

# P

# Pliny

*20 Letters and  
Suggested Companion Texts*

Jacqueline M. Carlon



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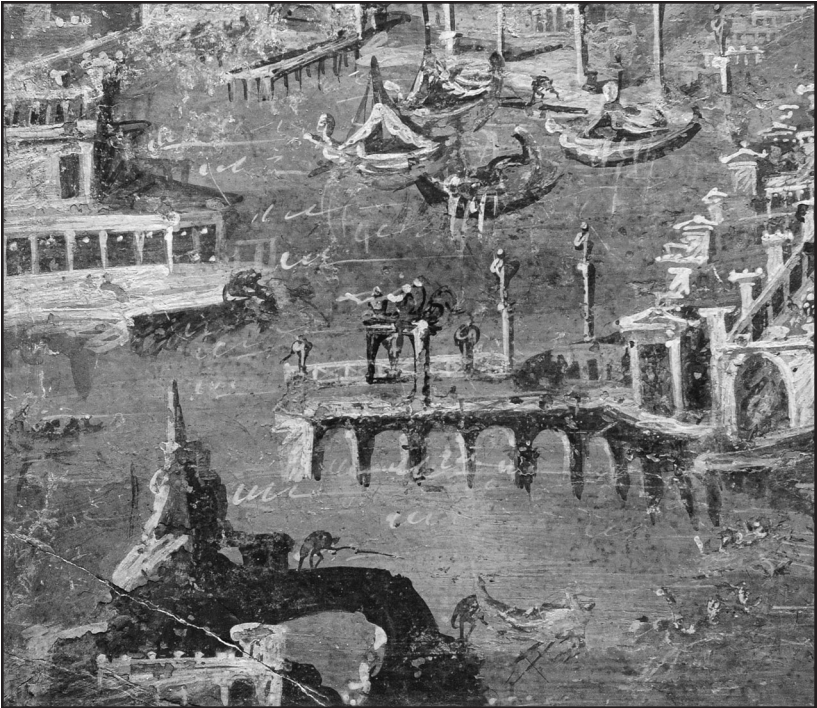
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# Pliny

## REQUIRED LETTERS

*The following texts are on the required reading list for  
the College Board Latin Exam starting in 2026.*



Port scene, first-century ce fresco from Stabiae, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.

## Letter 6.4

C. PLINIUS CALPURNIAE SUAE S.

1 *Numquam sum magis de occupationibus meis questus, quae me non sunt passae aut proficiscentem te valetudinis causa in Campaniam prosequi aut profectam e vestigio subsequi.*

5 2 *Nunc enim praecipue simul esse cupiebam, ut oculis meis crederem quid viribus quid corpusculo apparares, ecquid denique secessus voluptates regionisque abundantiam inoffensa transmitteres.*

**abundantia**, -ae, f., wealth

**apparō**, 1, add to

**Calpurnia**, -ae, f., Calpurnia, Pliny's wife

**Campania**, -ae, f., Campania

**corpusculum**, -ī, n., plumpness

**dēnique**, adv., finally

**ecquid**, whether it is true that

**inoffēnsus**, -a, -um, adj., unharmed

**occupātiō**, -iōnis, f., business obligations

**praecipuē**, adv., especially

**prōsequor**, -ī, **prōsecūtus sum**, accompany

**queror**, -ī, **questus sum**, complain

**regiō**, -iōnis, f., area

**secessus**, -ūs, m., retreat

**subsequor**, -ī, **subsecūtus sum**, follow closely

**trāsmittō**, -mittere, -misi, -missum, let (something) pass by

**valētūdō**, -inis, f., (state of) health

*In this first of his three letters addressed to his wife Calpurnia, Pliny laments the fact that he is not with her in Campania, where she has gone to recuperate from some illness. He would rather be with her so that he could see her progress firsthand.*

2. **questus sum**: perfect indicative.

3. **quae**: relative pronoun with antecedent **occupationibus**, subject of **sunt passae** followed by two acc./infinitive constructions: **me . . . prosequi** and **(me) subsequi**.

**te**: direct object of **prosequi** and **subsequi**; **proficiscens**, **profectus**: participles of **proficiscor**, modifying **te**. Following **sunt passae** read: **aut me te proficiscentem . . . prosequi aut (me) te profectam . . . subsequi**. Pliny's repetition (an example of **POLYP-TOTON**) is meant to emphasize his frustration at not being able to be with Calpurnia.

**valetudinis causā**: **causa** in the abl. = preposition, preceded by gen. object.

4. **Campaniam**: Campania was a region of western central Italy.

**e vestigio**: idiomatically, *right away*.

5. **cupiebam**: an epistolary tense, time based on when the letter is being read, not written, rendered in English with present tense.

**ut . . . crederem**: purpose clause.

6. **quid . . . quid . . . apparares, ecquid . . . transmitteres**: indirect questions following **crederem**; **viribus** and **corpusculo**: dat. following compound verb **apparares**; Pliny is clearly concerned that the luxuries for which Campania was famous might have adversely affected Calpurnia.

- 3 *Equidem etiam fortem te non sine cura desiderarem; est enim*  
 10 *suspensum et anxium de eo quem ardentissime diligas interdum*  
*nihil scire. 4 Nunc vero me cum absentiae tum infirmitatis tuae*  
*ratio incerta et varia sollicitudine exterret. Vereor omnia,*  
*imaginor omnia, quaeque natura metuentium est, ea maxime mihi*  
*quae maxime abominor fingo. 5 Quo impensius rogo, ut timori*  
 15 *meo cottidie singulis vel etiam binis epistulis consulas. Ero enim*  
*securior dum lego, statimque timebo cum legero. Vale.*

**abōminor, -ārī, -ātus sum**, pray (something) away/not to happen  
**absentia, -ae, f.**, absence  
**anxius, -a, -um, adj.**, worrying  
**ardentissimē, superl. adv.**, most passionately  
**binī, -ae, -a, pl. adj.**, a pair of  
**dēsiderō, 1**, desire, long for  
**diligō, -ere, -lēxī, -lēctum**, love, hold dear  
**exterreō, -ēre, -uī, -itum**, thoroughly terrify

**imāginor, -ārī, -ātus sum**, imagine  
**impēnsē, adv.**, without limit, endlessly  
**infirmitās, -tātis, f.**, weakness, poor health  
**sēcūrus, -a, -um, adj.**, free from care  
**singulī, -ae, -a, pl. adj.**, one at a time, one each  
**sollicitūdō, -inis, f.**, anxiety  
**suspēnsus, -a, -um, adj.**, anxiously uncertain  
**vereor, -ēri, veritus sum**, dread

*With a flood of language that expresses fear and anxiety, Pliny writes about his feelings regarding his separation from Calpurnia and asks her to write to him to help ease his worries.*

**9. etiam te fortem:** serves as protasis of present contrary-to-fact conditional, *even if you were strong*, with **desiderarem** in the apodosis.

**est:** subject is **nihil scire**.

**10. quem . . . diligas:** relative clause of characteristic.

**11. cum . . . tum:** *both . . . and*.

**12. ratio:** preceded by gen. of description **absentiae, infirmitatis**.

**incerta, varia:** modify **sollicitudine**, abl. of means.

**13. quae (est):** nom. sing. relative pronoun, substantive use: *that which* or *what*.

**metuentium:** gen. pl. present participle, substantive use.

**ea:** acc. pl., antecedent of **quae (abominor)**.

**mihi:** dat. of reference.

**14. Quo:** relative pronoun, with preceding sentence as its antecedent, abl. of degree of difference with comparative adverb **impensius:** *for that reason*.

**14–15. ut . . . consulas:** indirect command; **timori:** dat. with intransitive verb **consulas**.

**16. legero:** future perfect indicative in a **cum**-temporal clause.

## Letter 6.7

C. PLINIUS CALPURNIAE SUAE S.

1 *Scribis te absentia mea non mediocriter affici unumque habere*  
*solacium, quod pro me libellos meos teneas, saepe etiam in*  
*vestigio meo colloces.* 2 *Gratum est quod nos requiris, gratum*  
 5 *quod his fomentis acquiescis; invicem ego epistulas tuas lectito*  
*atque identidem in manus quasi novas sumo.* 3 *Sed eo magis*  
*ad desiderium tui accendor: nam cuius litterae tantum habent*  
*suavitatis, huius sermonibus quantum dulcedinis inest! Tu tamen*  
*quam frequentissime scribe, licet hoc ita me delectet ut torqueat.*  
 10 *Vale.*

**absentia**, -ae, *f.*, absence

**acquiescō**, -ere, -quiēvī, -quiētum, relax,  
find comfort

**afficiō**, -ere, adfēci, adfectum, affect, move  
(emotionally)

**collocō**, 1, put in place, position

**dēlectō**, 1, delight

**desiderium**, -ī, *n.*, longing

**dulcēdo**, -inis, *f.*, sweetness

**fōmentum**, -ī, *n.*, remedy

**frequentissimē**, *superl. adv.*, very frequently

**identidem**, *adv.*, again and again

**invicem**, *adv.*, in turn

**lectitō**, 1, read over and over, keep reading

**libellus**, -ī, *m.*, little book, short literary  
work

**mediocriter**, *adv.*, moderately; *with*  
*negative*, exceedingly

**sōlācium**, -ī, *n.*, comfort

**suāvitās**, -tātis, *f.*, charm

*In this second letter to Calpurnia, Pliny reflects upon the power of writing both in consoling those who are separated from one another and in increasing their longing for one another.*

2. **Scribis**: second person signals the epistolary genre.

2–3. **te . . . solacium**: indirect statement; **te** = subject of both **affici** and **habere**; **absentia mea**: abl. of means.

**quod**: introduces a substantive clause: *that*.

3–4. **teneas**, **colloces**: present subjunctives in subordinate clauses within indirect statement; **eos**, i.e., **libellos**, understood with **colloces**.

**in vestigio meo**: *where I usually sit*.

4–5. **quod . . . requiris, quod . . . acquiescis**: substantive clauses.

4. **nos**: Pliny refers to himself using the pl. form.

5. **his fomentis**: abl. of means.

6. **eo magis**: *so much the more*; **eo**: abl. of degree of difference with comparative adverb.

7. **tui**: objective gen., antecedent of **cuius**.

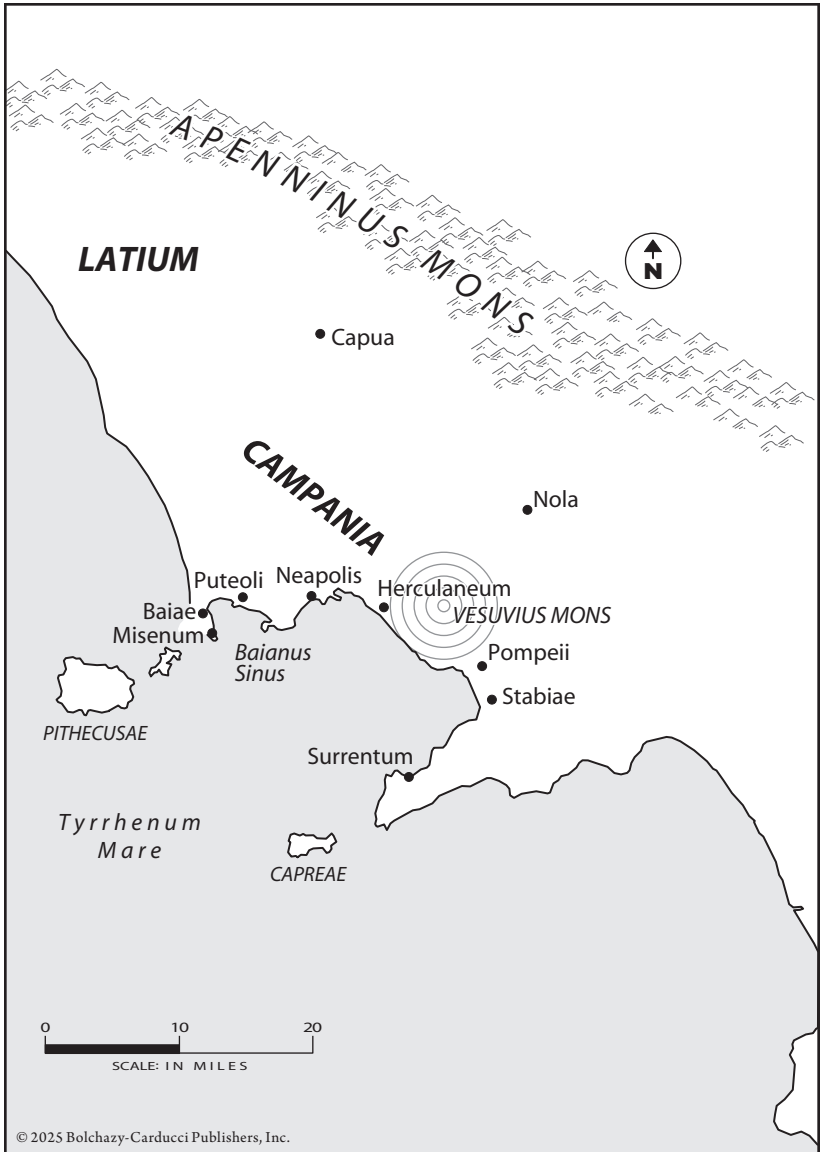
7–8. **nam . . . inest: tantum . . . quantum** are correlatives used as nouns, each followed by a partitive genitive: *as much (+ gen.) . . . as (+ gen.): for your letters have as much sweetness as there is charm in your way of speaking*.

9. **quam**: with superlative, *as . . . as possible*.

**hoc . . . delectet**: substantive clause of purpose following **licet** (**ut** omitted); **licet** serves as a conjunction: *although*.

**ut torqueat**: result clause.

# BAY OF NAPLES





## Letter 6.16

C. PLINIUS TACITO SUO S.

1 *Petis ut tibi avunculi mei exitum scribam, quo verius tradere posteris possis. Gratias ago; nam video morti eius, si celebretur a te, immortalem gloriam esse propositam.* 2 *Quamvis enim*  
 5 *pulcherrimarum clade terrarum, ut populi ut urbes memorabili casu, quasi semper victurus occiderit, quamvis ipse plurima opera et mansura condiderit, multum tamen perpetuitati eius scriptorum tuorum aeternitas addet.*

**aeternitās, -tātis, f.**, immortality

**celebrō, 1**, make famous

**clādēs, -is, f.**, calamity, disaster

**condō, -ere, -didi, -ditum**, compose

**immortālis, -e, adj.**, immortal, undying

**memorābilis, -e, adj.**, memorable

**perpetuitās, -tātis, f.**, permanence, perpetuity

**plūrimus, -a, -um, superl. adj.**, very much, very many

**posterī, -ōrum, m. pl.**, descendants, posterity

**prōpōnō, -ere, -posuī, -positum**, offer

**Tacitus, -ī, m.**, Tacitus, a Roman historian and friend of Pliny

*In his opening to this account of the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, the only eyewitness report we have, Pliny expresses his gratitude that Tacitus has asked him to write an account of his uncle's death, and he then expounds upon the importance of both good deeds and their memorialization in writing.*

1. **Tacitus**: a close friend of Pliny.

2. **Petis**: an epistolary opening that gives Pliny a reason to offer the narrative that follows.

**ut . . . scribam**: indirect command following **petis**; **avunculi**: Pliny the Elder, a prolific writer whose interest in natural phenomena, as demonstrated by his encyclopedic work *Naturalis Historia*, prompts him to investigate the eruption.

2–3. **quo . . . possis**: purpose clause introduced by **quo** rather than **ut**; **quo**: abl. of degree of difference with comparative adverb **verius**. **tradere: eum** (i.e., **exitum**) understood.

3. **gratias ago: gratias agere**, to thank

3–4. **morti . . . propositam**: indirect statement following **video**; **morti**: dat. of indirect object with **propositam**.

3. **si celebretur**: protasis of a future-more-vivid condition; subjunctive is required in a subordinate clause in indirect statement.

4–7. **Quamvis . . . occiderit** and **quamvis . . . condiderit**: concessive clauses that require subjunctive mood.

5. **clade** and **casu**: abl. of attendant circumstances, which here expresses time, place, and cause.

5–6. **ut . . . casu**: provide **occiderunt**; **ut . . . ut** = *as . . . as*.

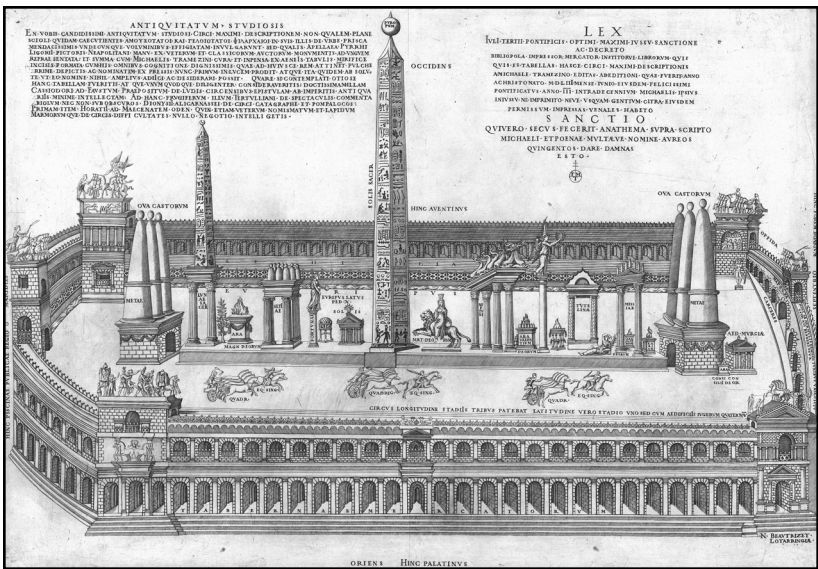
6. **victurus**: future active participle of **vivo**, not **vinco**; Pliny emphasizes his uncle's ongoing life by juxtaposing **victurus** and **occiderit**.

6–7. **opera . . . mansura**: Pliny the Elder will live on both because he died in the disastrous eruption and because of his many writings.

7–8. **multum . . . addet**: the main verb **addet** is in the future indicative; **scriptorum**: perfect passive participle, substantive use. Following the concessive clauses that focus on reasons for his uncle's continued existence, Pliny now emphasizes that the lasting nature of Tacitus's works will greatly enhance the elder Pliny's immortality.

## SUGGESTED LETTERS

The following texts are on the suggested list for the College Board Latin Exam starting in 2026.



Circus Maximus; Engraving, Robert-Dumesnil, 1853.

## Letter 1.6

C. PLINIUS CORNELIO TACITO SUO S.

1 *Ridebis, et licet rideas. Ego, ille quem nosti, apros tres et quidem  
pulcherrimos cepi. “Ipse?” inquis. Ipse; non tamen ut omnino ab  
inertia mea et quiete discederem. Ad retia sedebam; erat in  
5 proximo non venabulum aut lancea, sed stilus et pugillares;  
meditabar aliquid enotabamque, ut si manus vacuas, plenas  
tamen ceras reportarem.*

**aper, apri, m.**, wild boar  
**cēra, -ae, f.**, wax, wax tablet  
**ēnotō, 1**, note down  
**inertia, -ae, f.**, inactivity  
**lancea, -ae, f.**, hunting spear  
**meditor, -ārī, -ātus sum**, think about  
**omnīnō, adv.**, altogether, entirely  
**pugillāres, -ium, m. pl.**, writing tablets

**quiēs, quiētis, f.**, restfulness  
**reportō, 1**, bring back  
**rēte, -is, n.**, net  
**stilus, -ī, m.**, pen  
**Tacitus, -ī, m.**, Tacitus, a Roman historian  
and friend of Pliny  
**trēs, tria, adj.**, three  
**vēnābulum, -ī, n.**, hunting spear

*Pliny writes to his good friend Tacitus to describe the way that he approaches hunting.*

**2. Ridebis, rideas:** POLYPTOTON.

**rideas:** substantive clause of purpose following **licet** (**ut** omitted).

**nosti:** contracted form of **novisti**.

**3. Ipse?: tu** understood; **Ipse: ego** understood.

**3–4. ut . . . discederem:** result clause.

**4–5. in proximo:** *close by*.

**6–7. ut . . . reportarem:** purpose clause; **si:** concessive rather than conditional, (*even*) *if*.

2 *Non est quod contemnas hoc studendi genus; mirum est ut animus agitatione motuque corporis excitetur; iam undique silvae et solitudo ipsumque illud silentium quod venationi datur, magna cogitationis incitamenta sunt.* 3 Proinde cum venabere, licebit auctore me ut panarium et lagunculam sic etiam pugillares feras: experieris non Dianam magis montibus quam Minervam inerrare. Vale.

**agitātiō, -ōnis, f.**, activity, exercise  
**auctor, -ōris, m.**, model, author  
**cōgitātiō, -ōnis, f.**, contemplation  
**contemnō, -ere, -tempti, -temptum**, scorn, look down upon  
**Diāna, -ae, f.**, goddess of hunting  
**experior, -iri, -pertus sum**, experience, learn  
**incitāmentum, -ī, n.**, spur, stimulus  
**inerrō, 1**, wander, roam  
**laguncula, -ae, f.**, wine flask

**Minerva, -ae, f.**, goddess of the arts  
**mīrus, -a, -um, adj.**, remarkable  
**mōtus, -ūs, m.**, movement  
**pānārium, -ī, n.**, food basket  
**proinde, adv.**, therefore  
**pugillāres, -ium, m. pl.**, writing tablets  
**silentium, -ī, n.**, silence  
**sōlitūdō, -inis, f.**, solitude  
**undique, adv.**, all around  
**vēnātiō, -ōnis, f.**, hunting  
**vēnor, -ārī, -ātus sum**, hunt

*Pliny explains how going hunting helps him to write and recommends this approach.*

**8. quod contemnas:** relative clause of characteristic with antecedent **hoc . . . genus**; **studendi:** gen. of specification, *pursuit*.

**8–9. ut . . . excitetur:** indirect question following **mirum est**; **ut:** interrogative adverb, *how*; **agitatione motuque:** abl. of means.

**10. silvae, solitudo, silentium:** subjects of **sunt**; ALLITERATION.

**venationi:** indirect object following **datur**.

**11. cogitationis:** objective gen. with **incitamenta**.

**cum venabere:** cum-temporal clause; **venebere:** second person sing. future.

**12. me auctore:** abl. absolute.

**13. feras:** verb in substantive clause of purpose following **licebit**; **ut** does not introduce the clause, but is used with **sic** as a correlative conjunction: *as (you carry) . . . so also (should you carry) . . .*

**13–14. non . . . inerrare:** indirect statement following **experieris**; **montibus:** dat. with compound verb **inerrare**.

## Letter 2.6

### C. PLINIUS AVITO SUO S.

1 *Longum est altius repetere nec refert, quemadmodum  
acciderit, ut homo minime familiaris cenarem apud quendam,  
ut sibi videbatur, lautum et diligentem, ut mihi, sordidum simul  
5 et sumptuosum. 2 Nam sibi et paucis opima quaedam, ceteris  
vilis et minuta ponebat. Vinum etiam parvulis lagunculis in tria  
genera discriperat, non ut potestas eligendi, sed ne ius esset  
recusandi, aliud sibi et nobis, aliud minoribus amicis — nam  
gradatim amicos habet, aliud suis nostrisque libertis.*

**Avitus**, -ī, *m.*, Avitus, one of Pliny's protégés  
**diligēns**, -ntis, *adj.*, attentive  
**discrībō**, -ere, -scripsī, -scriptum,  
distribute  
**ēligō**, -ere, -lēgi, -lēctum, choose  
**familiāris**, -e, *adj.*, well-known, close in  
friendship  
**gradātīm**, *adv.*, in order of precedence  
**laguncula**, -ae, *f.*, wine flask  
**lautus**, -a, -um, *adj.*, splendid  
**minimē**, *adv.*, not at all  
**minūtus**, -a, -um, *adj.*, small in amount,  
meager

**opimus**, -a, -um, *adj.*, rich, choice  
**parvulus**, -a, -um, *adj.*, small in size, tiny  
**quemadmodum**, *rel. adv.*, in what way, how  
**recūsō**, I, decline, reject  
**rēfert**, -ferre, rētulit, *impers.*, it is  
important  
**repetō**, -ere, -ivī, -itum, recount  
**sordidus**, -a, -um, *adj.*, vulgar, unrefined  
**sumptuosus**, -a, -um, *adj.*, extravagant  
**trēs**, *tria*, *adj.*, three  
**vilis**, -e, *adj.*, cheap  
**vīnum**, -ī, *n.*, wine

*Pliny writes to his young protégé Avitus about a dinner party whose host treated his guests unjustly.*

2. **Longum est**: with infinitive **repetere**, it takes too long to . . .

**altius**: comparative adverb, more thoroughly.

2–3. **quemadmodum acciderit**: indirect question following **repetere** and **refert**.

3. **ut . . . cenarem**: substantive result clause following impersonal verb **acciderit**; **homo minime familiaris**: appositive to the subject of **cenarem**, i.e., Pliny.

4–5. **lautum, diligentem, sordidum, sumptuosum**: modify **quendam**; the first two adjectives are the man's opinion of himself, the second two Pliny's opinion.

4. **ut . . . videbatur**: **ut** with indicative mood, as.

**ut mihi**: supply **videbatur**.

5. **sibi et paucis, ceteris**: dat. of reference; ASYNDETON.

6. **parvulis lagunculis**: abl. of means.

7. **ut . . . ne . . . esset**: purpose clauses, introduced by **non . . . sed**.

7–8. **eligendi, recusandi**: gerunds, objective gen. following **potestas** and **ius** respectively.

7. **esset**: with both **potestas** and **ius**: *there would be*.

8–9. **aliud . . . aliud . . . aliud**: referring to and explaining the **tria genera**; each followed by dat. of reference: **sibi et nobis . . . minoribus amicis . . . suis nostrisque libertis**.

9. **amicos habet**: *he treats his friends*.

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## COMPANION TEXTS

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Mt. Aetna from Taormina by Cole Thomas, 1842.

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# EUTROPIUS

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## *Breviarium Historiae Romanae* 8.1–2, 4–5

### Introduction to Eutropius and the *Breviarium Historiae Romanae*

#### **AUTHOR**

Little is known of the early life of Eutropius, including whether he was born in Gaul or Italy (scholars disagree), but it is clear that his education and writing skills made him valuable to several Roman emperors. He was a prominent member of the imperial court, likely serving as a secretary to Constantius II, Julian, and Valens and accompanying Julian on his Persian campaign of 363 CE. The commonness of the name Eutropius makes certainty difficult, but he may also have become praetorian prefect of Illyricum in 381 CE under Theodosius and consul with Valentinian II in 387 CE.

#### **WORK**

Eutropius wrote a survey of Roman history, beginning with Romulus and ending with the death of Jovian in 364 CE. For source material, he relied primarily on the *Epitome* of Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* and on other imperial histories (that do not survive), with the final entries of his history drawn from his personal knowledge and experiences.

### *Breviarium Historiae Romanae* 8.1–2

1 Anno octingentesimo et quinquagesimo ab urbe condita,  
 Vetere et Valente consulibus res publica ad prosperrimum  
 statum rediit bonis principibus ingenti felicitate commissa.  
 Domitiano enim exitiabili tyranno, Nerva successit, vir in  
 5 privata vita moderatus et strenuus, nobilitatis mediae.  
 Qui senex admodum operam dante Petronio Secundo,  
 praefecto praetorio, item Parthenio interfectore Domitiani,  
 imperator est factus; aequissimum se et civilissimum praebuit.  
 Rei publicae divina provisione consuluit Traianum adoptando.  
 10 Mortuus est Romae post annum et quattuor menses imperii  
 sui ac dies octo, aetatis septuagesimo et altero anno, atque inter  
 Divos relatus est.

*Eutropius explains how Trajan became the first adopted emperor.*

**1. Anno . . . condita:** it was customary for Romans to designate the year using the founding date of the city of Rome—traditionally 753 BCE. They counted inclusively, and thus the year here is 96 CE.

**2. Vetere . . . consulibus:** abl. absolute. During the Republic, it was customary for a year to be designated by the names of the consuls for that year, here Vetus and Valens. This practice continued under the emperors, using only the names of the *consules ordinarii*, not the *consules suffecti*, who replaced them and were themselves replaced every few months. Neither had any of the powers that the office had held during the Republic, but it was still considered an honor to be chosen by the emperor. The addition of the *consul suffectus* allowed the emperor to reward more senatorial rank people, allying them with himself. *Consul ordinarius* was an exceptional honor.

**3. bonis principibus:** dat. with compound verb **commissa**, which modifies **res publica**; **ingenti felicitate:** abl. of description; **felicitas** was highly regarded in Roman leaders.

**4. Domitiano:** dat. with compound verb **successit**; **exitiabili tyranno:** appositive to **Domitiano**.

**5. nobilitatis mediae:** gen. of description.

**6. Qui:** relative pronoun with antecedent **Nerva**; **senex:** *as an old man*.

**admodum:** adverb, *completely*; **operam dare, to apply oneself;** **admodum . . . praetorio:** *with Petronius Secundus, the praetorian prefect, strongly supporting (him)*.

**8. aequissimum . . . civilissimum: esse** understood; **civilis, devoted to the state**.

**9. Rei publicae:** dat. of indirect object with **consuluit**.

**divina provisione:** abl. of manner.

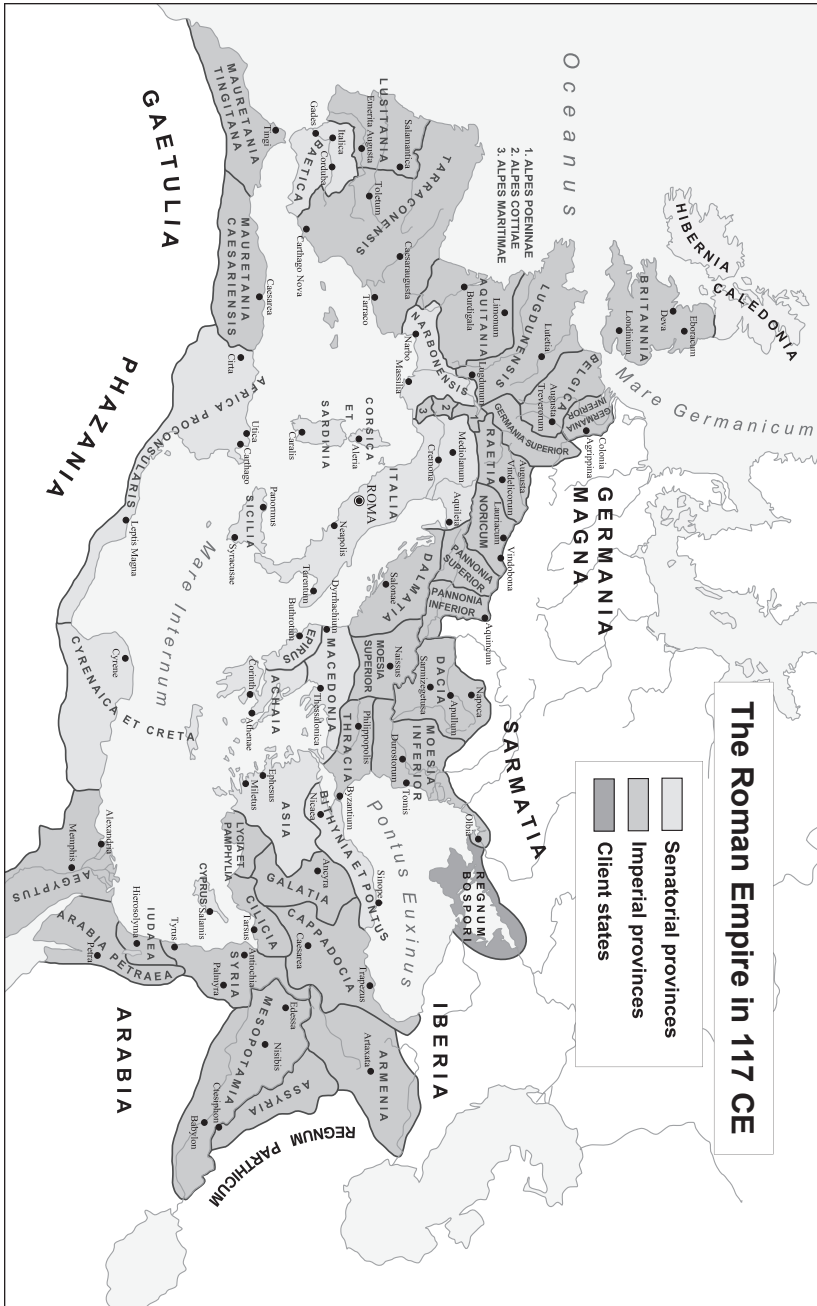
**adoptando:** gerund; abl. of means.

**10–11. post . . . octo:** it was Roman custom to denote periods of rule (as well as age of death) by years, months, and days.

**11. aetatis . . . anno:** abl. of time.



# THE MEDITERRANEAN



- 2 Successit ei Ulpus Crinitus Traianus, natus Italicae in Hispania, familia antiqua magis quam clara. Nam pater eius primum consul fuit. Imperator autem apud Agrippinam in Galliis factus est. Rem publicam ita administravit, ut
- 5 omnibus principibus merito praeferatur, inusitatae civilitatis et fortitudinis. Romani imperii, quod post Augustum defensum magis fuerat quam nobiliter ampliatur, fines longe lateque diffudit. Urbes trans Rhenum in Germania reparavit. Daciam Decibalo victo subegit, provincia trans Danubium
- 10 facta in his agris, quos nunc Taifali, Victoali et Tervingi habent. Ea provincia decies centena milia passuum in circuitu tenuit.

*Eutropius describes Trajan's background and his commitment to expanding Roman territory.*

**1. ei:** dat. with compound verb **successit**.

**Italicae:** loc. case; **Italica** was a Roman city in southern Spain, founded by Scipio Africanus in 206 BCE.

**2. familia . . . clara:** abl. of description.

**3. Agrippinam:** i.e., Colonia Agrippina, modern Cologne.

**4–5. ut . . . praeferatur:** result clause; **omnibus principibus:** dat. with compound verb **praeferatur**.

**5–6. inusitatae civilitatis et fortitudinis:** gen. of description.

**6. Romani imperii:** gen. case, read with **fines**, which is the direct object of **diffudit**; the expansion of Roman territory had been a hallmark of successful politicians during the

Republic. But Augustus had told Tiberius just to hold on to whatever the Romans already controlled. Thus Trajan's determination to extend Roman power was seen as a return to republican practices.

**9–10. Decibalo victo, provincia . . . facta:** abl. absolute. Decibalus was the king of the Dacians.

**11. decies centena milia passuum:** acc. of extent of space, *one thousand miles*, literally *ten times one hundred thousands of paces*, a thousand paces being equal to one Roman mile; **in circuitu tenere**, to have a circumference.

*In section 8.3, omitted here, Eutropius lists the various places besides Dacia that Trajan was successful in subduing, reorganizing, or fortifying, including advance preparations for an assault on Indian territory that never came to pass.*

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## INSCRIPTIONS

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### *Introduction to Inscriptions*

**T**he Roman epigraphical habit would have been on full display in most cities and towns in the first century CE. Inscriptions were a means either of honoring family members, dead or living, or of promoting oneself as a benefactor of the community. Tens of thousands of inscriptions have been discovered, some complete, but many fragmentary or damaged. Some inscribed blocks were used as building materials for later structures, having lost their cultural significance with the demise of Roman rule; others were simply buried in the ruins of the communities in which they stood.

Because inscriptions tended to be formulaic, scholars of epigraphy have been able to reconstruct the text of many damaged inscriptions. In addition, some that were lost again after they had been discovered were drawn or described by those who uncovered them. These inscriptions comprise a remarkable resource of historical evidence, particularly for the first century BCE through the second century CE, to which the vast majority of them belongs.

As the discipline of archaeology was formally established in the nineteenth century, two German scholars, Hermann Dessau and Theodor Mommsen, recognized the need to gather and organize Latin inscriptions. Dessau published a three-volume collection, *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae* (*ILS*), in which the entries are arranged by topic; Mommsen began the ongoing publication of *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (*CIL*), in which inscriptions were and continue to be recorded in volumes by geographical region or type. Each resource numbers its entries: *ILS* in order of appearance in the three volumes; *CIL* with a volume number tied to the region of discovery followed by an item number. The latter now consists of seventeen volumes and many thousands of entries.

There were three major types of inscriptions in the Roman world: funerary, dedicatory, and commemorative. Funerary inscriptions were placed on tombs, sarcophagi, or steles; dedicatory inscriptions were generally located on buildings; and commemorative inscriptions usually appeared on statue bases. All three types are represented in the selections that follow, along with the final, unique, and lengthy funerary tribute for a beloved wife.

## ILS 8402

HIC SITA EST AMYMONI MARCI OPTIMA ET  
PULCHERRIMA, LANIFICA PIA PUDICA FRUGI  
CASTA DOMISEDA.

This sarcophagus inscription was found in Rome and dates to the first century BCE. Funerary inscriptions tend to be formulaic. It praises the traditionally valued qualities of a proper wife.

**1. Amymone Marci:** the name of the deceased following by her husband's name in the gen. case.

**2. lanifica:** noun, *a woman who weaved*; in a traditional Roman household, the *materfamilias* was expected to weave or at least to oversee the weaving of the cloth from which the household's clothing and bedding were made.

**frugi:** indeclinable adjective, *thrifty*.

**3. domiseda:** *a woman who stayed at home*.

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## APPENDIX A

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### *Glossary of Names and Places*

**Agrippina:** Colonia Agrippina, the capital of the province of Lower Germany; now the city of Cologne. Since the colony was situated on the Rhine River, it was adjacent to the Gallic provinces. Trajan had spent the winter of 97/98 CE there, as he was tasked with reorganizing the Rhine frontier.

**Alexandria:** Founded by Alexander the Great in 331 BCE, it was the capital of the Ptolemaic Empire after his death. Its populace consisted of Greek citizens recruited to live there and a large non-citizen population, which included many Egyptians and Jews. Ruled by Alexander's general Ptolemy and then his descendants, the last of whom was Cleopatra VII, Alexandria was the second largest city in the Roman Empire, following Egypt's fall to Augustus in 30 BCE. It was famous for its library and crucial as Rome's main port in the eastern Mediterranean.

**Athenodorus:** a Stoic philosopher from Tarsus, who may be identified as an advisor to Augustus.

**Athens:** Founded as a Mycenaean city hundreds of years before Rome existed, Athens had been a major force in the Greek world in the fifth century BCE. After its losses in the Peloponnesian War and its surrender to Macedonian forces, it lost its power and influence, but under Roman rule it retained its status as a center for culture and education.

**Avitus, Iunius:** likely the young senator who was a protégé of Pliny, who describes his tragic death in Letter 8.23, shortly before he would have served as aedile.

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## GLOSSARY

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This Glossary contains all words from the companion texts in this volume. For vocabulary help in the Pliny *Letters*, all words are either glossed on-page or are in the Word List.

### A

**a** or **ab(s)**, *prep.* + *abl.*, from; away from; by (*agent*)

**abripio, -ere, -ui, -reptum**, to drag, carry away by force, snatch away

**absens, -ntis, adj.**, absent (sometimes **apsens**)

**absum, abesse, afui**, to be away, to be absent

**ac.** See **atque**

**accido, -ere, -cidi**, to happen, to occur, happen; to fall (near)

**accipio, -ere, -cepi, -ceptum**, to receive; to accept

**accommodo** (1), to adjust; to apply to; to fasten

**acerbus, -a, -um, adj.**, bitter

**ad, prep.** + *acc.*, to, toward; at, near

**adclamo** (1), to hail, to shout; to acclaim (+ *dat.*)

**adeo, adv.**, to such an extent

**adlevo** (1), to lift, lift up

**administro** (1), to manage; to assist

**admodum, adv.**, fully, quite, completely

**admoneo, -ere, -monui,**

**-monitum**, to remind, advise, urge, warn

**adopto** (1), to adopt, select; to wish

**adquo, adv.**, as much as

**adsector, -ari, -atus**, to flatter; to agree

**aduro, -ere, -ussi, -ustum**, to burn; to consume in fire

**adversarius, -i, m.**, enemy, opponent

**aedes, -is, f.**, dwelling place, house; temple, sanctuary, shrine

**aedifico** (1), to erect (a building), build, construct

**aegroto** (1), to be sick; to be distressed; to grieve

**aequalis, -e, adj.**, equal

**aeque, adv.**, equally, likewise

**aequo** (1), to make level, make equal

**aequor, -oris, n.**, a level surface; the sea

**aequoreus, -a, -um, adj.**, of or connected with the sea, near the sea, surrounded by the sea

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## WORD LIST

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**T**his vocabulary includes all words from the College Board's required vocabulary list that occur at least once in the letters by Pliny that appear in this volume. An asterisk indicates that the word occurs at least five times in Pliny's letters. These words are not glossed in the text except by the judgment of the author.

### A

**a, ab, abs**, *prep.* + *abl.*, from, away from, out of, by\*

**abeō, -īre, -ivī (-iī), -itum**, move away, go away\*

**absum, abesse, āfui, āfutūrus**, be away from, be absent

**ac**, *see atque*

**accēdō, -ere, -cessī, -cessum**, go to, approach, come near

**accendō, -ere, -cendī, -cēsum**, kindle, set on fire, inflame

**accidō, -ere, -cidī**, happen

**accipiō, -ere, -cēpī, -ceptum**, accept, receive

**ācer, ācris, ācre**, *adj.*, sharp, pointed, piercing; vehement, passionate, ardent

**ad**, *prep.* + *acc.*, at, near; to, toward\*

**addō, -ere, -didī, -ditum**, add

**adeō, -īre, -ivī (-iī), -itum**, go to, approach, come near

**adhūc**, *adv.*, until now, as yet; still\*

**adsum, -esse, -fui, -futūrus**, be present, be at hand

**adversus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, opposite, adverse, unfavorable

**adversus, adversum**, *prep.* + *acc.*, opposite, against

**aedificō, I**, build, construct, make; create; establish; improve

**aeger, -gra, -grum**, *adj.*, sick, ill, injured; painful; corrupt; sad, troubled

**aequō, I**, make equal, equalize

**aequus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, equal

**aetās, -tātis, f.**, age, stage of life

**affirmō, I**, strengthen; confirm, encourage

**agō, -ere, ēgī, āctum**, do; move; lead; live (*x* years); **grātiās**

**agere**, give thanks\*

**āiō**, *def. verb.*, say, state

**Alexandrīnus, -a, -um**, *adj.*, Alexandrian, pertaining to Alexandria, a city in Egypt