

I. Imperium Rōmānum

Rēs Grammaticae Novae

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Lēctiō Prīma (Section I)

Getting Started: The Roman Empire

In the first chapter, we take you 2,000 years back into the past, to the time when the Roman Empire was at the height of its power, extending from the Atlantic Ocean to the Caspian Sea and from Scotland to the Sahara. We give you a few geographical facts as background for the sketches from life in ancient Rome that follow.

On the map of the Roman Empire facing the first page of the text, you will find all the geographical names occurring in the chapter. After locating the names *Rōma*, *Italia*, *Eurōpa*, *Graecia*, etc., you will understand what is said about the situation of the city of *Rōma* in the first sentence: *Rōma in Italiā est*, and about *Italia* and *Graecia* in the next two: *Italia in Eurōpā est*. *Graecia in Eurōpā est*. This is said once more in a single sentence: *Italia et Graecia in Eurōpā sunt*. The meaning of *et* should be quite clear, but can you tell why it

is now *sunt* instead of *est*? If not, look in the margin and read the next two sentences as well. Have you discovered when to use *est* and when *sunt*? If so, you have learned the first rule of grammar: a singular subject is joined with a singular verb and a plural subject with a plural verb.

If you read LINGUA LATINA, heeding the following suggestions, you'll learn Latin well and easily.

1. Pay Attention to Endings (e.g., -a, -ā)

Did you also notice the slight difference between *Italia* and *Italiā*, and what little word produces the long -ā? This difference is pointed out and explained in the first marginal note:

Italia
in Italiā

2. Be Aware of Latin's Flexible Word Order (e.g., *est*, *sunt*)

Another thing worth noticing: here *est* and *sunt* come at the end of the sentence, but you will see that it is not always so; *Rōma est in Italiā* is also correct. The word order is less rigid in Latin than in English.

3. Concentrate on Meaning and Context (e.g., the negation *nōn*)

Is it really possible, you may ask, to understand everything by just reading the text? It certainly is, provided that you concentrate on the meaning and content of what you are reading. It is sufficient to know where *Aegyptus* is, to understand the statements *Aegyptus in Eurōpā nōn est*, *Aegyptus in Āfricā est* (1.5). There can be no doubt about the meaning of *nōn* (a so-called negation).

4. Be Patient: Keep Reading (e.g., *quoque* and *sed*)

Often a sentence is understood only when seen together with other sentences. In the sentence *Hispānia quoque in Eurōpā est* (ll.2–3), you will not understand *quoque* until you read in context: *Italia et Graecia in Eurōpā sunt. Hispānia quoque in Eurōpā est*. (The two preceding sentences might have been *Italia in Eurōpā est* or *Graecia quoque in Eurōpā est*.) If you are still in doubt, just go on reading till the word recurs: *Syria nōn est in Eurōpā, sed in Asiā. Arabia quoque in Asiā est* (1.7). Now you will certainly understand *quoque*—and in the meantime, you have learned the word *sed* almost without noticing it.

5. Answers Often Explain Questions (e.g., -ne...? and ubi...?)

In the next paragraph, a number of questions are asked, and each question is followed by an answer. It is often necessary to read the answer before you can

be quite sure of the meaning of the question. The first question is *Estne Gallia in Eurōpā?* The particle *-ne* attached to *est* marks the sentence as a question (our question mark [?] was unknown to the ancient Romans). The answer is *Gallia in Eurōpā est*. The next question, *Estne Rōma in Galliā?* is answered in the negative: *Rōma in Galliā nōn est*. (Latin has no single word for “yes” or “no.” The sentence—or part of it—must be repeated with or without *nōn*.)

In the question *Ubi est Rōma?* the word *ubi* is intelligible only when you get the answer: *Rōma est in Italiā*.

6. Look to Context for Word Meaning

After the short survey of the location of the principal Roman provinces, you are told about various localities: *Rhēnus* and *Nīlus*, *Corsica* and *Sardinia*, *Tūsculum* and *Brundisium*. You will find these names on the map, and the text will tell you what they represent. If you are still in doubt about the meaning of the words *fluvius*, *īnsula*, and *oppidum*, turn back to the picture heading the chapter.

Nouns: Singular/Plural

Note that these words occur in two different forms: *Nīlus* alone is called *fluvius*, but *Nīlus* and *Rhēnus* together are called *fluvii*. In similar circumstances, you will notice the use of the forms *īnsula* and *īnsulae*, as well as *oppidum* and *oppida*. In the section GRAMMATICA LATINA in LINGUA LATINA you will learn that the forms *fluvius*, *īnsula*, and *oppidum* are called *singulāris*, while *fluvii*, *īnsulae*, and *oppida* are called *plūrālis*—in English singular and plural.

Lēctiō Altera (Section II)

Antonyms [↔]

As you read on, you will see that *Nīlus* is referred to not only as *fluvius*, but also as *fluvius magnus*, unlike *Tiberis*, which is described as *fluvius parvus*. In the same way, *Sicilia* is referred to as *īnsula magna* as opposed to *Melita* (the modern Malta), which is called *īnsula parva*. In the margin, *magnus* and *parvus* are represented as *opposites* (sign [↔], “the opposite of”); this will help you to understand the meaning of the words, but note that the endings change: *fluvius magnus*, but *fluvii magni*. A further example: *Brundisium* is called *oppidum magnum* and *Tūsculum*, *oppidum parvum*, and when the same words occur in the plural, they are called *fluvii magni*, *īnsulae magnae*, and *oppida magna*.

Adjectives and Substantives

A word that shows this variation between the endings *-us*, *-a*, *-um* in the singular and *-ī*, *-ae*, *-a* in the plural is called an adjective (Latin *adiectivum*, “added word”) because it is added to a noun (substantive), which it qualifies. Other nouns occurring in this chapter are:

<i>prōvincia</i>	<i>littera</i>
<i>imperium</i>	<i>vocābulum</i>
<i>numerus</i>	

Adjectives occurring in this chapter are:

<i>magnus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i>	<i>Rōmānus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i>
<i>parvus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i>	<i>Latinus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i>
<i>Graecus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i>	<i>prīmus</i> , <i>-a</i> , <i>-um</i>

Plural adjectives found in this chapter are:

<i>multī</i> , <i>-ae</i> , <i>-a</i>	<i>paucī</i> , <i>-ae</i> , <i>-a</i>
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Note: The endings of the adjectives depend on the nouns that they qualify; so it is *prōvincia magna* but *imperium magnum*.

More Interrogatives: *num*, *quid*

The question *Num Crēta oppidum est?* (1.49) must, of course, be answered in the negative: *Crēta oppidum nōn est*. *Num* is an interrogative (i.e., asking) particle, like *-ne*, but a question beginning with *num* implies a negative answer. The next question is *Quid est Crēta?* Here, again, only the answer, *Crēta insula est*, makes the meaning of the question quite plain.

Compare:

<i>Estne Crēta oppidum?</i>	Is Crete a town? (I really don’t know, so I’m asking.)
<i>Num Crēta oppidum est?</i>	Crete isn’t a town, is it? (I suspect Crete is not a town and expect you to answer “no.”)

Remember the other interrogatives in this chapter:

<i>Quid est Crēta?</i>	What is Crete?
<i>Ubi est Crēta?</i>	Where is Crete?

More about Endings

We have seen that, after *in*, the final vowel is *-ā* and not *-a*. Remember that the macron over the *ā* means the vowel is long (see pronunciation guide). We now see that *in* also makes *-um* change to *-ō*:

<i>in imperiō Rōmānō</i> (1.58)	<i>in capitulō primō</i> (1.73)
<i>in vocābulō</i> (1.72)	

You will learn more about these forms in *-ā* and *-ō* in Cap. V.

Lēctiō Tertia (Section III)

Mille

Mille, the word for “a thousand,” is an indeclinable adjective; indeclinable means its endings never change. So:

mille numerī *mille vocābula* *mille litterae*

Points of Style: Latin Concision

Latin is a concise language. It can often express in a few words what requires several words in other languages. One of the reasons is that Latin has fewer particles (small, uninflected words) than most modern languages; Latin also has nothing corresponding to the English articles “a” and “the,” as in “a river,” “the river,” etc.

Recēnsiō (Review)

Remember:

1. Pay attention to endings.
2. Be aware of Latin’s flexible word order.
3. Concentrate on meaning and context.
4. Be patient: keep reading.
5. Answers often explain questions.
6. Look to context for word meaning.

Important terms:

- Enclitic: word that is appended to another word (*-ne*, *-que*)
- Particle: small uninflected word
- Indeclinable: word whose endings do not change (*mille*)

Studia Rōmāna

The map in the beginning of this chapter shows the Roman Empire (*Imperium Rōmānum*) at its height in the second century AD, the time in which our narrative takes place. This is the time of the *Pax Rōmāna*, the Roman peace (which lasted from the end of the first century BC through the second century AD, from the time of the emperor Augustus through Marcus Aurelius). Rome had begun almost a millennium before our story, in 753 BC, as a hamlet on the hills around the swamp that would eventually become the Roman Forum. It began as a tiny kingdom (753–510 BC), then a republic run by the aristocracy (510–27 BC), and finally an empire which lasted in the west until the fifth century AD and in the east—in Constantinople—until the fifteenth century.

In addition to learning the words for town (*oppidum*) and island (*īnsula*), you learn the word for river (*fluvius*) and the names of a few (*Nīlus*, *Rhēnus*, *Dānuvius*, *Tiberis*). Rivers are very important—for drinking water, for agriculture, for travel, for transport of goods, and as territorial boundaries. So important were rivers that river gods are often shown holding a cornucopia (*cornū cōpiae*, the horn of plenty), emphasizing their gift to agricultural fertility. Latin poets sometimes identify a group living in an area with the river that supplies them water: “the chilly brook Digentia that the folk of Mandela drink” (*Quīntus Horātius Flaccus*, 65–8 BC, *Epist.* 1.18.105); “those who drink the Tiber and the Fabaris” (Vergil, 70–19 BC, *Aen.* 7.715). The Romans helped along natural resources with the building of aqueducts. Appius Claudius Crassus directed that the first one, the Aqua Appia, be built in the fourth century BC (he is also to be credited with the construction of the Via Appia, the major roadway that led from Rome; see Cap. VI). By the time of our narrative, there were ten.¹ Aqueducts fed fountains throughout a town lucky enough to be connected to an aqueduct. The structure of the house (see Cap. V) helped with water collection: rain water could come in through an opening in the roof of the *ātrium*, fall into a pool and be collected in a cistern for later use.

The image of the tablet inscribed with numerals (*numeri*) and letters (*litterae*) that heads Section III in your text represents an important vehicle for writing. It is called a *tabella* (Cap. XXI) and consists of a wooden board with a raised border, with wax (*cēra*) in the middle. The pointed stick you see to the right of the *tabella* is called a *stilus*. It had a pointed end (for writing on the wax) and a broad, tapered surface on the other with which one could smooth out the wax (hence erasing the writing). There were different varieties of these tablets, including ones small enough to be held in the hand (called *pugillārēs* from *pugnus*, “fist”). In the margins on page 107 (Cap. XIV), you can see a tablet that folded and tied closed (just like *pugillārēs*), as well as a *stilus* and a *rēgula* (ruler). In Cap. II, there is a picture of an ancient book (*liber antiquus*) in the form of a scroll, as well as a *pāgina*, a written page (and the page itself!). You will learn more about writing in Cap. XVIII.

Vocābula Disposita/Ōrdināta

Nōmina (Nouns)²

capitulum, -ī	chapter
exemplum, -ī	example, model
fluvius, -ī	river
grammatica, -ae	grammar

1. Frontinus (first century BC) 1.4: *Nunc autem in urbem influunt aqua Appia, Anio Vetus, Mārcia, Tepula, Iūlia, Virgō, Alsietina quae eadem vocatur Augusta, Claudia, Anio Novus*. The Aqua Alexandrina was completed in the early third century AD.

2. Ignore for now the letters that come after each vocabulary entry; they are there for your later reference and their significance will be clear in the next chapter.

imperium, -ī	command, empire
īnsula, -ae	island
littera, -ae	letter
numerus, -ī	number
ōceanus, -ī	ocean
oppidum, -ī	town
pēnsus, -ī	task
prōvincia, -ae	province
syllaba, -ae	syllable
vocābulum, -ī	word
Verba (Verbs)	
est	he/she/it is
sunt	they are
Adiectiva (Adjectives)	
Graecus, -a, -um	Greek
Latinus, -a, -um	Latin
magnus, -a, -um	big, large, great
multī, -ae, -a (pl.)	many, a great many
parvus, -a, -um	little, small
pauci, -ae, -a (pl.)	few, a few
plūrālis (numerus)	plural (plūrālis and singulāris are adjectives of the 3rd declension; you will learn about these in Cap. XII)
prīmus, -a, -um	first
Rōmānus, -a, -um	Roman, of Rome
secundus, -a, -um	second, favorable
singulāris (numerus)	singular
tertius, -a, -um	third
Numerī (Numbers)	
ūnus	one, only
duo	two
trēs	three
sex	six
mille	one thousand
Adverbia (Adverbs)	
nōn	not
Praepositionēs (Prepositions)	
in (prp. + abl.)	in, on, at
(prp. + acc.)	into, to, against
Coniūctionēs (Conjunctions)	
et	and, also
sed	but
quoque	also, too

Vocābula Interrogātiva (Interrogative words)**-ne?**

enclitic added to the emphatic word at the beginning of a question the answer to which may be either “yes” or “no.” It can be used in both direct and indirect questions (Cap. XIX).

num?

if, whether; expects a “no” answer

quid? *n.* (see **quis**)

what, anything; adv. why

ubi? *interrog. adv.*

where