LATIN LITERATURE
notes compiled by Bill Smithfield based on
notes from Dr. Kaye Warren

I. EARLIEST WRITING

LAPIS NIGER– 'black stone', in Forum, 4-sided post, ca. 500
B.C., has word "RECEI" (archaic form of REX, also REGEI),
written from top to bottom, oldest Latin writing

PRAENESTE FIBULA– broach, ca. 400 B.C., "MANIOS MED FHOE FHAKED
NUMASIOI" (modern: "MANIUS ME FECIT NUMERIO"), written right to
left

Duenos bowl– Quirinal hill, "DEUNOS ME FECED" (FECED– weakened
and unreduplicated form of FHEFHAKED)

records of official proceedings– LIBRI PONTIFICUM, LIBRI LINTEI
(linen tablets, used by C. Licinius Macer and Q. Aelius
Tubero, worked into ANNALES MAXIMI, end 100's)

FASTI CAPITOLINII– lists of magistrates, etc.

Twelve Tables– earliest written laws, 451-450

speeches in senate, funeral orations, speech of Menenius
Agrippa, dev. of oratory

CARMEN SALIARE and CARMEN ARVALE– cult chants of priestly
colleges

lays sung at banquets– deeds of great families, origin of
lyric, epic (?), attested by Varro and Cato

Fescennine verse– origin of drama (?), sung at weddings,
triumphs and funerals, ribald, from Fescennium (Erturia),
FASCINUM– witchcraft

Sibylline Books– books of oracular statements in Greek
hexameters, supposedly from Greece (time of Solon), 9 offered
to Superbus by Cumean Sibyl, 6 burned, bought 3, conferred
with by 2 patricians, then 10 (50-50 pat./pleb.), later 15,
kept in chest under Jupiter Capitoline, burned in 83 B.C.,
Augustus made a similar set kept in temple of Apollo on
Palatine, destroyed by Stilicho

II. EARLY WRITERS

240 B.C.– start of Latin literature, Livius, Naevius, and
Ennius fathers of Latin literature

Appius Claudius– APP. Claudius Caecus
wrote aphorisms in Saturnian verse (some extant), great orator
censor (312-308), Via Appia, Aqua Appia, blind

Livius Andronicus (284-204)– L. Livius Andronicus, from Tarentum
ODISSIA– Latin translation of Odyssey, 240, in Saturnian
verse, have fragments
wrote a hymn to cleanse Rome in 207
produced a Greek tragedy and comedy for LUDI ROMANI in 240
translated at least 9 Greek tragedies and comedies, have fragments
president of the academy of poets (COLLEGIIUM POETARUM) on
Aventine in Temple of Minerva
captured fighting in southern Italy in 272, prisoner of war,
to Rome, slave of a Livius

Naevius (270-201) - CN. Naevius, from Campania
BELLIUM PUNICUM - Saturnian verse, epic on 1st Punic War, tells
background and calls Romulus Aeneas' grandson, has Dido
LUPUS- tragedy on Romulus and Remus (FABULA PRAETEXTA)
CLASTIDUM - M. Marcellus wins SPOLIA OPIMIA by killing
Viridomarus
other works - DANAEOI, ROMULUS, HARIETUS, LEO, HESIONE,
ANDROMACHE, TEREENTILLA, APELLA, EQUUS TROIANUS, HECTOR
PROFICISCENS, IPHIGENIA, LYCURGIS, TESTICULARIA, TRIPHALLUS
enemy of the Metelli for "FATO METELLI ROMAE FIUT CONSULES"
Roman citizen, plebian, fought in 1st Punic war, 1st Italian
native to write on Roman topics, 34 comedies, 7 tragedies
epitaph - IMMORTALES MORTALES...

Plautus (255/254-184) - T. Mac(i)us Plautus, from Sarsina
(Umbria)
AMPHITRUO - Zeus disguised as Amphytryon rapes Alcmena making
Hercules, with Mercury as Sosias Amph.'s slave
CAPTIVUS - captives of war (slave and master) switch places,
slave turns out to be son of Megio, their buyer, with
Ergasius, a parasite, most popular, least indecent and funny,
intrigue
MERCATOR - father and son both seek same girl, excellent farce,
intrigue
MOSTELLARIA - Haunted House, youth hides his friends from his
father, funny farce, weak plot, intrigue, used in Taming of the Shrew
PSEUDOLUS - a lover needs money to save his love from another,
minor inconsistencies, intrigue
STICHUS - about the happy and untrammelled life of slaves, a
father tries to get his 2 daughters to leave their absent
husbands who return rich, weak plot, intrigue
TRINUMMUS - brother tries to get a dowry for sister, very minor
intrigue, farce, no female
BACCHIDES - a trick to get money, indecent, intrigue
CASINO - very indecent, lyrical farce, intrigue
MILES GLORIOSUS - Braggart Warrior, crude farce, 2 weakly
connected parts, influenced Terence, hero- Pyrgopolynices
AULULARIA - excellent comedy about a miser, Eucrost, who loses
his fortune due to too much caution and the violation of a
daughter
CISTELLARIA - slave girl thought to be of rich birth due to a
chest and is allowed to marry a rich young man
MENAECHMIS - Sosicles and Menateemus (brothers) split up, base
of Comedy of Errors
RUDENS - like CISTELLARIA, but better, woman recognized by a
rope tied around her box
other plays: ASINARIA, EPIDICUS, PEREA, POENULUS, CURCULIO,
TRUCULENTUS
all plays FABULA PALLIATA, most plays set in Greece with
Roman people and customs, 1/3 of play dialogue (DIVERBIUM,
mostly in iambic senarii), 2/3 of play sung (CANTICA), copies
greek New Comedy (Menander), repeats plots and characters,
credited with 130 plays, more at 40-45, have 20, Varro says
21 definitely his
poor family, worked in a theater (actor or carpenter), later
worked a flour mill, died in rome

Q. Ennius (239–169) – from Rudiae in calabria
ANNALES– history, 18 books, to 171, left out 1st Punic War
(BELLUM PUNICUM), "O TITE TUTE TATI TIBI TANTA, TYRANNE,
TULISTI", have about 600 lines
SATURA– 4 books, misc. works
MEDAEA– translation of Euripides
HEDYPHAGETICA– gastronomy
"SAXO CERE COMMUNIUT BRUM"– worst example of TMESIS
ALEXANDER, HEARIA, AIAX, AMBRACIA, SCIPIO, EUHEMERUS,
EPICHRAMUS
parts of 22 works survive
produced dactyl hexameter
"AMICUS CERTUS IN RE INCERTA CERNITUR"
"UNUS HOMO NOBIS CUNCTANDO RESTITUIT REM"– Fabius Maximus
Cunctator refusing to be drawn into open battle with Hannibal
called the first "pure man of letters" in western world
3 hearts: Latin, Greek, Oscan
brought to Rome by Cato the Elder, thought he was Homer
reborn, centurion, became citizen through army, lived on
Palatine, died of gout

Q. Fabius Pictor (b. 254)
oldest historian, wrote in Greek, most writing ca. 214
in 2nd Punic War, related to Fabius 'the Delayer', related to
the Pictor who painted the Temple of Salus in Rome in 304

Cato the Elder (Censor) (234–149) – M. Porcius Cato from
Tusculum
DE AGRICULTURA– oldest extant prose in Latin, also called DE
RE RUSTICA, 1st history in Latin
ORIGINES– 7 books of history without names, to 149
"REM TENE VERBA SEQUENTUR"
1st major orator, ended speeches with "DELENSA EST CARTHAGO"
called slaves "speaking tools"
father a farmer, quaestor in Sicily and Africa, praetor in
Sardinia (met Ennius), consul in 195, task master with slaves
(had his slaves work all day and only eat and sleep at night),
ultra-conservative

Caecilius Statius (217–168/166)– from Cisalpine Gaul
SYNEPHEBI– "The Young Companions"
comedies, friend of Ennius, many of his plays translations of
Menander

M. Pacuvius (220–130) – from Brundisium
PAULUS, FABULAE PRÆTEXTAE probably on L. Aemilius Paullus
ANTIOPA– imitates Euripides
NIPTRA– probably imitates Sophocles
CHRYSSES–
wrote at least 12 tragedies, nephew of Ennius, Laelian circle

Polybius (202/201–120) – from Megalopolis in Arcadia
HISTORIA– 1st Punic War to 3rd Macedonian War in 41 books,
have 1st 5 books complete
Greek historian, son of Lycortas (member of Achaean League), taught sons of Scipio Aemilianus, went to siege of Carthage with Scipio in 147-8

Terence (195/185-159)—P. Terentius Afer, from Carthage

Andria—Woman of Andros, young man of Athens falls in love with a "foreign" girl, but is about to marry another, the "foreigner" turns out to be Athenian, mostly a translation of Menander, "Hinc illae lacrime", 166

Heauton Timorumenos—Self-Tormentor, Menedemus torments himself by distrustimg son, then repenting, son marries, Chremes brags on trusting his son, but mad at son for being in love with a prostitute, M.'s daughter-in-law is C.'s daughter, adaption of Menander, theme: mind your own business, 163

Eunuchus—adaption of Menander's play by same name, most popular of Terence's play (occasionally condemned as immoral), complicated double plot of love affairs, intrigue, disguised identity, and recognition, "nullumst iam dictum quod non dictum sit prius", influenced Taming of the Shrew, 161

Adelphoe (Adelphi)—The Brothers, based on Menander, most intellectual of Terence, education of children, education vs. discipline, Aeschines and Ctesiph, uses soliloquy, base of Fielding's The Fathers, played at funeral games of Aemilius Paullus, 160

Phormio—adaptation of Apollodorus (Menander follower), Antipho and Demipho, farce with double plot of recognition and intrigue for money, "Quot homines, tot sententiae", "to have a wolf by the ears", 161

Hecyra—The Mother-in-Law, 165 and 160
5 of 6 plays very popular, have all, better quality, but not as funny as Plautus brought to Rome by Terentius Lucanus, educated, freed, friend of Scipio Africanus the Younger (Aemilianus), died in or returning from Greece (probably getting plays of Menander)

Scipio Aemilianus (185-129)—P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus (Africanus Minor), son of L. Aemilius Paullus adopted by P. Scipio, son of Africanus Major, consul in 148 and 133, murdered,?, orator and literary patron (Scipionic circle)

Titinius
Fullonia—fullers and weavers quarrel
Barbatus—embroiderer
Quintus—attack on non-Latin speaking people
Simulans—father-in-law vs. bad son-in-law wrote Fabulae Tobatae, contemporary to Terence, have 15 titles

C. Lucilius (180-102)—from Sessa Aurunca
Sermones—30 books, have about 1300 lines originator of a satire as a genre (only by Romans) wrote like Old Comedy (attacked specific people) publisher—Valerius Cato

L. Accius or Attius (170-ca. 86/85)—from Pisaurum
Diascalica—Greek/Roman poetry in 9 books
Atreus—"oderint dum metuant", quot often used by Caligula says Suetonius
Pragmatica, Paregra, Annius, Sotadica, Bacchae, Phoenissae,
BRUTUS, AENEADAE VEL DECIUS
tragedian, have 45 of his tragedy titles (on Greek themes),
wrote 2 FABULAE PRAETEXTAE, 1 of his plays opened the Theater
of Pompey.

Gracchi (TI. d. 133, C. d. 121) - TI. and C. Sempronius Gracchus

Afranius (150?)
wrote FABULAE TOGATAE, imitated Menander

Volcaius Sedigitus - 2nd century B.C. critic, flourished ca.
100
DE POETIS - PALLIATAE ranking: Caecilius, Plautus, Naevius,
Licinius Macer, Attilius, Terence, Turpilius, Trabea, Luscius,
Ennius

III. GOLDEN AGE

A. AGE OF CICERO

M. Terentius Varro (116-27) - from Reate
DE LINQUA LATINA - 25 books, dedicated to Cicero
SATIRAE MENIPPEAE - prose and verse (Menippus - Greek
philosopher/writer, imitated by Varro), not true satire
ANTICITATES RERUM HUMANARUM ET DIVINARUM - 41 books, source of
Augustine's DE CIVITATE DEI
RES RUSTICA
"IDEM ATTU QUOD TITI" - "Sauce for the goose is sauce for the
gander"
74 works in 620 books
says 1st sundial in Rome in 263 B.C. (not 268 as in M.
Johnston)

Sisenna - L. Cornelius Sisenna
translated Milesian Tales into Latin, best historian before
Sallust
PRAETOR in 76 B.C., helped defend Verres

Hortensius (114-50) - Q. Hortensius Hortalus
1st pleaded on behalf of Africa (province) accusing the
governor of malversation in 95, consul in 69, leading orator
of the day until Verres (63), chief law rival of Cicero,
Cicero paid tribute to him in "Brutus", praised him in "DE
ORATORE", used Asian oratory (flowery, with examples),
excellent voice, gesture, memory, and wealth of language

Atticus (109-32) - T. Pomponius Atticus
LIBER ANNALIS - epitome of Roman history in 1 book, missing
wrote a genealogical treatise of some Roman families
corespondence with Cicero 68-43
Epicurean, friend of Cicero, equite family, left Rome in 88
(Sulla and Marius) for Athens, generally neutral with both
sides, helped the Marians, Pompeians, protected Cicero's wife
(Terentia) during exile and Antony's wife (Fulvia) during
Mutina, friend of Augustus (Atticus' daughter married
Agrippa), Pomponia (sister) married Q. Tullius Cicero, acted
as Cicero's publisher, Nepos wrote biography of him

M. Tullius Cicero (106-43)
Decimus Laberius (105-43)
wrote mimes, outspoken politically, thus Caesar had him act
own stories on stage vs. P. Syrus

C. Julius Caesar (July 12, 102/102-March 15, 44)—from Rome
COMMENTARII DE BELLO GALLICO—8 books (8th by A. Hirtius),
written winter of 52-51, extant
COMMENTARII DE BELLO CIVILE—3 books, unfinished, extant
DE ANALOGIA—on grammar, written on trip across Alps, missing
DE ASTRIS—on astrology, missing
ANTICATONES—2 books, reply to Cicero's panegyric on Cato the
Younger
Attic oratory (direct, simple, and restrained)
Plutarch and Suetonius wrote biographies on Caesar, BELLUM
AFRICUM (Caesar vs. Cato and Juba), BELLUM ALEXANDRINUM, and
BELLUM HISPANIENSE written about Caesar's campaigns by unknown
authors

Lucretius (99/95/94-55/51)—T. Lucretius Carus, from Rome
DE RERUM NATURA—6 books on Epicurean philosophy, to Memmius
(patron ?), didactic poem, epic, dactylic hexameter, Cicero
helped edit, wrote it while insane from love philter (?),
7415 lines, unfinished, mission to free men from fear of gods
and death, influenced by Democritus, Empedocles, Homer, 
Ennius, and Epicurus, some conjectures amazingly accurate
Book I and II- atomic theory, starts "AENEA DUM GENETRIX" (to
Venus), matter indestructible, of atoms (indivisible, eternal, 
infinite, size, shape, and weight varies
Book III- mortality of the soul, soul is made of two atoms 
(ANIMA and ANIMUS)
Book IV- sense perception, thinking, reproduction 
Book V- origin of the world, man, and evolution
Book VI- natural phenomena, disease
no gods, true happiness form no fear of gods or afterlife and
pursuit of wisdom and virtue, man only has free will, insults 
women
was a great influence on Vergil, aristocrat (?), committed 
suicide

\* Cornelius Nepos (98-25)- from Ticinum
CHRONICA- world history in 3 books
EXEMPLA-
DE VIRIS ILLUSTRIBUS- biographies, 24 extant, in 2 parts Roman
and non-Roman
\* Sallust (86-34)- C. Sallustius Crispus, from Amiternum
BELLUM JUGURTHINUM- written via interview (idea from
Thusidises), extant
BELLUM CATAINAET- Cataline in 63, extant
HISTORIA- 78 to 67, Sulla to Pompey; lost
influence on Tacitus, Quintillian writes of his "famous 
brevity", distorted facts for the POPULARES, all monographs 
tribune in 52, member of POPULARES, kicked out of senate in 50
for charges against his character quaestor in 49, governor of 
Numidia, owned HORTI SALLUSTIANI (became imperial property)

\* A. Hirtius (d, 43)
COMMENTARII DE BELLO GALLICO- 8th book
lieutenant of Caesar in Gaul, consul with Vibius Pansa in 43,
killed fight Antony

\* Catullus (84-54)- C. Valerius Catullus, from Verona
NUGAE- 'trifles' to Cornelius Nepos
PASSER- death of Lesbia's sparrow
ATTIS- Attis is castrated to become a Cybele follower and 
misses his old life
Wedding of Peleus and Thetis
love poems to "Lesbia" (Clodia)
influenced by Sappho (original Lesbia), Callimachus, etc.,
have 116 of his poems (about 2300 lines in all), all are 
numbered 'long' poems- 2 wedding poems (61-62), 1 lyric (63), 1 short 
epic (64), 5 elegies (65-68, 74), more objective and less 
emotional than 'short'
'short' poems (107)- 4 types: Love- most to Lesbia, most 
important of his poems, sometimes jealous (76, 77), doubting 
her love (83, 92), praising her beauty (86), or violent 
passion (5, 51), Elegies- most famous on brother (101), Poems 
on travel- (31,46), Misc.- anecdotes (10, 53), reproaches (30, 
38, 40), invitations/greetings (9, 13, 28), consolation (96), 
hymn (34), drinking song (27), attacks on Caesar (29, 57), 
etc.
wealthy family, client of Memmius, governor of Bithynia (57),
summer estate at Sirmio
Clodia—probably met her ca. 62 at his home, affair for about
5 years (mostly in Rome), sister of P. Clodius, married to Q.
Metellus Celer (consul in 60)

Calvus (82-47)

P. Syrus— from Antioch (?)
wrote Latin mimes, includes husband, faithless wife, her lover,
the maid
probably a slave, then manumitted, height of career ca. 43 (?)

B. AUGUSTAN AGE

Vergil (70-19)— P. Vergilius Maro

C. Cornelius Gallus (69-26)
elegies, first prefect of Egypt

Horace (Dec. 8, 65-Nov. 27, 8)— Q. Horatius Flaccus from Apulia

Strabo (64—19 A.D.)— from Pontus
GEOGRAPHICA—17 books

Tibullus (60-19 A.D.)— Albius Tibullus

Livy (59-17 A.D.)— T. Livius, from Patavium

Seneca Rhetor (the Elder) (55/54-37/34 A.D.)— L. Annaeus
Seneca, from Cordova

SEX. Propertius (50-16)— from Mevania

Ovid (March 20, 43-17 A.D.)— P. Ovidius Naso

IV. SILVER AGE

Seneca the Younger

Petronius
Trimalchio (Satyricon): "If you have a penny,
that is what you are worth."

Lucan

Statius

Quintilian

Martial

Juvenal

Tacitus

Pliny the Elder

Pliny the Younger

V. LATER WRITERS
Suetonius
Ammianus Marcellinus
Apuleius
Claudian
VI. CHRISTIAN WRITERS
Tertullian
Lactantius
Jerome
Augustine
Boethius

VII. MISC. NOTES
literary circles:
Scipio Aemilianus—Terence, Panaetus, Polybius, Laelius,
Lucilius, Q. M. Scaevola, Rutilius Rufus
Maecenas—Vergil, Propertius, Horace
Augustus—Livy, Paterculus
M. Valerius Messala Corvinus—Tibullus, Ovid (also client of
Cotta Messalinus, Fabius Maximus)
Alexandrian poets—modeled after Callimachus, Greek librarian
at Alexandria, include Calvus, Furius Bibaculus, and Cinna
only Republic political figure to not be a great orator—Marius
greatest satires: SATYRICON, APOCOLOCYNTYSIS, Consultation of
Religion
ARGELETUM—book and shoe street
Apicius—wrote cookbook, famous gourmet
Mausoleum of Augustus—from Marcellus to Nerva,
RES BSTAE (deeds, Augustus' deeds) on door
Theater of Pompey—first stone theater, 55 B.C.
Theater of Balbus—13 B.C.
Theater of Marcellus—13 B.C., by Augustus
ODEON—small theater
MIMI—comic opera, singing, dancing, satirical, usually short
PANTOMINI—ballet, 1 actor, many parts, chorus in back, often
about old legends or tales
LUDI SCENICI—theater plays
FABULA PALLIATA—copy of Greek style plays
FABULA ATELLENA—slapstick farce with Maccus (clown, fool),
Bucco (clown with puffed out cheeks), Pappus (a silly old
man), Dossenus (clever hunchback), also Manducus (glutton)
FABULA PRAETEXTA—historical Roman drama
FABULA TOSATA—comedy of village life
actors—most slaves
grey wig—old man
Black wig—young man
red wig—slave
purple wig—rich (?)
white clothing—old man
purple clothing—young man
yellow clothing—woman