

Initiation to the Latin Language and its System. Manual for Adults. Vol. 1

(1967, 1968, 1975, 1977, 1990, 1992, reissue 2011, 2015)



TAGS:

General information	
<i>Title of the work</i>	Initiation à la langue latine et à son système: Manuel pour grands débutants. Tome 1
<i>Title of the work in english</i>	Initiation to the Latin Language and its System. Manual for Adults. Vol. 1
<i>Year of publication</i>	1967, 1968, 1975, 1977, 1990, 1992, reissue 2011, 2015
<i>Publisher</i>	SEDES [Société d'édition d'enseignement supérieur]
<i>Original language</i>	French, Latin
<i>Target and Age Group</i>	Students, beginner-level adults

Additional information

Contents & Purpose

The textbook includes 21 lessons, each containing a fragment of a Latin text (*texte d'étude*), which is the starting point for learning vocabulary, syntactic forms and their use. The text itself follows a short commentary on the historical or cultural context; the column on the right includes a verbatim French translation. Below the text each lesson provides the relevant vocabulary and derivations from Latin to French connected to the text. The lesson contains grammatical resources divided into morphological and syntactical parts and ends with a revision and exercises (*exercices d'assouplissement*), as well as with additional texts for translatory activities (*traduire and lecture*). At the end of the course, the authors included additional texts with questions to consolidate the acquired knowledge and a test to verify it (*textes de contrôle*), tables of conjugation, a grammatical index, and a glossary.

Among the *textes d'étude* of each lesson, one can find the mythical history of Rome, based mainly on Livy: the myth of founding Rome, the tale of the rape of the Sabine women, of Numa Pompilius, or paragraphs about the Punic Wars. Besides that, there are also descriptions of Sicily and its culture and of Verres' abuses revealed by Cicero. The texts also feature fragments from Caesar, Pliny the Younger, Seneca, Suetonius, Cicero, and even fragments of *Satiricon*.

The mythology is introduced to the course exclusively through Latin texts referring mainly to the mythical roots of Rome. In lesson 10, the reading refers to the beliefs of Gaul being conquered by Caesar's army, yet the Gallic beliefs are described from the Roman point of view. Such mythological representation is quite unusual as the Roman conceptual framework is deployed to describe a foreign culture using familiar terms. As a result, the student does not learn about the Gallic pantheon, but rather about how Romans saw it. Lesson 12 presents the tale of the kidnapping of Proserpina from *De errore profanarum religionum* (VII, 1-3) - a work about the fight with paganism, sent to emperors Constantius and Constance by Firmicus Maternus, a 4th-century author. This text also presents a modified, non-canonical version of the myth changed into a simple story bereft of supernatural elements. The reason for such treatment was the author's conversion to Christianity.

The more recent editions of the textbook, which has remained on the market since 1967, incorporate new texts and updates, yet they still



retain the spirit of the course.

