

23

Participles

Like English, Latin has a set of verbal adjectives, i.e., adjectives formed from a verb stem, called “participles.” Regular transitive verbs in Latin have four participles, two of them in the active voice (the present and future), and two in the passive (future and perfect); they are formed as follows:

	Active	Passive
<i>Pres.</i>	present stem + -ns (gen. -ntis)	_____
<i>Perf.</i>	_____	partic. stem + -us, -a, -um
<i>Fut.</i>	participial stem + -ūrus, -ūra, -ūrum ¹	pres. stem + -ndus, -nda, -ndum

It is important to know the proper stem for each participle as well as the proper ending. Note that the present active and the future passive are formed on the present stem, while the perfect passive and future active are formed on the so-called “participial stem” (found by dropping the endings from the perfect passive participle, which is itself most often a verb’s fourth principal part: i.e., **laudāt-** from **laudātus, -a, -um**). This pattern can perhaps best be recalled by memorizing the participles of **agō**, in which the difference between the present stem and the participial stem is sufficient to eliminate any confusion. It is also helpful to note that the base of the **present** participle is marked by **-nt-**, the future active by **-ūr-**¹, and the future passive, often called the “gerundive,” by **-nd-**.

¹ The ending of the future active participle is very easy to remember if you keep in mind the fact that our word *future* comes from **futūrus, -a, -um**, the future (and, incidentally, the only) participle of *sum*.

agō, agere, ēgi, āctum, to lead

Active		Passive
Pres.	ágēns, agētis, leading	_____
Perf.	_____	áctus, -a, -um, led, having been led
Fut.	āctūrus, -a, -um, about to lead, going to lead	agēndus, -a, -um, (about) to be led, deserving or fit to be led

English derivatives are illustrative of the sense of three of these participles: "agent" (from **agēns**), a person doing something; "act" (**āctus, -a, -um**), something done; "agenda" (**agendus, -a, -um**), something to be done. The participles of three of the model verbs follow.

	Act.	Pass.	Act.	Pass.	Act.	Pass.
Pres.	ágēns	_____	aúdiēns	_____	cápiēns	_____
Perf.	_____	áctus	_____	audítus	_____	cáptus
Fut.	āctūrus	agēndus	audítūrus	audiéndus	captūrus	capiéndus

Note carefully that fourth conjugation and third conjugation **-iō** verbs have **-ie-** in both the present active participle (**-iēns, -ientis**) and the future passive (**-iendus, -a, -um**). Notice too that while Latin has present active, perfect passive, and future active and passive participles, the equivalents of *praising, having been praised, about to praise, and (about) to be praised*, it lacks both a present passive participle (*being praised*) and a perfect active participle (*having praised*).

DECLENSION OF PARTICIPLES

Three of the four participles are declined on the pattern of **magnus, -a, -um**. Only the present participle has third declension forms, following essentially the model of **potēns** (Ch. 16), except that the ablative singular sometimes ends in **-e**, sometimes **-ī**²; the vowel before **-ns** in the nominative singular is always long, but before **-nt-** (according to the rule learned earlier) it is always short.

	M. & F.	N.
Nom.	ágēns	ágēns
Gen.	agētis	agētis
Dat.	agéntī	agéntī
Acc.	agéntem	ágēns
Abl.	agéntī, agénte	agéntī, agénte

² The present participle has **-ī** in the ablative singular when used strictly as an attributive adjective (**ā patre amanti**, by the loving father) but **-e** when it functions verbally (e.g., with an object, **patre filium amante**, with the father loving his son) or as a substantive (**ab amante**, by a lover).

<i>Nom.</i>	agéntēs	agéntia
<i>Gen.</i>	agéntium	agéntium
<i>Dat.</i>	agéntibus	agéntibus
<i>Acc.</i>	agéntēs	agéntia
<i>Abl.</i>	agéntibus	agéntibus

PARTICIPLES AS VERBAL ADJECTIVES

The etymology of the term participle, from **participere**, *to share in* (**pars** + **capere**), reflects the fact that participles share in the characteristics of both adjectives and verbs. As *adjectives*, participles naturally agree in gender, number, and case with the words which they modify. Sometimes also, like adjectives, they modify no expressed noun but function as nouns themselves: **amāns**, *a lover*; **sapiēns**, *a wise man, philosopher*; **venientēs**, *those coming*.

As *verbs*, participles have tense and voice; they may take direct objects or other constructions used with the particular verb; and they may be modified by an adverb or an adverbial phrase:

Patrem in casā videntēs, puella et puer ad eum cucurrerunt, *seeing their father in the house, the boy and girl ran up to him.*

In Latin as in English, the tense of a participle, it should be carefully noted, is not absolute but is relative to that of the main verb. For example, the action of a present participle is contemporaneous with the action of the verb of its clause, no matter whether that verb is in a present, a past, or a future tense; in the preceding sample you can see that it was at some time in the past that the children first saw and then ran toward their father (seeing him, i.e., when they saw him, they ran up to him). A similar situation obtains for the perfect and future participles, as can be seen in the following table:

1. Present participle = action *contemporaneous* with that of the verb (the same time).
2. Perfect participle = action *prior* to that of the verb (time before).
3. Future participle = action *subsequent* to that of the verb (time after).

Graecī nautae, videntēs Polyphēmum, timent, timuērunt, timēbunt.
The Greek sailors, seeing Polyphemus, are afraid, were afraid, will be afraid.

Graecī nautae, vīsī ā Polyphēmō, timent, timuērunt, timēbunt.
The Greek sailors, (having been) seen by P., are afraid, were afraid, will be afraid.

Graecī nautae, vīsūrī Polyphēmum, timent, timuērunt, timēbunt.
The Greek sailors, about to see Polyphemus, are afraid, were afraid, will be afraid.

TRANSLATING PARTICIPIAL PHRASES AS CLAUSES

Participial phrases are used much more frequently in Latin than in English, which prefers clauses with regular finite verbs. In translating from Latin to idiomatic English, therefore, it is often preferable to transform a participial phrase (especially if it sounds stilted in English) into a subordinate clause.

In doing so you need to consider 1) the relationship between the action in the phrase and the action in the clause to which it is attached, so that you can then choose an appropriate subordinating conjunction (especially "when," "since," or "although"), and 2) the relativity of participial tenses, so that you can then transform the participle into the appropriate verb tense.

Thus the example given earlier, *patrem in casā videntēs, puella et puer ad eum cucurrerunt*, can be translated *seeing their father in the house, the girl and boy ran up to him* or, more idiomatically, *when they saw their father in the house, the girl and boy ran up to him*. Likewise *Graecī nautae, vīsī ā Polyphēmō, timuērunt* is better translated *when they had been seen* [time prior to main verb] *by Polyphemus, the Greek sailors were afraid* than the more literal *having been seen by Polyphemus, the Greek sailors were afraid*. Consider these further examples:

Māter, fīlium amāns, auxilium dat, since she loves her son [lit., *loving her son*], *the mother gives him assistance*.

Pater, fīliam vīsūrus, casam parābat, since he was about to see his daughter, the father was preparing the house.

Puella, in casam veniēns, gaudēbat, when she came into the house [lit., *coming into the house*], *the girl was happy*.

VOCABULARY

arx, ārcis, f., citadel, stronghold

dux, dūcis, m., leader, guide; commander, general (duke, ducal, ducat, duchess, duchy, doge; cp. *dūcō*)

ēquus, -ī, m., horse (equestrian, equine; cp. *equa, -ae, mare*)

hāsta, -ae, f., spear (hastate)

īnsula, -ae, f., island (insular, insularity, insulate, isolate, isolation, peninsula)

lītus, lītōris, n., shore, coast (littoral)

mīles, mīlītis, m., soldier (military, militaristic, militate, militant, militia)

ōrātor, ōrātōris, m., orator, speaker (oratory, oratorio; cp. *ōrō*, Ch. 36,

ōrātiō, Ch. 38)

sacérdōs, sacerdotīs, m., priest (sacerdotal; cp. *sacer, sacred*)

āliquis, āliquid (gen. *alicuius*, dat. *alicui*, etc.; cp. decl. of *quis, quid*; nom. and acc. neut. pl. are *āliqua*), indef. pron., *someone, somebody, something*

- quisquis, quidquid** (*quis* repeated; cases other than nom. rare), indef. pron., *whoever, whatever*
- magnánimus, -a, -um**, *great-hearted, brave, magnanimous* (magnanimity)
- úmquam**, adv., in questions or negative clauses, *ever, at any time* (cp. *numquam*)
- éducō** (1), *to bring up, educate* (education, educator, educable; do not confuse with *ēducō, to lead out*)
- gaúdeō, gaudére, gāvísus sum**, *to be glad, rejoice* (gaudeamus; cp. *gaudium, -iī, joy*, as in *Latīna est gaudium!*)
- osténdō, osténdere, osténdī, osténtum**, *to exhibit, show, display* (ostentation, ostentatious, ostensible, ostensive; cp. *tendō, stretch, extend*)
- pétō, pétere, petívī, petítum**, *to seek, aim at, beg, beseech* (appetite, compete, competent, impetuous, petition, petulant, repeat; cp. *perpetuus*)
- prémō, prémere, préssī, préssum**, *to press, press hard, pursue*; **-primō** in compounds as seen in **opprimō** below (compress, depress, express, impress, imprint, print, repress, reprimand, suppress)
- ópprimō, -primere, -préssī, -préssum**, *to suppress, overwhelm, overpower, check* (oppress, oppression, oppressive, oppressor)
- vértō, vérttere, vértī, vérsun**, *to turn; change*; so **āvértō, turn away, avert, revertō, turn back**, etc. (adverse, advertise, avert, averse, convert, controversy, divers, diverse, divorce, invert, obverse, pervert, revert, subvert, subversive, transverse, verse, version, animadvert)

PRACTICE AND REVIEW

1. Aliquid numquam ante audītum cernō.
2. Illum órātōrem in mediō senātū iterum petentem finem bellōrum ac scelerum nōn adiūvistis.
3. Certī fructūs pācis ab territō vulgō atque senātū cupiēbantur.
4. Quī vir magnanimus aliās gentēs gravī metū servitūtis liberābit?
5. Nēmō fidem neglegēns timōre umquam carēbit.
6. Illa fēmina fortunāta haec cōsilia contrā eōs malōs quondam aluit et salūtis commūnis causā semper labōrābat.
7. Illam gentem Latīnam oppressūrī et dīvitiās raptūrī, omnēs virōs magnae probitātis premere ac dēlère prōtinus coepērunt.
8. Tollēturne fāma huius medicī istīs versibus novīs?
9. At vīta illīus modī aequī aliquid iūcundī atque fēlicis continet.
10. Quō diē ex igne et ferrō atque morte certā ēreptus es?
11. We gave many things to nations lacking hope.
12. Those ten men, (when) called, will come again with great eagerness.
13. Through the window they saw the second old man running out of his neighbor's house and away from the city.
14. He himself was overpowered by uncertain fear because he desired neither truth nor liberty.

SENTENTIAE ANTĪQUAE

1. Vīvēs meīs praesidiīs oppressus. (Cicero.—**praesidium**, -iī, *guard*.)
2. Illī autem, tendentēs manūs dextrās, salūtem petēbant. (Liviy.—**tendō**, -ere, *to stretch, extend*.)
3. Tantalus sitiēns flūmina ab ōre fugientia tangere desīderābat. (Horace.—**sitīre**, *to be thirsty*.)
4. Signa rērum futūrārum mundō ā dīs ostenduntur. (Cicero.)
5. Graecia capta asperum victōrem cēpit. (Horace.—**victor**, -tōris, here = Rome.)
6. Atticus Cicerōnī ex patriā fugientī multam pecūniam dedit. (Nepos.—**Atticus**, a friend of Cicero.)
7. Sī mihi eum ēducandum committēs, studia eius fōrmāre ab īnfantiā incipiam. (Quintilian.—**fōrmāre**.—**īnfantia**, -ae.)
8. Saepe stilum verte, bonum libellum scrīptūrus. (Horace.—**stilum vertere**, *to invert the stilus = to use the eraser*.)
9. Cūra ōrātōris dictūrī eōs audītūrōs dēlectat. (Quintilian.)
10. Mortī Sōcratis semper illacrimō, legēns Platōnem. (Cicero.—**Sōcratēs**, -cratis.—**illacrīmāre**, *to weep over*.—**Platō**, -tōnis.)
11. Memoria vītae bene āctae multōrumque bene factōrum iūcunda est. (Cicero.)
12. Quī timēns vīvet, liber nōn erit umquam. (Horace.—**quī**, as often, = **is quī**.)
13. Nōn is est miser quī iussus aliquid facit, sed is quī invītus facit. (Seneca.—**invītus**, -a, -um, *unwilling*; the adj. here has adverbial force, as it commonly does in Latin.)
14. Verbum semel ēmissum volat irrevocābile. (Horace.—**semel**, adv., *once*.—**ē-mittere**.—**volāre**, *to fly*.—**irrevocābilis**, -e.)

LAOCOON SPEAKS OUT AGAINST THE TROJAN HORSE

Oppressī bellō longō et ā deīs aversī, ducēs Graecōrum, iam post decem annōs, magnum equum ligneum arte Minervae faciunt. Uterum multīs militibus complent, equum in lītore relinquunt, et ultrā īnsulam proximam nāvīgant. Trōiānī nūllās cōpiās aut nāvēs vident; omnis Trōia gaudet; panduntur portae. Dē equō, autem, Trōiānī sunt incertī. Aliī eum in urbem dūcī cupiunt; aliī eum Graecās īnsidiās appellant. Prīmus ibi ante omnēs, dē arce currēns, Laocoon, sacerdos Trōiānus, haec verba dīcit: “Ō miserī cīvēs, nōn estis sānī! Quid cōgitātis? Nōnne intellegitis Graecōs et īnsidiās eōrum? Aut inveniētis in istō equō multōs militēs ācrēs, aut equus est machina bellī, facta contrā nōs, ventūra in urbem, vīsūra casās nostrās et populum. Aut aliquid latet. Equō nē crēdite, Trōiānī: quidquid id est, timeō Danaōs et dōna gerentēs!” Dīxit, et potentem hastam magnīs vīribus manūs sinistrae in uterum equī iēcit; stetit illa, tremēns.

(Virgil, *Aeneid* 2.13–52; prose adaptation.—**ligneus**, -a, -um, *wooden, of wood*.—Minerva, goddess of war and protectress of the Greeks.—**uterus**, -ī.—**complere**, *to fill up, make pregnant*.—**proximus**, -a, -um, *nearby*.—**Trōiānus**, -a, -um, *Trojan*.—**pandō**, -ere, *to open*.—**Nōnne** introduces a question anticipating an affirmative answer, *Don't you . . . ?*—**machina**, -ae.—**vīsūra**, *here to spy on*.—**latēre**, *to hide, be hidden, be concealed*.—**equō**, dat. with **crēdite** (see Ch. 35).—**nē** = **nōn**.—**Danaōs** = **Graecōs**.—**et** (with **gerentēs**) = **etiam**.—**tremō**, -ere, *to tremble, shake, vibrate*.—To be continued. . .)



Trojan horse with Greek soldiers
 Relief from neck of an amphora, Mykonos, 7th century B.C.
 Archaeological Museum, Mykonos, Greece