Supplementary Syntax

The following constructions are listed for the benefit of students who plan to continue their study of Latin beyond the introductory year. The additional knowledge of these constructions enables one to skip Caesar and go on directly to Cicero with considerable confidence. Actually, a number of these constructions have already been encountered here and there in the forty formal chapters of this book. However, although such can be easily translated without benefit of syntactical labels, it seems wise to catalog them here along with the more difficult items.

Genitive of Material. The genitive may indicate the material of which a thing is made.

pōculum auri, a goblet of gold
Numerus hostium crēscit, the number of the enemy is increasing.
Mōns aquae secūtus est et tempestās trēs nāvēs cinxīt aggere harēnāe, a mountain of water followed and the storm surrounded three ships with a mound of sand.

Genitive of Description. The genitive, when modified by an adjective, may describe a noun by indicating its character, quality or size.

vir parvae sapientiae, a man of small wisdom
liber magnī ponderis, a book of great weight
pāx in hominis bōneae voluntātis, peace among men of good will
Erat puella brevis aetātis, she was a girl of short life.
Laudābat parvulum formīcam magnī labōris, he used to praise the tiny ant, (a creature) of great toil.
Cōnsilium eius modi mihi placet, a plan of this sort pleases me.

Objective Genitive. The objective genitive depends on a noun of verbal meaning and is used as the object of the verbal idea. It is sometimes translated by for.

amor laudis, love of praise (= amat laudem, he loves praise.)
cupiditās pecūniae, greed for money (= cupit pecūniam, he longs for money.)
metus mortis, fear of death (= metuit mortem, he fears death.)
spēs salūtis, hope for safety (= spērat salūtem, he hopes for safety.)

Dative of Purpose. The dative may express the purpose for which a person or thing serves. A dative of reference (v. Ch. XXXVIII) often appears in conjunction with the dative of purpose, and this combination is called the double dative construction.

Petitiō mea tibi (dat. of ref.) summae cūrae (dat. of purp.) est, my candidacy is (for) the greatest concern to you.
Ea rēs mihi (ref.) summae voluptātī (purp.) erat, that matter was for the greatest pleasure to me = gave me the greatest pleasure.
Illī nōbis (ref.) auxiliū (purp.) vēnērunt, they came as an aid to us.
Hōs librōs dōnō (purp.) misit, he sent these books as a gift.
Hoc mē iuvat et mihi (ref.) melli (purp.) est, this gratifies me and is (as) honey to me.
Optant locum tēctō (purp.), they desire a place for a roof (building).

Dative of Possession. The dative can be used with sum to express the idea of possession.

Liber est mihi, a book is to me = I have a book.
(Contrast: liber est meus, the book is mine.)
Ilī maior turba clientium est, that man has a greater throng of retainers.
Sunt tibi animus et mōrēs, you have a soul and character.
Haec eis semper erunt, they will always have these things.
Prūdentia est illī puellae, that girl has prudence.
Ō virgō, nōn tibi est vultus mortālis, O maiden, you do not have the face of a mortal.
Si umquam mihi filiūs erit..., if I ever have a son . . .

Dative with Adjectives. The dative is used with many Latin adjectives to indicate the direction in which the adjective is applicable. These generally correspond to English adjectives which can be followed by to or for (friendly to, hostile to, suitable to or for, useful to, similar to, equal to, etc.).

Mors est somnō similis, death is similar to sleep.
Scīēbam tē mihi fīdēlem esse, I knew that you were faithful to me.
Est homō amicus amīcō, he is a man friendly to a friend.
Quisque sībi cārūs est, each one is dear to himself.
Potestne haec urbs tibi esse iūcunda, can this city be pleasing to you?
Ille mihi vidēitur pār esse dēō, that man seems to me to be equal to a god.
Proximī Germānīs sunt, they are nearest to the Germans.
**Ablative of Specification.** The ablative may be used to tell in what specific respect a verb or an adjective holds true.

Hi omnēs linguā, institūtis, légibus inter sē differunt, these all differ from one another in language, customs, and laws.

Ilī virtūte omnibus (dat.) praestābant, those men used to excel all in courage.

Id genus erat intractābile bellō, that race was unmanageable in war.

Quis est praestantior aut nōbilitāte aut probitāte aut studiō optimārum artium? Who is more outstanding in nobility or integrity or the pursuit of the finest arts?

Ager bene cultus est über  viewType: `null` et ornātus speciē, a field well cultivated is rich in usefulness and beautiful in appearance.

Asia omnibus terrīs (dat.) antecellit ābertāte agrōrum et variētāte frūctuum et multītūdine  viewType: `null` cārum rērum quae exportantur, Asia excels all lands in richness of fields and variety of fruits and large number of those things which are exported.

**Ablative of Cause.** The ablative can be used to indicate a cause or reason.

Miser timōre dēlirat, the wretched man is insane with fear.

Corpora eōrum metū dēbilis sunt, their bodies are weak from fear.

Aper dentibus timētur, the boar is feared because of his teeth.

Nihil arduum mortālibus est; caelum ipsum stultītia petimus, nothing is (too) arduous for mortals; we seek the sky itself in our folly.

Odī tyranni in exullīm fugīt, because of his hatred of the tyrant he fled into exile.

Bonī amōre virtūtis peccāre  viewType: `null` dērunt, good men because of their love of virtue hate to sin.

**Ablative of Degree of Difference.** With comparatives and adverbs suggesting comparison the ablative can be used to indicate the degree of difference in the comparison.

Tantō melius, the better by so much = so much the better.

Senex nōn facit ea quae iuvenis, at multō maiōra et meliōra facit, an old man does not do the things which a young man does, but he does much greater and better things (greater by much).

Multō ācrius iam vigīlābō, I shall now watch much more keenly.

Rōmam paucis post diebus vēniisti, you came to Rome a few days afterwards (afterwards by a few days).

Aberat ab eā urbe tribus miliībus passuum, he was three miles from that city (was away by three miles).

**Ablative of Comparison.** Instead of the quam construction after a comparative (v. Ch. XXVI), the ablative of comparison is commonly used if the first of the two things compared is in the nominative or the accusative case.

Tua cōnsilia sunt clāriōra lūce, your plans are clearer than light.

Quis in Graeciā erat clāriōr Themistocles? Who in Greece was more illustrious than Themistocles?

Quis est mē beātior? Who is happier than I?

Patria est mihi multō (degree of difference) cārior meā vitā, my country is much dearer to me than my own life.

Homērus dicit orātiōnem ex Nestoris lingūa fluxisse dulciōrem melle, Homer says that speech flowed from Nestor’s tongue sweeter than honey.

Illa cum plūs oculīs suis amābat, she used to love him more than her own eyes.

Ō Fortūna, quis est crūdēliōr tē? O Fortune, who is more cruel than you?

Argentum est vīlius aurō; aurum, virtūtibus. Silver is cheaper than gold; gold, than virtues.

Exēgī monumentum aere perennius, I have erected a monument more lasting than bronze.

**Ablative of Description.** A noun and an adjective in the ablative may be used to describe another noun. Frequently there is no difference between the ablative of description and the genitive of description, but commonly the ablative denotes a physical characteristic.

miles sauciā manū, the soldier with the wounded hand

Ad eum adducta est virgō eximiā fōrmā, to him was led a maiden of exceptional beauty.

Vidi hominem antiquā virtūte et fidē, I have seen a man of old-time virtue and fidelity.

Ego nātus sum animō lēnī, I was born a gentle-souled person.

Es ingenīo dūrō atque inexcōrābili, you are a person of harsh and inexorable nature.

Tū mē hortāris ut sim animō magnō et spem salūtis habeam, you exhort me to be of great courage and to have hope of safety.
Subordinate Clauses in Indirect Discourse. In indirect discourse, subordinate clauses regularly have verbs in the subjunctive mood, even though they had the indicative in the direct form.

Lègit librós quōs miserās, he read the books which you had sent.
Dixit sē lēgisse librōs quōs misissēs, he said that he had read the books which you had sent.

Eī malī quī in urbe manent īnfirmī erunt sine duce, those evil men who remain in the city will be weak without their leader.
Putō eōs malōs quī in urbe mancant īnfirmōs futūrōs esse sine duce, I think that those evil men who remain in the city will be weak without their leader.

Si id crēdet, errābit. If he believes this, he will be wrong.

Dicō sī id crēdat cum errātūrum esse. I say that if he believes this he will be wrong.

Verbs of Fearing. Verbs denoting fear take subjunctive noun clauses introduced by nē (affirmative, lest, that) or ut (negative, that not).

Metuō nē id crēdant, I am afraid that they will believe this.
Metuō ut id crēdant, I am afraid that they will not believe this.
Vereor ut hoc intelligi possit, I am afraid that this cannot be understood.
Verentur nē Rōmae magnī tumultūs sint, they fear that there may be great disturbances at Rome.

At vereor ut hoc eī placēat, but I am afraid that this will not please him.

Verēmur nē nimium indulgēns sis, we fear that you may be too indulgent.

Objective Infinitive. The complementary infinitive has no subject accusative (v. Ch. VI). However, when an infinitive with subject accusative is used as the object of a verb, it is called an objective infinitive.

Volunt venire, they wish to come. (compl. inf.)
Iussit eōs venire, he ordered them to come. (obj. inf.)
Nōn possim loquī, I cannot speak. (compl. inf.)
Nōn patitur mē loquī, he does not permit me to speak. (obj. inf.)
Nōn audet ēre, he does not dare to go. (compl. inf.)
Coēgérunt cum ēre, they forced him to go. (obj. inf.)

—Ne, Num, Nōnne in Direct Questions. When a Roman asked a genuine question (i.e., one which did not imply that he expected the answer to be “yes” or that he expected it to be “no”) he appended the enclitic —ne to the first word of the question (v. Ch. V).

However, if the Roman expected the answer to be “no,” he introduced the question with num. If he expected the answer to be “yes,” he used nōnne.

Veniuntē? Are they coming?
Num veniunt? They are not coming, are they? (Expected answer is “no.”)
Nōnne veniunt? They are coming, aren’t they? (Expected answer is “yes.”)

Scrīpsistīne illās litterās? Did you write that letter?
Num illās litterās scrīpsisti? You did not write that letter, did you?
Nōnne illās litterās scrīpsisti? You wrote that letter, didn’t you?
Nōnne arma togae cessērunt, mē cōnsule? Did not arms yield to the toga when I was consul?
Nōnne vidēs quantum sit periculum? You see how great the danger is, do you not?

Num audēs hoc negāre? You don’t dare to deny this, do you?
Num dubitās hoc dicēre? You do not hesitate to say this, do you? or Surely you do not hesitate to say this.