going from the page to readers' minds. Dickinson often used dashes rather than commas or periods—an idiosyncratic punctuation that has been properly restored to her published poems in recent years. She frequently used lines of iambic tetrameter followed by iambic trimeter, which, remember, is also the pattern of a ballad, though Dickinson did not confine herself to ballad quatrains. If she had used the words in List #61 to write a poem, the result might have been something like this:

A Neophyte's Memories

A neophyte incredulous,
My sanguine mind—perplexed—
I gaze nonplussed—sans animus—
Defenestrated wrecks
Abound, a copious debris—
My former lives traverse my mind—
So ostentatiously!

DEATH IN THE SENATE

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

The sixty senators who conspired to assassinate Julius Caesar on the Ides of March had no plan for what would happen after Caesar was dead. We now consider the killing of Caesar as a cataclysmic event, and yet they had no plan for the future! Their absence of a plan should give us pause and raise the question: *What were they thinking?* Their expectation seems to have been that things would continue much as they had before Caesar was in control of Rome, that the Republic would continue as it had for the past 465 years, that they and members of their class would control the events of state, and that the problem was Caesar himself and not a larger, systemic threat to the Republic. The assassination plot was closely held among the patrician senators; a new man like Cicero was not included in the plot, even though the plotters knew that Cicero would have sided with them on constitutional grounds. The exclusion of Cicero is a clear indication that the cohesive force at work was the interests of a class of men rather than an ideological impetus to restore the state. Their expectation that the Republic would continue as before was enhanced by the results of killing enemies of their class for the previous eighty-nine years and having only positive outcomes from the deaths. Beginning with the murder of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 B.C.E., their great-grandfathers, grandfathers, and fathers had met threats to their interests with assassination, sending their enemies to premature and violent deaths, and those assassinations had worked for them. So now the sixty senators expected the same result from the same action.

The assassins spared the life of Mark Antony on the Ides of March; they could have killed him, but they did not consider him a threat to their class, and they decided the evening before to let him live. Mark Antony was not held in high regard because he led a life that was anything but the embodiment of the traditional Roman virtues of discipline, self-control, and moderation. In a society in which family counted for much, Antony was the son of an ineffectual man known for his corruption and remembered for his bankruptcy, a man whose early death was unlamented. Antony's mother was Caesar's cousin, hence Antony's position as a general under Caesar. He had proven an able general, and Caesar had been influential enough to have him made Tribune of the Plebs in 50 B.C.E.; Antony had been one of the two tribunes run out of Rome by the senators when he tried to stop the proceedings that were intended to remove Caesar from office and relieve him of control of his armies. Mark Antony had a long history of drunkenness, gambling, and licentiousness, and he had been a poor civil administrator when Caesar had left him in charge of the government in Rome. Caesar had relieved him of authority, and for two years Antony had done little while Caesar ended the threat to his rule that Pompey and his sons had posed. In 44 B.C.E. Caesar had made Antony co-consul with him, but that had not been sufficient to raise the esteem in which Antony was held. He owed his life to the low opinion the senatorial conspirators had of him as much as to their desire to assert that the death of Caesar was an act of principle, not the prelude to a bloodbath.

However dissolute he may have been, Antony was not without ability, which he used to think, plan, and maneuver better than the senatorial conspirators. In the immediate aftermath of the stabbing of Caesar, Antony hid, unsure if he was an intended victim. When he found that he was not in danger, he swiftly began to rally the Caesarean forces to take control of the state. On the night after Caesar's assassination, Marcus Lepidus seized control of the Forum. He had been in the vicinity of Rome with an army of veterans about to go into retirement in Spain; now he considered making himself master of Rome. However, Antony convinced him not to and formed an alliance with Lepidus, sealing it with the marriage of his daughter to Lepidus's son. He also assisted Lepidus in taking the office of *Pontifex Maximus*, which Julius Caesar had held until his death. The *Pontifex Maximus* was the chief religious official of Rome. Antony gave the assassins, led by Brutus and Cassius, assurances of his friendship, even sending his son among them as a hostage. The need of both sides was legitimacy, and on the 18th of March they crafted a compromise that gave amnesty to the assassinations but did not declare Caesar a tyrant and thereby left in place all his laws and programs, as well as his officials. Moreover, Antony got the senators to pass a decree that ratified all of Caesar's acts without naming or even describing them. A balance seemed to have been reached—until Antony inflamed the crowd at Caesar's funeral and made Rome unsafe for the assassins.

THE TANGLED WORLD OF MARCUS JUNIUS BRUTUS

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

Marcus Junius Brutus was the acknowledged leader of the senatorial assassins of Julius Caesar. Disentangling his beliefs, bonds of family, and loyalties is extraordinarily complex. When he was seven years old, Brutus's father was killed by Pompey in suppression of a purported plot against the state. Brutus was raised and educated by his mother's half-brother, Cato. This formative experience may have imbued in him a dedication to the Roman Republic as Cato understood it and perhaps an enormous respect for Cato personally. Brutus began his career as an assistant to Cato during his governorship of Cyprus. There he made a fortune by lending money at exorbitant rates of interest. In party terms, Brutus was a patrician and one of the conservative Optimates. His politics and loyalties might have placed him in opposition to Caesar, but Caesar was the long-time lover of Servilia, Brutus's mother. Caesar was quite solicitous of the son of his lover, and he offered Brutus every kindness and preferment possible.

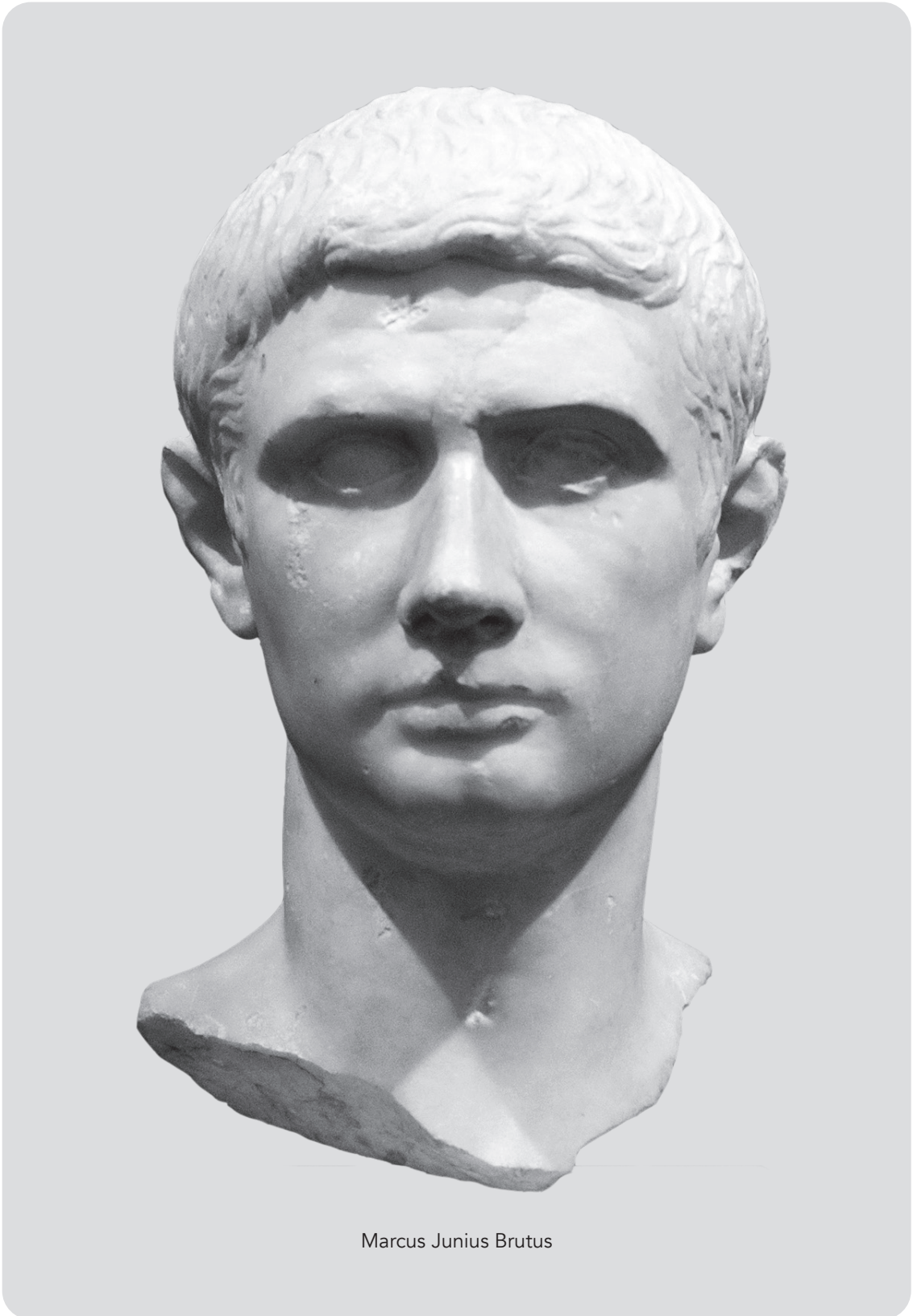
Once when Cato was attacking Caesar in the Senate, the latter received a missive. Cato accused Caesar of receiving a conspiracy note during Senate proceedings. Caesar handed to Cato the missive, which was a love note from Cato's half-sister (and Brutus's mother) Servilia. This did nothing to diminish Cato's hostility to Caesar; we can only speculate on how Brutus felt about the episode, but embarrassment is likely.

Brutus's first wife had conflicted family ties to both parties; her uncle was Clodius, one of Caesar's closest and most notorious allies; he was killed by the Optimates. Her father was attacked in the courts by Caesar's party and was vigorously defended by Cato and the Optimates. This put Brutus further at odds with Caesar.

In 49 B.C.E. when Caesar crossed the Rubicon, Brutus sided with Pompey and the Senate, standing with the man who had killed his father against the man who was his mother's lover. He followed Pompey to Greece and participated in the battle of Pharsalus. At that battle Caesar gave orders that Brutus was not to be harmed if Caesar's legionnaires encountered him on the battlefield. After Pompey lost, Brutus decided not to follow Pompey and Cato in continued resistance to Caesar and instead applied to Caesar for clemency, which was immediately granted. Thereafter, Caesar brought Brutus into his inner circle.

After the Republicans lost the battle of Thapsus in 46 B.C.E., Cato committed suicide. Fourteen months later Brutus divorced his wife (causing something of a scandal and a rift with his mother because he gave no reason for doing so) and married his cousin, Cato's daughter. Brutus also authored a pamphlet in which he honored Cato, who was at once his uncle and his posthumous father-in-law. Meanwhile Caesar fostered Brutus's career, making him the governor of Cisalpine Gaul in 46/45 and a praetor for the year 44, and he put him in line to be a consul in 41. As Caesar moved increasingly toward taking all power in his hands and violating many of the practices of the Roman Republic, Brutus, then forty years old, was drawn into becoming the leader of the conspiracy to kill him. All of Caesar's personal kindnesses toward Brutus were repaid with a dagger, but Brutus's true loyalties were to the patrician class, the Optimate party, and the protection of the Republic.

The complex family ties and bonds of friendship of the sixty senators certainly helped them to keep secret their plot to assassinate Caesar. The initiator of the conspiracy was said to be Gaius Cassius Longinus, who was a little older than Brutus. He was married to a daughter of Servilia, who was Brutus's mother; thus, Cassius and Brutus were brothers-in-law. Other leading members of the conspiracy were the Casca brothers: Publius Servilius Casca Longus—who struck the first blow in the assassination—and Gaius Servilius Casca; they too were members of the Servilia family and were thereby related to Brutus through his mother. The Servilia had been prominent patricians in Rome for 450 years by the time of the assassination of Caesar. Roman families venerated their ancestors, who gave the family identity, pride, and prominence. Among the Servilia ancestors was Gaius Servilius Ahala, who nearly 400 years earlier had assassinated Spurius Maelius to prevent a plot to make the latter king. Although at the time this was thought of as murder, by 44 B.C.E. it was an act cited often as an example of the courage and heroism of the ancient Romans in their defense of the Republic. As such, Gaius Servilius Ahala provided a standard for Brutus and the Casca brothers to emulate.

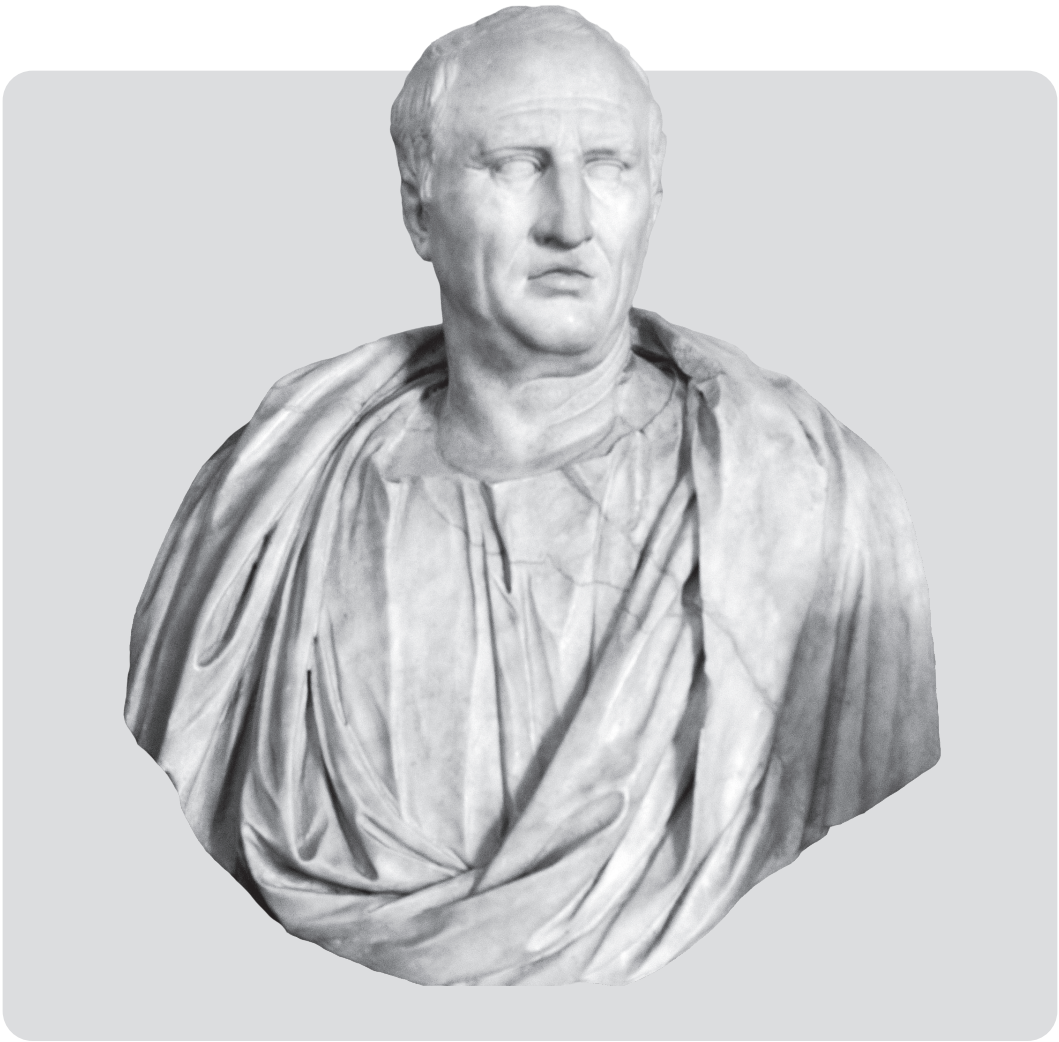


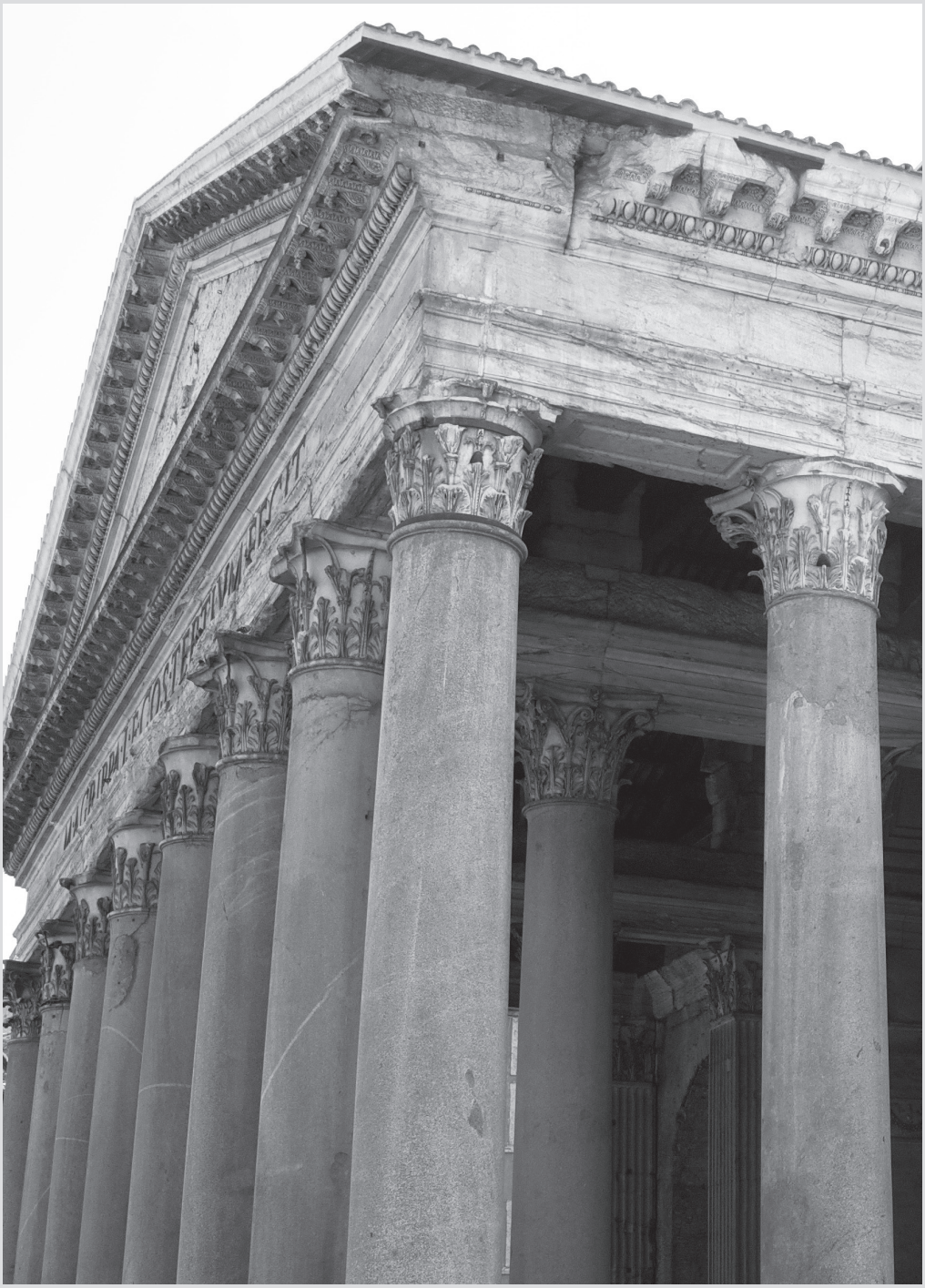
Marcus Junius Brutus

MARCUS TULLIUS CICERO

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

Marcus Tullius Cicero was not a patrician, but he was from a wealthy provincial family of the *equites* (knights) class. He was an exceptionally able student, a hard worker, and a gifted orator with high ambition and an elegant Latin prose style. Besides many of his writings, much of Cicero's correspondence has survived, and together they give us great insight not only into his career and accomplishments but also into many aspects of Roman daily life and much of the history of the late Roman Republic. Cicero was an indefatigable self-publicist, and he wrote up many of his law cases, highlighting his successful arguments on behalf of his clients. He had the respect of the Senate, and he refused Caesar's invitation in 60 B.C.E. to join Crassus, Pompey, and Caesar when they formed the First Triumvirate. When civil war came in 49 B.C.E. after Caesar crossed the Rubicon, Cicero sided with Pompey and the senators who fled to Greece. He was present at Pharsalus when Caesar defeated Pompey, but he quickly made peace with Caesar and returned to Rome. He was taken by surprise by Caesar's assassination. Brutus, standing over Caesar's body holding a bloody dagger, asked Cicero to lead the Senate in the restoration of the Roman Republic. In the following two years, Cicero was the most obvious and important spokesman for the Senate, and his virulent and damaging opposition to Mark Antony eventually cost him his life.





An important source for our knowledge of this period is a history written by Appian before 162 C.E. Appian was born in Alexandria in about 95 C.E. to a Greek family of the equestrian order. He went to Rome in about 120 C.E.; there he was a lawyer, and he argued cases before the emperor. Only about half of his history has survived, but five books detailing the Roman civil wars have come down to us. They offer fascinating insights into the events and behaviors of the leading individuals, and it is revealing to read parts of them. For instance, the chapter on Caesar's funeral is well worth the ten minutes it takes to read it. This is most easily found by looking for Appian, *Civil Wars*, Book II, Chapter XX.

Latin stems are in standard style; Greek stems are in *italics*; newly introduced stems are in **bold**:

• in	(in)	inchoate	• *ism*	(doctrine)	stoicism
• *peri*	(around)	peripatetic	• vale	(farewell)	valediction
• ***patein***	(to walk)	peripatetic	• dict	(say)	valediction
• ambi*	(around)	ambient	• tion	(act or state)	valediction
• ten	(thin)	tenuous	• super	(over)	supercilious
• duct	(lead)	ductile	• **cilium**	(eyelid)	supercilious
• ous	(full of)	fortuitous	• mort	(death)	moribund
• ad	(to)	allude	• ex	(out)	expository
• **ite**	(adherent)	Sybarite	• pos	(put)	expository
• sub	(under)	surrogate	• dis*	(from)	dishabille
• rogat	(ask)	surrogate			

inchoate (just begun) The inchoate promise of the renewal project never materialized.

peripatetic (walking) Don Quixote and Sancho embarked on a peripatetic adventure.

ambient (surrounding) For Hamlet, the ambient air was promise-crammed.

tenuous (thin) Researchers found only a tenuous relationship between lunacy and sunspots.

ductile (malleable) The Martian projectile was of a ductile metal, hammered into shape.

fortuitous (by chance) The fortuitous discovery of penicillin made Alexander Fleming famous.

surrogate (substitute) The baby monkey clung to the soft, carpeted, surrogate mother.

allude (indirectly refer) He cleverly alluded to their previous acerbic disagreement.

dishabille (partially dressed) In astonished dishabille, they stared down from their balcony.

Sybarite (devotee of luxury) Rome succumbed to the Sybarites and *bon vivants* within.

• • •

stoicism (indifference to sensation) With heroic stoicism, she refused to answer their questions.

valediction (farewell speech) “Look for me under your boot soles,” was Whitman’s valediction.

supercilious (scornful) “Let them eat cake,” she replied with supercilious condescension.

moribund (dying) The moribund community was replete with vacant offices and homes to rent.

expository (explanatory) Rachel Carson loved to read clear, academic, expository prose.

*We introduce new definitions of *ambi* and *dis*.

sub

under • beneath • below

The Latin stem **sub**, which we define as meaning *under*, actually can have a wide variety of meanings and is sometimes altered to **suc**, **suf**, **sug**, **sum**, **sup**, **sur**, and even **sus** in order to blend with the stem that follows it. Though **sub** often means *under*, it can mean *beneath*, *below, lower*, *somewhat*, or even *inferior*. Here are some of the interesting words that contain **sub** in its various shades of meaning:

subcutaneous: beneath the skin. He was troubled by a subcutaneous infection.

subduct: to draw downward. She swam against the subduction in the offshore current.

sublunary: under the moon. The lovers enjoyed a beautiful sublunary dance.

sublimate: to express acceptably. The urge of the id can find creative sublimations.

submontane: at the foot of the mountains. The submontane vegetation was more lush.

subtle: not obvious. Subtle clues told her to avoid asking about the problem.

subvert: to overthrow. They worked to subvert the established regime.

substratum: foundation. His peaceful humility was founded on a substratum of religion.

subsistence: bare survival. They survived at a subsistence level by gathering food.

subaqueous: underwater. The subaqueous habitation gradually developed into a city.

subservient: obsequious. The toady's subservient fawning irritated her.

subtrahend: number subtracted. The deduction was a fearful subtrahend from the check.

surreptitious: done in secret. The plans were made at a surreptitious meeting in the Alps.

suffuse: to fill with color. Becky Thatcher's face was suffused with embarrassment.

suffrage: voting. Women's suffrage began very late in American history.

succinct: brief and clear. Her succinct description impressed them all.

suggest: to mention. He suggested a solution, but no one listened.

suffocate: to smother. Small businesses were being suffocated by federal regulations.

suspend: to hang. The bridge was suspended from massive cables.

sustain: to maintain. They were unable to sustain their initial enthusiasm.

summon: order to appear. The peremptory summons was ignored.

1. The adjective **peripatetic** refers to walking about, but it also puts us in mind of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.), who was the pupil of Plato and the teacher of Alexander the Great. Aristotle, after receiving his education in Plato's Academy, founded the Lyceum, where he would lecture and discourse with his students as he walked about. This walking, or peripatetic, style has thenceforth been associated with Aristotle, the peripatetic philosopher. A follower of Aristotle could be described as a peripatetic.

2. The noun **Sybarite** is one we apply to someone who reminds us of the inhabitants of ancient Sybaris, a Greek coastal colony and trading center in southern Italy founded in 720 B.C.E. Sybaris was famous for its wealth, luxurious lifestyle, opulence, and decadence. The colony was destroyed in 510 B.C.E. by a rival city, Crotona. Someone fond of decadent luxury is a Sybarite. Some related terms are ***bon vivant***, **epicure**, **voluptuary**, and **hedonist**. A voluptuary is a Sybarite who is especially involved in sensual pleasures. A *bon vivant* cares more for food and drink and luxurious eating. An epicure is a person who not only enjoys luxurious meals but who has exquisite taste in food, wine, and the cultivated aspects of the table. A hedonist is someone who pursues pleasure—which may or may not involve luxury—as the chief aim of life.

3. Why does the noun **surrogate**, meaning a substitute, contain the stem *rogat* (ask)? Because it comes from the Latin *surrogare*, to elect someone in another's place. In other words, the person is asked to fill in. The Latin *rogare* meant to ask or to nominate.

4. A **Micropoem**: The adjective **inchoate** (pronounced in-KO-it) means beginning, or just begun, but it comes to us from the Latin *inchoatus*, meaning in (*in*) harness (*cohum*: the strap from the plow to the yoke). Thinking of this word, we imagine the ancient Roman farmer who is preparing to plow his field, and his project is just beginning. He has just hitched his horse to the plow under a windy, blue, Mediterranean sky.

5. A **Classic Word**: The intransitive verb **allude** means to refer to something casually or indirectly. The Latin *alludere* meant to jest, and it contained the stems *ad* (to) and *ludere* (to play). *Allude* and its noun form **allusion** have been favorite words to classic authors for hundreds of years. *Allude* was frequently used by Swift, Shelley, Cooper, and the Brontës, as well as Stowe, Melville, Dickens, and Twain. We find allusions to peculiar sounds, allusions to ill health, allusions to someone's wishes, and allusions to lines and angles. In Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*, there are profane allusions to a general. In Wells's *The War of the Worlds*, a character alludes to the curious suggestions of the red weed. In Kipling's *Kim*, we learn that "*Lear* was not so full of historical allusions as *Julius Caesar*." In Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*, we find an "incidental allusion, purposely thrown out." In *The Bridge of San Luis Rey*, Wilder described all "those allusions to honour, reputation, and the flame of love." Melville mentioned that some "nomenclature may be convenient in facilitating allusions to some kind of whales" and referred to "a thorough appreciative understanding of the more special leviathanic revelations and allusions of all sorts." In Conrad's *Lord Jim*, there are some "muttered allusions...to dogs and the smell of roastmeat." We find *allude/allusion* as early as *Gulliver's Travels* in 1726 and as late as *A Separate Peace* in 1959, but perhaps the most charming usage of all comes from Kenneth Grahame in his book for children and grown-up children, *The Wind in the Willows*: animals, it turns out, have their own rules of proper conduct, and "it is quite against animal-etiquette to dwell on possible trouble ahead, or even to allude to it."

Though it is good to have a rich vocabulary, it is not good to abuse that vocabulary by writing verbose, sesquipedalian sentences. Those who overuse their vocabularies often do so at the expense both of clarity and of others' patience. Translate the following ostentatious, ponderous passage into graceful, direct English.

With stoic visage, the aging hero Don Quixote saddled up the swaybacked, moribund nag and rode forth on his inchoate adventure. In curious dishabille, he clutched a makeshift shield of ductile metal and a lance, all of which weighed ponderously on his old horse's back. No hedonist or Sybarite, the knight, for so he regarded himself, was intent on chivalrous service and altruistic sacrifice to his Lady, the honorable Dulcinea, whom he had never seen but knew to be the most pulchritudinous and demure maiden in the world.

By fortuitous circumstance, his indolent but amiable neighbor Sancho was available and willing to accompany the knight and serve him, in return for being requited with wealth and power at the end of their quest—a tenuous hope.

They had traversed some distance over the undulating landscape, with Don Quixote euphorically delivering voluminous expository lectures on the famous histories of knights-errant, and the sanguine Sancho replying with desultory remarks of his own, when Don Quixote, with supercilious condescension, suddenly rebuked him, "Sancho, your vacuous replies are less than profound. You are not mendacious, but your soporific pontifications on subjects unknown to you are odious. Henceforth on our peregrinations, please speak only when you are spoken to, or you will hear my valediction. The erudite histories of knights-errant to which I often allude show that the squire should be as an obsequious sycophant to his knight and never violate protocol."

As Sancho listened with incredulity, they suddenly came upon a hillside covered with whirling windmills. "Oh, thou miscreants, thou odious and prodigious giants whose perfidious evil has achieved a hegemony over these lands," cried Don Quixote, "prepare for oblivion, for I will smite you under the banner of the sublime Dulcinea. Nothing you can do will mollify my anger." And before the nonplussed Sancho could demur, Don Quixote was off, charging toward the windmills with an unambivalent bravery.

In the risible but sad denouement of this altercation, Sancho attempted to help the bruised Don Quixote up after the windmill had knocked him down. The pensive knight looked at his squire: "Sancho," he said with a serene self-confidence, "I now apprehend that these giants are assisted by evil magicians, who have cleverly transmogrified them into the shapes of windmills in an attempt to deceive me. What animus these magicians must bear against me, the greatest knight-errant in the world!" The perplexed Sancho could not reply.

Reading Comprehension

1. The best title for Translation #70 would be:
    a. A Poignant Psychosis
    b. The Objurgations of a Knight-Errant
    c. An Altruistic Victim of Apocryphal Histories
    d. An Autodidact's Epiphany

2. With which of the following would the author of Translation #70 likely agree?
    a. Don Quixote meets his condign end when he charges the windmills.
    b. Don Quixote is an insufferable patrician snob who should be condemned.
    c. Sancho tolerates Don Quixote's eccentricities for reasons of cupidity only.
    d. Don Quixote brings out feelings of pity, affection, and sympathy in his readers.

Analogies

3. **SYBARITE : STOICISM ::**
    a. luxury : pleasure
    b. pacifist : militarism
    c. sycophant : obsequious
    d. neophyte : inchoate

4. **SUPERCILIOUS : AMIABLE ::**
    a. condescending : arrogant
    b. perplexed : nonplussed
    c. patrician : friendly
    d. moribund : inchoate

Antonyms

5. **FORTUITOUS :**
    a. weak
    b. fortunate
    c. designed
    d. unfortunate

6. **TENUOUS :**
    a. substantial
    b. tendentious
    c. intentional
    d. subtle

aesthetics

The **peripatetic** philosopher Aristotle strolled through the *peripatos*, or covered walking area, at his Lyceum in Athens. Aristotle's Lyceum was a rival to Plato's Academy and was devoted to the study of logic, ethics, poetics, and the accumulation of early scientific knowledge about the world. In contrast to Plato's poetically brilliant, many-leveled explorations of truth, Aristotle's thinking was often practical and straightforward. Like Leonardo da Vinci 1,700 years later, Aristotle was interested in the things of the world: What kinds of things are there? What makes things happen? What are the characteristics of good plays? Why does theatrical tragedy move us?

One of the most influential works of Aristotle is his *Poetics*. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle discussed poetry, and within poetry, comedy and tragedy. His comments on the nature of tragedy have guided our thinking ever since and have even created the terms with which we debate the nature and function of tragedy. Aristotle argued that the function of tragedy is to achieve a catharsis of the tragic emotions, pity and fear, in the viewer. This is accomplished when the main character, or protagonist, has a tragic recognition that causes a reversal of his life (and the play). When the protagonist is a good and distinguished person with whom we can identify, and whose tragic reversal is not the result of great crime or depravity but of a tragic flaw such as hubris (pride) that we can all possess, this brings the tragic emotions to their peak in the viewer. Aristotle said that the tragedy has two parts: the complication and the denouement, or unraveling, which occurs after the protagonist's recognition.

As an example of tragedy at its greatest, Aristotle repeatedly cited Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*, in which the protagonist Oedipus, King of Thebes and a brilliant man of good intentions whose excess pride prevents him from really listening to anyone else, is destroyed by the horrifying knowledge that he has unknowingly murdered his own father and married his mother, Jocasta. Having learned this, Oedipus blinds himself (Jocasta commits suicide) and is exiled in accordance with his own command.

What do you think of these ideas? It is easy to see how Aristotle's ideas help to describe and understand a classical tragedy such as Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*, but do you think that these ideas are still useful? Can you apply any of these terms to a modern novel or film in an enlightening way? Are we still concerned with hubris as a tragic flaw in otherwise excellent people? Consider and discuss these questions.

emotion

In one famous experiment in psychology, which a friend of mine calls the fuzzy-mother-scratchy-mother experiment, experimenters constructed two **surrogate** mother monkeys for baby monkeys to choose from. Each surrogate mother had a similar monkey-like head, but one of the surrogate mothers was made of wire screen and had a milk bottle attached for the baby to feed itself, whereas the other surrogate mother was made of soft carpet and had no milk bottle. Which mother would the baby monkeys cling to? It turned out that baby monkeys would cling pitifully to the soft surrogate mothers, even when they were hungry. Consider this result carefully, and then explain what you think it shows us.

Neologist's Lexicon

Use the stems in this list to create a new word (neologism). Give the word, the pronunciation, the part of speech, the etymology, and the definition(s). Keep a record of the neologisms you create from list to list. Here are some examples using stems from this week's list:

> **morrogation** (more roe GAY shun) n. [*mort* (death), *rogat* (ask), *tion* (act)] 1. behavior that invites extreme retribution 2. continuing with a behavior after being told, "one more time and I will murder you"
>
> **pericilious** (per ih SIL ee us) adj. [*peri* (around), *cilium* (eyelash), *ous* (full of)] 1. flirtatious 2. batting one's eyes in order to attract attention

Sesquipedalian *Frankenstein*

Have you read Mary Shelley's wonderful novel *Frankenstein*? If not, you may be surprised to learn that the novel is dramatically different from most of the films that have been made of it. The poor monster, especially, is not the ponderous, square-shoed clod of the cinema but is quick and smart and wants nothing more than to be accepted by humanity, who scorn him because of his frightful appearance. In the book there is a reversal of roles: the monster is the person, and the people are monsters to him. Mary Shelley did not use quite the sesquipedalian vocabulary that we are studying (although the book is rich in strong vocabulary), but if she had, it might have read like the following passage, which you can use as a model for imitating a different novel of your choice:

> **The Monster's Piteous Tale**
>
> Little I remember of my inchoate moments. I awoke from oblivion, it seemed, and knew not what I was. I gradually gained an apprehension of my ambient environment, my creator's laboratory, the surrounding mountains visible through the window. How I quarreled with my maker and escaped in ragged dishabille is a tale too tedious to tell, but when I saw in the mirror the reflection of my odious visage, I knew I was no ordinary person but some hideous surrogate, the *idée fixe* of my patrician master, to whom I have alluded.
>
> Having fled the laboratory of my creation, I spent some time in pensive, peripatetic wanderings, traversing the lofty mountains and the lonely crags, breathing the salubrious, attenuated air, learning to survive as a stoic autodidact, assuaging the pangs of my hunger with whatever berries and esculent roots fortuitous chance gave to me, and sleeping on the leafy forest floor, exposed to the night air and the dew. Often I huddled among the rocks, waiting for the cacophonous mountain storms to abate. This was no life for the hedonist or the Sybarite; with supercilious scorn for the fatuous ease of gregarious humanity, I paid my valediction to all society and sought out the secret caves and the icy peaks, euphoric in my saturnine solitude.
>
> Gradually, however, I began to long for amiable companionship—not a human, but a female of my own nature to share the profound solitude, mollify the severity of my existence, and join me in my exodus, my peregrinations to the most remote reaches of the Earth, where we might live undisturbed by human miscreants. Little did I know that my perfidious and mendacious creator, filled with animus against me, would rebuke me and pontificate that this was unthinkable, dashing the only tenuous hope of my miserable life.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF AUGUSTUS

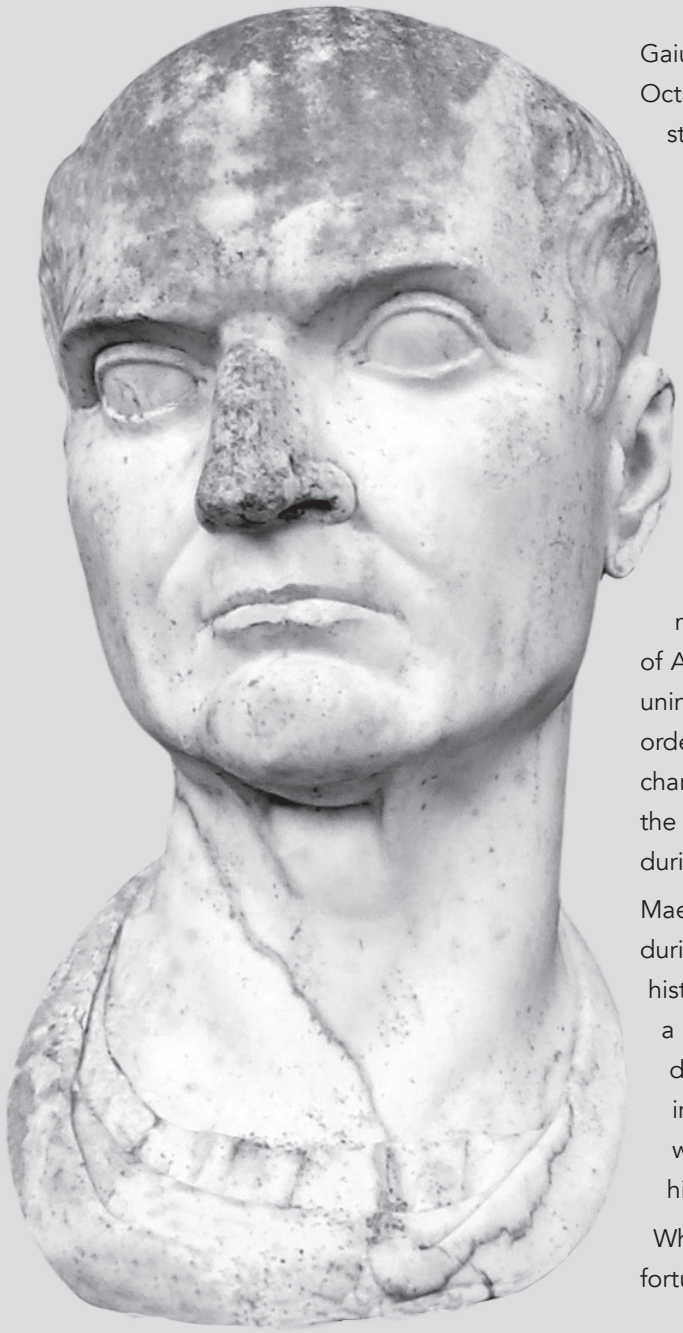
Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

In the period after the battle of Philippi, one of Octavian's confidants, Gaius Cilnius Maecenas, began to collect a circle of men of letters. Maecenas himself was a highly educated man with refined tastes. One of the poets he met was Virgil, whose early work was a series of ten pastoral poems, *Eclogues* (or *Bucolics*), in which he established Arcadia as a poetic idea. As Octavian's rivalry with Mark Antony became more intense, Maecenas sought to win writers to the former's camp. He was a trusted advisor to Octavian, who used him to make the arrangements for his first marriage, as well as to negotiate treaties with Mark Antony and administer Rome when Octavian was absent. Maecenas was at once a cultural minister, domestic affairs aide, and propaganda chief. Through Virgil, Maecenas met Horace, who had fought as a relatively high-ranking officer with Brutus at Philippi. As a poet he presented himself as one of a small community of philosophically minded men seeking true peace of mind and avoiding vices such as greed. Virgil and Horace were the best poets in their generation, but Maecenas was patron to many other lesser poets and men of letters. Virgil and Horace both wrote poetry that expressed the Roman reverence for the land and the simple life and modest pleasures that went with the small holdings that a man could farm with a few slaves. As such, they served part of the purpose Augustus wanted in reining in the extravagant life of Rome, with its values of consumption, ostentatious display, frivolous waste, and wanton morals.

A major aspect of the reverence for the past that Augustus sought was found embodied in the historical writings of Livy. Livy was a contemporary of Augustus, and his history offered embellished accounts of Roman heroism to promote the new type of government implemented by Augustus. Livy expressed in his preface the desire to "preserve the memory of the deeds of the world's preeminent nation." Much of his early history of Rome, however, is little more than a retelling of myths with a heady mixture of conjecture and gratifying tall tales. His dating of the founding of the Republic to 509 B.C.E. was conveniently a little older than Athenian democracy. Even when the facts were accurate, often Livy's interpretation was suspect, as in the case of Marcus Brutus's ancestor Gaius Servilius Ahala, whose 539 B.C.E. killing of Spurius Maelius was regarded at the time as an act of murder (Ahala was tried and only escaped execution by going into exile) but which came to be re-interpreted as an example of Roman heroism in defense of the Republic.

When it came to using myth for the glory of his administration, Augustus had an even loftier goal than Livy, and for this he commissioned Virgil to write a special epic poem on the scale of Homer. The twelve books of Virgil's *Aeneid* tell the story of Aeneas, a prince of Troy who escapes the destruction of his city carrying his father and leading his son. They traverse the Mediterranean, for a time stopping at Carthage for a famous interlude with Queen Dido, before Aeneas comes to Italy, founds the city of Lavinium, and fights a war with the Latins. Aeneas is a figure in Homer's *Iliad*, and through his epic, Virgil linked the principate of Augustus to the Trojans and Homer, explained the origins of the Punic Wars and the Roman destruction of Carthage, and traced a history that led directly to the glories of the age of Augustus. His first six books of Aeneas's wanderings form a parallel to the *Odyssey*, and his six books of the war between the Latins and the Trojan band form a parallel to the *Iliad*. With the *Aeneid*, the Romans had a founding myth embodied in a document to rival the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, a document that linked the Julian clan of Julius Caesar and Augustus to the gods, and a compelling statement of the destiny that led to Roman greatness.

Often Augustus seems to have had direct contact with Horace and Virgil, but Macenas was a perfect assistant in moving the spirit of the age where Augustus and his circle wanted it to go. One of the things that Augustus and his circle seem to have shared was a desire to encourage the finest expressions of art and architecture; they do not appear to have been tolerant of second best, of good enough, of adequate, of passable. They wanted exquisite and excellent, and they encouraged the men who could provide them. Horace and Virgil were their poets, and their abilities are evident 2,000 years later. Livy's emphasis on the preeminence of Rome and on the glorious deeds that allowed it to achieve that position fit neatly into the emphasis on excellence.



Gaius Cilnius Maecenas was five years older than Octavian but was one of his earliest and longest-standing friends, as well as one of his closest advisers. He may have been with Octavian at the battles of Mutina, Philippi, and Perugia. In 40 B.C.E. he was trusted enough by Octavian to arrange the details of Octavian's marriage to Scribonia, a part of the truce between the Triumvirate and Sextus Pompey. He also was used by Octavian to negotiate with Mark Antony's envoys for the Treaty of Tarentum to ensure that the two leaders continued to work together.

Maecenas came from a wealthy equestrian family from Arrentium, which became the center for the manufacture of red gloss pottery during the reign of Augustus. Maecenas was proud of his heritage and uninterested in office or advancement to the patrician order. On two occasions Octavian left Maecenas in charge of Rome while he was busy elsewhere: during the later stages of the war against Sextus Pompey, and during the Battle of Actium and its aftermath.

Maecenas was the patron of many artists and writers during his life, and he has been remembered throughout history as the model patron. He was by all accounts a man of great charm, wit, sincerity, cordiality, and discernment. Above all, Maecenas played an important part in the insistence on excellence that was a central part of the aesthetic of Augustus and his inner circle.

When Maecenas died in 8 B.C.E., he left his entire fortune to Augustus.

ARA PACIS AUGUSTAE: THE IMPORTANCE OF PEACE

Dr. Thomas Milton Kemnitz

More than anything, it was the peace that came after Actium that legitimized the rule of Augustus. The battle of Actium in 31 B.C.E. was fought 102 years after the killing of Tiberius Gracchus and 300 of his supporters in 133 B.C.E. For much of that time, Romans had been at war with one another. Now civil war was finished; Octavian was the sole ruler; no one was left to challenge him. As Octavian became Augustus and used and elevated the patricians' families, they could not contain their gratitude for the security and abundance that came to them. For each of the great families, Augustus was the source of power, and proximity to him meant opportunity. So the Senate was particularly celebratory when Augustus returned to Rome in 13 B.C.E. after three years in Hispania and Gaul. That summer the Senate commissioned an altar dedicated to Pax, the Roman goddess of peace, to be known as *Ara Pacis Augustae*, the altar of Augustan peace. In the words of Augustus himself, "When I returned to Rome from Spain and Gaul, having successfully accomplished deeds in those provinces, in the consulship of Tiberius Nero and Publius Quintilius, the Senate decreed that an altar of Augustan peace should be consecrated next to the Campus Martius for my return, and it resolved that the magistrates and priests and Vestal Virgins should perform an annual sacrifice there."

The reign of Augustus was at an apex, and the inner circle must have decided to make the altar a defining statement of the blessings that flowed from Augustus. The result was a great expression of the art (rather than of the engineering) of architecture. The building was small and simple but elegant. The altar itself is a stone slab for sacrifices within an enclosure of four walls, forming a sacred precinct. The width between the outside walls is only about thirty-five feet, with the length—made greater by steps—being not much longer. The entire edifice was erected using a fine white marble from Luna in northeastern Italy. The sculpture was excellent workmanship, representing the desire of the Augustan circle for the finest. The images depicted are a mixture of mythical and realistic, allegorical and political. It tied the Julian family to its divine origins and to its rule of the Roman state; it tied piety to peace, and peace to prosperity and plenty. And in all it was bound by the family and administration of Augustus, with the leading figures of the state attended by priests and lictors (attendants/bodyguards).

The altar itself is bare today, but it would have been rich in iconography sculptured in marble. The part of it that has survived illustrates the procedures for the proper ritual to be performed at the altar. The interior of the precinct walls are divided by a meander (a horizontal decoration made of a repeating pattern). The lower half simulates the wood paneling of other, simpler altar complexes around Rome. The upper half consists of garlands strung between ox skulls.

The important iconography was on the outside walls, which were divided horizontally by a meander of swastikas. The lower half displayed the abundance of the natural world, with a variety of different flowers brought together with a flowing vine with the addition of birds; this theme is repeated vertically on the pilasters that adorn the corners of the building and that border the friezes on the ends. The upper frieze at each end is mythical and allegorical. One panel is nearly complete and probably shows the goddess Pax with two children, fruit, and two nymphs, all suggesting peace and plenty. Most of the other three panels is missing, but scholars have guessed at what was depicted. The one that is most complete (the panel on the upper right, as shown in the picture on the previous page) shows the sacrifice of a pig, perhaps by Aeneas, perhaps by Numia Pompilius, the Roman king associated with peace, and the gates of Janus, which were closed only when Rome was at peace. Another panel may depict the goddess Roma sitting on a pile of weapons taken from enemies, while the final panel may depict the moment when Romulus and Remus were found (upper left panel, previous page).

The figures in the upper registers of the long walls are more complete, and we know that they show a procession in 13 B.C.E., with portraits of actual figures in the various colleges of priests and in the family of Augustus. The figure of Augustus (on the left in the picture) has been damaged, and the front of his body is missing. Many of the figures, such as the priests, can be identified by the items they carry in their hands and by their grouping. Others would have been well known to the Roman public at the time of the consecration of the altar in 9 B.C.E. But the figures have been damaged, and scholars have debated for years about the identification of many of the individuals, including members of Augustus's family. One of the unusual features of the Ara Pacis is the depiction of children in the procession. The obvious intent was to assert a familial and dynastic relationship to the adults. These were the youngsters of the Julian family—the grandchildren of Augustus—and their presence here was an assertion of their legitimacy and hence their right to inherit the Caesar name and the mantle of leadership.

This procession came at a particularly felicitous moment for the family of Augustus. The next year Agrippa, his most trusted and able second-in-command—and also his son-in-law—died, and the plans Augustus had for his succession began to unravel.

In the procession depicted on the Ara Pacis, Agrippa is shown with a young boy mis-identified at the Ara Pacis Museum as his son Gaius Caesar. In fact, the boy is not a Roman but rather one of the foreign princes being held or educated in Rome (his clothing and hair are wrong for a Roman child, and he is not wearing a bulla, the amulet all Roman boys wore around their necks). The woman is Julia, who was the wife of Agrippa and the daughter of Augustus.