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LATIN PREVERBS AND CASES

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SUMMARY

The syntax of *verba composita*, especially the argument structure of their preverbs, is investigated under the general hypothesis that it will be regular to the extent that the constructional behavior of the *verbum compositum* can be explained on the basis of the constructional behavior of its parts, namely the *verbum simplex* and the preverb. A preverb is – like a preposition – a local relator, which takes two arguments, the *locatum* and the *relatum*. In preverbatation, the *locatum* is identified with the subject of the intransitive and the object of the transitive simplex. The *relatum* very often remains implicit. If it is expressed, it may be couched in an adverbial phrase, in particular a prepositional phrase, in particular one introduced by the preposition identical to the preverb. Or it may be taken directly in a mere case, the dative, ablative or accusative. The latter two cases are subject to certain restrictions: it is not common for preverbs to have rection, as prepositions have. Preverb and preposition are not functionally equivalent; the paradigmatic relation between preverbal and prepositional constructions is irregular because the former belong essentially to word-formation, while the latter belong to syntax.

1. Introduction

The subject-matter of the present contribution is the syntax of Latin preverbs. The central question is: How is the manner in which *verba composita* take complements to be described? And does it have a regular connection with the case-rectio of the *verbum simplex*, on the one hand, and that of the preposition corresponding to the preverb, on the other? To my knowledge, this question has not yet been posed in Latin linguistics. The investigation reported upon here has had to start from scratch. I have attained little more than a classification of the relevant phenomena. All farther-reaching hypotheses are to be regarded with extreme caution.

The initial assumption is that the argument structure of *verba composita* will be regular just to the degree to which their meaning and constructional behavior can be explained on the basis of the meaning and constructional behavior of their parts, namely the *verbum simplex* and the preverb. This search for syntactic regularity entails, therefore, the limitation to such *verba composita* whose meaning has a regular relationship to the meaning of the simplex. I shall concentrate on such verbs as *aufero* or *distraho*, whose meaning can be largely predicted from the meanings of *fero* and *ab-*, or *traho* and *dis-*, respectively, and I will not treat such verbs as *incipio* or *decerno*, which do not allow this. This restriction has the natural consequence of a concentration on preverbs with local meanings, leaving other kinds of meanings (as, e.g., in *pergaudeo* “rejoice greatly”) out of consideration.

2. Basic concepts

Preverbs and prepositions are (together with adverbs, which I leave out of consideration here) coordinate categories and jointly subordinate to the notion of ‘local relator’ (LR), which I have to introduce here. ‘Local’ must be taken to cover ‘spatial’ and ‘temporal’, but it correctly emphasizes that spatial relationships are at the heart of the matter. Some examples will show in which sense prepositions and preverbs are relators:

- (1) (a) *ille qui stillantem prae se pugionem tulit* (Cic. *Ph.* 2,30)
 (b) *Pontico triumpho trium verborum praetulit titulum: veni, vidi, vici* (Suet. *Caes.*37)
 (c) *a portu me praemisisti domum* (Pl. *Am.* 602)

In each of the examples, the semantic relation of ‘x (being) before y’ is inherent by virtue of the presence of *prae*, though it is not always made explicit. In (a), x is the dagger and y is he; in (b), x is the inscription and y is the procession; in (c), x is the speaker and y is the hearer. In semantically different, but structurally analogous ways, two terms are correlated by all the LRs. We call x the locatum and y the relatum. These two may be characterized as follows:

The locatum is something whose position in space or time is described by the construction. This may be a person or a thing, as in the examples given; or it may be an event. We may leave this latter possibility open at the moment (see §5.2) and confine ourselves to the observation that if the LR is a preverb, then its locatum is a nominal concept and thus an argument of the *verbum compositum*.

The relatum is the item with respect to which the locatum is localized. It is an animate, lifeless or abstract object, a nominal concept which serves as a point of reference for the localization. Syntactically speaking, if the LR is a preposition, the relatum is its complement or *rectum*, as is *se* in (1)(a). If the LR is a preverb, then the relatum may be one of the arguments of the verb, as is in (b) *Pontico triumpho*. This is normally distinct from the argument which represents the locatum – as it is in (1)(b) – , but this need not be so, as we shall see later. Finally, the relatum may be implicit. Thus the fact that in (1)(c) it is the subject of the verb is not wholly determined by the syntax of the sentence; we infer it, partly, from its meaning and context.

Whereas the distinction between locatum and relatum is not always straightforward with *verba composita*, as we shall see in §4.4.2, they behave quite differently when an LR takes the position of the predicate of a sentence (or clause). The locatum is then always the subject, as (2) shows.

- (2) *nec spes ulla super* (Val. Fl. 8,435)

The relatum, however, if it is not implicit as here, will occupy an oblique case role, as can be seen in (3).

- (3) *(in fossam) quae erat ante oppidum* (Caes. *B. G.* 2,32,4)

Thus, whenever a local construction is intimately tied up with a complex syntactic environment, the reduction to its embryonal form, as in (2) or (3), can serve as a heuristic criterion to determine locatum and relatum.

Almost all of the Latin preverbs have a basic local meaning. This would have to be defined as in the following examples, where x is again the locatum and y the relatum.

x *ex*- y: x moves out of y

x *sub*- y: x is or moves under y

There are peculiarities associated with some of the preverbs which need not be dealt with here. It is self-understood that such definitions of local relations are not based on extra-linguistic reality; on the contrary, these relations are defined with respect to the speech-situation and would, in their complete form, incorporate the speaker's deixis.

A preverb, contrary to other LRs, does not take arguments independently from the verb to which it is prefixed. That is to say, both its locatum and its relatum have to be arguments of that verb. We may therefore approach the analysis with the following general hypothesis: We start from a preverb and a verbum simplex. Each has its argument structure associated with itself: the preverb has a locatum and a relatum; the verbum simplex has a subject and possibly a direct object and further complements. In the formation of a verbum compositum, the argument structure of the preverb is superimposed onto that of the verbum simplex. One of the following may then happen to either of the arguments of the preverb: either it may be added to the arguments of the verbum simplex, thus enriching the argument structure of the verb; or it may be lost in prevervation; or it may be identified with one of the arguments of the verbum simplex. With these assumptions in mind, we may now specify our initial question: Among the syntactic functions associated with a verbum compositum, which are those typically occupied by the locatum and the relatum of its preverb?

3. The syntactic function of the locatum

We will begin with the syntactic function of the locatum. Empirical investigation turns up a general rule here which is valid for all of the productive types of prevervation and most of the unproductive types. Consider the following pairs of sentences, whose first member is intransitive and the second transitive; the locatum has been italicized.

- (4) (a) *Caesar* ... ad cohortandos milites ... decucurrit (Caes. *B. G.* 2,21,1)
 (b) hic postquam in aedes *me* ad se deducit domum (Pl. *Mi.* 121)
- (5) (a) si *nemo* hac praeteriit (Pl. *Ci.* 683)
 (b) ut *te* hodie quasi pompam illā praeterducerem (Pl. *Mi.* 67)
- (6) (a) simul ac primum *nubes* succedere soli coepere (Lucr. 5, 286f)
 (b) *sues* ... subigunt in umbrosum locum (Var. *R. R.* 2,4,6)

The rule is:

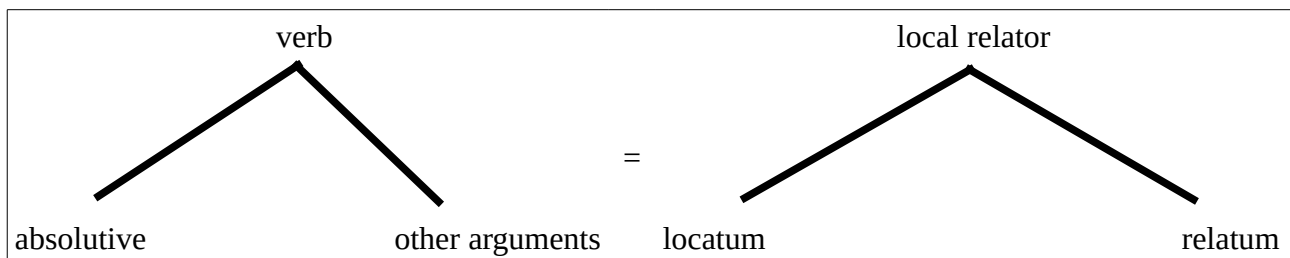
- I. I If a verbum simplex is intransitive, then its subject is the locatum of the preverb in composition.
- II. If a verbum simplex is transitive, then its direct object is the locatum of the preverb in composition.

It is understood that what applies to the object of a transitive verb, applies to its subject if the verb is passivized. The rule could be simplified if the subject and object of a verbum simplex were

automatically also the subject and object of the compositum; however, as we shall see later on, this is not always so.

The fact that this rule relies not on the notion of the subject, but on that of the subject of the intransitive and the object of the transitive verb seems to be an ergative trait in Latin. There has been much quarreling among scholars in recent times about whether a certain language is ergative, and another one is accusative. It would seem sensible to recognize that every language shares some ergative and some accusative features. Even the most accusative language such as Latin is ergative to a certain extent.

When we ask for the functional basis of our rule of the syntactic function of the locatum, we have to consider the way in which the argument structures of the preverb and the verbum simplex are superimposed. We have seen above that if an LR takes the position of the predicate of a sentence, its locatum must be the (intransitive) subject, whereas the relatum takes an oblique position. We therefore face the following parallelism:



Now, if an LR is combined with a verb to form a unit with a single argument structure, this analogy becomes effective, and the locatum of the preverb is identified with the absolutive of the verb. The fact that every verb has an absolutive argument and that every LR has a relatum accounts for the near absence of exceptions to this rule.

4. The syntactic function of the relatum

As for the syntactic function of the relatum of a preverb with respect to the verbum compositum, the situation is much more complex. The following alternatives present themselves:

1. The relatum may either be expressed by a nominal constituent of the clause or it may be implicit, i.e. not so expressed.
2. If the relatum is expressed, it may be adjoined to the verbum compositum either in an adverbial phrase, especially a prepositional phrase, or in a simple case.
3. If the relatum is adjoined to the verbum compositum in an adverbial phrase, it may either be governed by the preposition corresponding (i.e. identical) to the preverb, or it may be adjoined otherwise.
4. If the relatum is adjoined to the verbum compositum in a simple case, this may either be the one governed by the preposition corresponding to the preverb or another one.

The regularities determining these choices are to a great extent still unclear to me. I will illustrate them by some examples and, in discussing these, point out some tendencies that seem to be candidates for rules.

4.1. The *relatum* is implicit

If the *relatum* is not expressed by a nominal constituent of the clause, it is implicit and must be inferred from the context. We may then also say that the preverb is deictic as to its *relatum*. The examples (4) and (6)(b) above illustrate what is meant. The following comments seem to be in order:

1. Many examples might be adduced of *relata* which are not only not expressed but which are not at all adjoinable to the *verbum compositum* in question. Thus consider:

(7) (tun redimes me,) si me hostes interceperint? (Pl. *As.* 106)

(8) locum nacti ... quem domestici belli ... causa iam ante praeparaverant (Caes. *B. G.* 5,9,4)

The verbs *intercipio*, *praeparo* and many others forbid the expression of the *relatum* of their preverb even though used in a concrete spatial or temporal sense. The total absence of a *relatum* is, of course, much more frequent if the preverb does not have such a concrete meaning – a case not dealt with here.

2. One form of the implicit *relatum* requires special attention. Not infrequently does a preverb refer back to the subject of the *verbum compositum*. This occurs mainly with transitive verbs such as *praemitto* in (1)(c). Other such examples are:

(9) Si te forte meae gravis uret sarcina chartae, abicito ... (Hor. *Ep.* 1,13,6f)

(10) libenter extremum spiritum vitae ediderim (Cic. *Ph.* 11,9,22)

The identification of the *relatum* with the subject might be made explicit in each of these examples by adding a reflexive phrase like *prae te* in (1)(c), *a te* in (9) and *e me* in (10). The fact that this sort of reflexivity is actually inherent in such verbs can be proven by examples from the texts:

(11) abige *abs re* lassitudinem (Pl. *Mer.* 113)

(12) oves nullum fructum edere *ex se* sine cultu hominum et curatione possent (Cic. *n. d.* 2, 63, 158)

This – reflexive or implicit – identification of the *relatum* of the preverb with the subject of the verb depends on the following constellation: the simplex must be a transitive verb of motion, i.e. of transport (maybe also in a figurative sense), and the dynamic relationship between the transporting subject and the transported object must be such that the dynamic relationship between the *relatum* and the *locatum* of the preverb is already implicit in the former relationship or at least its most natural specification. Deixis evidently plays a role here.

In concluding this section, it must be stated that, apart from the obligatory transitivity of a few *verba composita* (cf. (24) and (25) below), it is quite normal for a *verbum compositum* to occur without an expressed *relatum*. This is essential in that it indicates that most preverbs are like adverbs, and unlike prepositions, in that they need not be rectional, but may be deictic as to their *relatum*.

4.2. The *relatum* is in an adverbial phrase

We will defer consideration of *relata* adjoined with the prepositional counterpart of the preverb to §4.3 and will consider only distinct prepositions and adverbs. Examples of adverbs functioning as *relata* have been seen above in (5) (*hāc* and *illā*). Examples of prepositional phrases are:

(13) *Abin e conspectu meo?* (Pl. *Am.* 518)

(14) *Itaque paulatim ex castris discedere ac suos clam ex agris deducere coeperunt.* (Caes. *B. G.* 4,30,3)

(15) *is me ad illam inlexit.* (Pl. *Au.* 737)

With certain preverbs, this way of adjoining the *relatum* is quite regular. In fact, examples such as the above testify to the partial synonymy of

- a) *ab*, *de* and *ex*,
- b) *ad* and *in*,
- c) *prae* with *ante*,
- d) *pro* with *ab*, *de*, *ex* and *ante*.

Whereas the semantic relationships in a) and b) are reciprocal, those in c) and d) are not: *ante* is less specific than either *prae* or *pro*; and *ab*, *de* and *ex* may introduce *relata* of *pro*, but not vice versa.

On the other hand, there are perfectly clear cases of adverbial phrases which are not the *relata* of the *verba composita* on which they depend. Such is the case, e.g., in (4) and (6)(b) above, where the phrases *ad cohortandos milites*, *in aedes ... ad se ... domum* and *in umbrosum locum* are not the *relata* of the preverbs. It appears that a number of preverbs whose *relatum* does not play the role of a goal nevertheless imply one, in addition to their *relatum*. This is especially true for the preverbs whose *relatum* is a source: *ab-*, *de-*, *ex-*, and *pro-*. But it also occurs with others like *per-* and *sub-*. Additional examples are:

(16) *ecfunde hoc cito in barathrum* (Pl. *Cu.* 121)

(17) *incolumem legionem in Nantuates, inde in Allobroges perduxit* (Caes. *B. G.* 3,6,5)

The implication of a goal is so strong with some such verbs that this is by far more frequently specified in the clause than the *relatum*, which is mostly left implicit. It is safe to assume that this depends not only on the preverb but also on the verb.

4.3. The *relatum* is adjoined with the corresponding preposition

For each of the preverbs we are dealing with, except *dis-*, *re-* and *se-*, there is a preposition that corresponds to it in that it is formally and semantically (almost) identical to the preverb. For all of them, except these latter ones, we might expect that their *relatum* can be adjoined by means of this corresponding preposition. In fact, this construction, which we will call duplication, is rather unevenly distributed among the different preverbs. We will first illustrate duplication with some typical examples:

- (18) *de via decedite* (Pl. *Am.* 984)
 (19) *quom ex alto puteo susum ad summum escenderis* (Pl. *Mi.* 1150)
 (20) *Hunc in collum ... impone.* (Pl. *Pe.* 691f)

The overall frequency distribution of duplication is roughly as follows:

frequent with *ab-*, *de-*, *ex-*; *ad-*, *in-*; *com-*, *inter-*, *sub*;
 rare with *ob-*, *per-*, *pro-*, *trans-*;
 never with *ante-*, *circum-*, *post-*, *prae-*, *praeter-*, *super-*.

I cannot present an analysis of these facts here. A diachronic consideration to be taken into account would be that duplication is rare or impossible with the recent prepositions like *trans* and *praeter*, whereas it is common with the oldest group, which *ex-*, *in-*, etc. belong to. However, one question that should be asked is: Why does duplication occur at all? Is it not redundant to say *decedo de*, *escendo e*, *impono in* and the like? What if we eliminated one occurrence of the LR in such constructions? We shall return to this question at the end of this report.

4.4 The relatum is governed by the preverb

When an LR is a preposition, it governs the case of its relatum; we say that it has rection or is rectional. Accordingly, we say that a preverb has rection and governs its relatum when this depends on the verbum compositum in the case which it would have to take if the preverb were a preposition. Since every Latin preposition takes its complement either in the accusative or in the ablative, we will subdivide the discussion according to these two cases.

4.4.1. The relatum is in the ablative

The prepositions taking the ablative are: *ab*, *cum*, *de*, *ex*, *in*, *prae*, *pro*, *sub*, *super* (and *se*). Here are examples of their rectional use as preverbs:

- (21) *Sceledre, manibus amisisti praedam.* (Pl. *Mi.* 457)
 (22) *ipse omnes copias castris eduxit* (Caes. *B.G.* 4,13,6)
 (23) *pacis nomine bellum involutum reformido.* (Cic. *Ph.* 7.6,19)

The frequency distribution of this construction is as follows:

frequent with *ab-*, *de-*, *ex-*, *pro-*;
 possible with *in-*;
 almost never with *com-*, *sub-* (only with transitive verbs), *super-*;
 never with *prae-*.

From this we may conclude that the only ablative regularly governed by preverbs is the separativus, the locativus being much more restricted. This corresponds to the general distribution of the ablative outside preverb syntax. One may therefore ask whether the ablative is really strictly

governed by the preverb, or whether the adjunction of the *relatum* of the preverb to the *verbum compositum* is not rather based, in part at least, on the meaning of the ablative.

4.4.2. *The relatum is in the accusative*

The prepositions taking the accusative are: *ad, ante, circum, in, inter, ob, per, post, praeter, sub, super* and *trans*. The preverbs *inter-* and *post-* can govern the accusative only if the *verbum simplex* is intransitive, normally a verb of the lexical field “go”. Here are some examples:

(24) *Aliquot me adierunt* (Ter. *And.* 534)

(25) *Quid me circumsisistis?* (Pl. *Men.* 998)

(26) *nonnulli ... fossam transire et maceriam transcendere conantur.* (Caes. *B. G.* 7,70,5)

Preverbs governing the accusative on a transitive *verbum simplex* may be seen in the following examples:

(27) *Eho istum, puere, circumduce hasce aedis et conclavia!* (Pl. *Mo.* 843)

(28) *flumen Axonam ... exercitum traducere maturavit* (Caes. *B. G.* 2,5,4)

This construction is, however, extremely rare. This restriction suppresses the double accusative which will appear in such constructions, and this seems to be the *ratio essendi* of the restriction. Support for this hypothesis comes from the fact that in none of the other cases where a preverb on a transitive simplex is permitted to govern the accusative does a double accusative appear. At least two types of transitive verbs are relevant here:

4.4.2.1. *Transitive verba composita with per-*

Consider the *verba composita* derived from intransitive *simplicia*, as in (24) – (26). Their subject is identical to the *locatum*, and their object identical to the *relatum* of their preverb. This same situation holds true also with at least one *compositum* derived from a transitive verb, namely *perquiro*: if *x perquirat y*, then *x per-* *y* (though it is not true that *x quaerit y*). The situation is minimally different in *x perlegit y* and *x perficit y*: here the same situation holds true for the simplex (*x legit y*, *x facit y*), but there is no *locatum* for *per-*: ? *per-* *y*. Now if we start from the fact that the object of the simplex is identical to the *relatum* of *per-*, we have a model for further derivation of *verba composita* such as *perfringo*, *perrumpo*. For these, the same relations hold as for *perlego* above; however, in addition to these, an instrument may be used with the latter. This leads us to a last subtype where the instrument which can be used functions as the *locatum* of *per-*. Consider *perforo*: if *z perforat y* with *x*, then *z forat y* (with *x*), and *x per-* *y*. The same relations hold for *pertundo* and *percutio* (if we disregard the lack of a simplex for the latter). This is the first type of derivation from transitive *simplicia* with preverbs governing the accusative without a double accusative emerging from this.

4.4.2.2. *Verba composita of affection*

Affection here means that the subject of the *verbum compositum* affects the object with something (cf. *afficio* in the first example below). This type is semantically closely related to the

last subtype of the preceding paragraph, but not dependent on a particular preverb. Observe the following examples:

(29) Quaecumque afficiet tali medicamine vultum (Ov. *Med.* 67)

(30) [postes] sunt inducti pice (Pl. *Mo.* 4827)

(31) aedīs venalīs hasce inscribit litteris. (Pl. *Tri.* 168)

(32) sagittā Cupido cor meum transfixit. (Pl. *Pe.* 27)

All of these constructions conform to the formula: ‘z affects object y with object (instrument) x, and x LR y’; i.e. the locatum of the preverb appears in the ablativus instrumentalis, and the relatum becomes the object of the verbum compositum.

Even in this case, part II of our rule for the syntactic function of the locatum of a preverb, which says that the locatum is the direct object of a transitive simplex, remains true. This can be shown when the simplex can be used, together with the corresponding preposition, in a paraphrase of the construction; then at least some of the simplicia take the locatum of the preverb as their direct object. Thus: “*facio*” *medicamen ad vultum, duco picem in postes, scribo litteras in aedes* and *figo sagittam trans cor*. We will see in the next section that it is possible to construe the locatum as the direct object even with some of the composita; but then the relatum is not in the accusative.

If the locatum were the direct object of the verbum compositum here, and if, at the same time, the relatum were constructed rectionally, we would have double accusative with these verbs. The hypothesis introduced above says that this should be avoided. This can be achieved in two ways: Either the preverb must not take its relatum rectionally. Then this is adjoined with a preposition or in the dative (see §4.5). Or we must ignore the fact that the locatum is the object of the simplex and rather pay attention to the fact that it is an instrument in the activity designated by the compositum. Then the locatum is adjoined in the ablative. Each of the verbs in (29) – (32) yields to one of the alternatives; some even admit of both.

The evidence of the transitive verba composita derived from intransitive simplicia (type *adeo*) and of the verba composita of affection shows that the rule for the syntactic function of the locatum has to refer to the verbum simplex and not to the compositum. This has been taken into account in the above formulation (§3). We only need the following supplement to part II of the rule:

If the relatum of the preverb is the object of the verbum compositum, then the locatum is either in the ablative or not adjoinable.

The first of the alternatives refers to the type *afficio*, the second to the type *perlego*. It is understood that in the construction with double accusative (type *traduco*), the relatum is not the direct object of the compositum.

More than half of the Latin prepositions take the accusative. If rectional use of prepositions as preverbs were the rule, conflicts such as those analyzed above would arise with most of the transitive verbs in preverbation. Instead, the verba composita of affection are the only type where the rection of the preverb prevails over that of the simplex. What is immeasurably more common is that the rection of the verb prevails and that the preverb has no rection at all. This will also be seen in the next section. The typical role of a preverb does not consist in changing the argument structure or even the transitivity of a verb, but in bringing the local specifications expressed by certain LRs nearer to the verb. This is also true when a preverb is allowed to govern the ablative. Change of the transitivity occurs in a moderately regular way only in one case, namely when a preverb governing

the accusative is attached to an intransitive simplex (type *adeo*). In contradistinction to the type *traduco* (transitive simplex), here the relatum of the preverb really becomes the direct object of the verb, as is proven by passivization:

(33) *cum neque praetores diebus aliquot adiri possent* (Cic. *Q. fr.* 1,2,15)

Without playing down the transitivity-altering force of the preverb in this type, we may state that it occurs almost exclusively with verbs of the lexical field “go” and that this use of the accusative can be naturally explained as a grammaticalization of the *accusativus directionis* commonly taken by such verbs.

4.5. *The relatum is in the dative*

There are some preverbs whose relatum is freely adjoined in the dative. These are *ante-*, *prae-* and *post-*; *in-* and *sub-*; *inter-* and *ob-*. Examples are:

- (34) (a) *virtute regi Agathocli antecesseris* (Pl. *Ps.* 532)
 (b) *bonum antepenam prandium pransoribus* (Pl. *Men.* 274)
- (35) (a) *Aiax in silva ... gladio incubuit*. (Auct. *Her.* 1,11,18)
 (b) *Hannibal ... quemque iussit ... foribus nomen suum inscribere* (Liv. 25,10,8)

For some verbs, e.g. *succedo*, this is practically the only construction.

For some preverbs, there is a restriction on dative-adjunction of the relatum to intransitive verbs. Thus, the relatum of *ad-*, *com-* and *super-* is freely taken in the dative by transitive verbs, but seldom or not at all by intransitive ones. Similarly, there are rare examples of transitive *verba composita* with *circum-* governing the dative but no such intransitive verb. We might suppose that this is connected with the avoidance of the double accusative discussed in the preceding section. *Ad-*, *circum-* and *super-* freely govern an accusative relatum if prefixed to intransitive *simplicia*, as we have seen. Their taking the dative with transitive *simplicia* seems to be interpretable as one of the alternatives to avoid the double accusative. This is further corroborated by the following evidence:

Some preverbs never or almost never have their relatum adjoined in the dative: *ab-*, *de-*, *ex-*, *pro-*; *per-*, *praeter-*, and *trans-*. Here we note again the tendency of *ab-*, *de-*, *ex-* and *pro-* to behave alike. It is remarkable that just those preverbs most intimately associated with the ablative most bluntly reject the dative. Again, on the basis of the double accusative hypothesis, we do not expect these to take the dative. *Per-*, *praeter-* and *trans-*, on the other hand, either (and relatively seldom) take their relatum in the accusative (*per-* may also be duplicated), or the adjunction of the relatum is not grammaticalized at all, which means that it remains implicit or is couched in an adverbial phrase.

It must be emphasized that the construction with the relatum of the preverb in the dative does not stand apart from the others, but is tightly integrated into the overall preverb syntax. Many *verba composita* take the relatum either in the dative or by means of duplication (e.g. *inscribo*). Special attention should be drawn to the quasi-transformational relation, to be found with several verbs, which exists between the construction ‘locatum in the accusative – relatum in the dative’, as evidenced by (34)(b) and (35)(b), and the construction ‘locatum in the ablative – relatum in the

accusative', as evidenced by the *verba composita* of affection in (29) – (32). Not all of the verbs of affection allow the transformation; observe, however, the close parallelism in the pair (31)/(35)(b).

The frequency and even regularity of the dative expressing the *relatum* of certain preverbs is difficult to account for. One might be inclined to suppose that if the *relatum* of a preverb is adjoined to the *verbum compositum* by means of a mere case, i.e. without an intervening preposition, then it would be most natural for it to appear in the case which the prepositional counterpart of the preverb governs. This is evidently not so. Not only does the rection of the preposition not prevail; what is more, it is totally irrelevant for the dative-rection of the *relatum* whether the accusative or the ablative is associated with the preverb (as a preposition). The dative is equally frequent with *ante-* (acc.) and *prae-* (abl.), and it accompanies *illabor* and *succedo* as well as *incubo* and *subiaceo*, although the prepositional counterpart with the *simplicia* of the former two would govern the accusative and with the latter two, the ablative. From this it must be concluded that the rection of the preposition is, with a large group of preverbs at least, irrelevant for the *verbum compositum*. It is not the preposition that is prefixed to the verb, but rather an LR which has two phenotypes: one as a preposition, which has a rection, and one as a preverb, which mostly has no rection, namely in every case except the one discussed in §4.4.

We arrive here at a conclusion already touched upon at the end of §4.4. The normal situation in preverbatation is the following: There is a verb which contracts relations with a subject and one or more complements. And there is an LR which contracts one relation with a *locatum* and one with a *relatum*. If the LR is prefixed to the verb, the *locatum* is identified with one of the arguments of the verb according to the rule of the syntactic function of the *locatum*. But the other open slot of the preverb, its *relatum*, is normally added (with the exceptions noted in the preceding sections) to the case-frame of the verb. The preverb is not a preposition; so the argument occupying this slot is not normally subject to case-rection. The open slot is semantically there, but syntactically underspecified. This is why there are so many different possibilities to adjoin the *relatum* to the *verbum compositum*. The accusative and the ablative are among these possibilities. However, as we have seen in §4.4, their use is subject to certain constraints; they are often not the appropriate cases. Exempting the genitive from the adverbial cases, what remains is the dative. Most of the examples show that this use is an extension of its proper function, which is to express an object indirectly participating in an action or process.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, let me briefly comment on the absolute hypothesis and on the relation between the preverb and the preposition.

5.1. *The absolute hypothesis*

In §3 we saw that the *locatum* of a preverb of a *verbum compositum* is regularly identified with the absolute argument of the *verbum simplex*. In §4.2– 4.5 the *relatum* was seen to emerge as an oblique argument of the *compositum*, sometimes being identified with an oblique argument of the *simplex*. Furthermore, in §4.1, which dealt with the implicit *relatum*, we saw that it may relate back to the subject of a transitive verb. In an ergative system, this would be an oblique syntactic function, too. In view of this, it might seem more appropriate not to treat the *relatum* identified with the

transitive subject as an instance of the implicit *relatum*. We could then strengthen the absolutive hypothesis by saying that the *locatum* of a preverb is identified with the absolutive argument of the *verbum simplex*, and its *relatum* becomes one of the arguments which in an ergative system are oblique.

Though this tends to be empirically true, attention must be drawn to two sorts of exceptions:

1. The *relatum* may perhaps be identified with the subject of an intransitive simplex in some cases such as *procumbo*, lit. “to fall in front of oneself”.
2. The *relatum* is identified with the object of a transitive simplex in several *verba composita* with *per-* as discussed in §4.4.2.1.

As long as such exceptions are not explained, we can only maintain the first half of the absolutive hypothesis, which says that the intransitive subject and the direct object are treated alike, and leave its second half, which says the transitive subject is treated alike with other oblique syntactic functions, for further investigation.

More evidence for a syntactic function ‘absolutive’ in Latin could probably be found in nominalization: both the subject of the intransitive and the object of the transitive verb appear in the genitive – *subjectivus* and *objectivus*, respectively –, if the verb is nominalized. However, a *genitivus subjectivus* related to the subject of a transitive verb seems to be subject to special constraints (pace Kühner/Stegmann 1962, I:413); this occurs with some frequency only if a *genitivus objectivus* is also there. Thus, *occisio Caesaris* would almost always mean that someone killed Caesar, not that Caesar killed someone. Evidence of a more semantic nature might be found in such lexical pairs as *egeo* – *privo* or *abundo* – *dono* (as suggested to me by Harm Pinkster), whose second members might be described as having an ergative in addition to the absolutive (and the other oblique case) present in both members. However, this evidence can be appreciated only when we have more precise knowledge about causative constructions in ergative and accusative systems.

5. 2. *The function of preverbs*

Preverb and preposition are not functionally equivalent; *x adit y* and *x it ad y* are not synonymous; there is no regular transformational relationship between the two constructions. Preverbatation belongs primarily to word-formation and only secondarily to syntax. Prepositions are rectional, preverbs are generally not, apart from the cases discussed in §4.4. Therefore, preverbs do not affect the valency of a verb in a regular way, apart from the subregularities analyzed. If we regard adjuncts joined to the verb by a preposition as belonging to the case-frame in a wider sense, then preverbatation does not even enrich the case-frame of a verb. At least, it does not make local relations syntactically accessible that would have been inaccessible before. On the contrary, if we consider the verbs of motion and transport centrally involved in preverbatation, e.g. *duco*, a source and a goal is often already implicit in the meaning of the simplex. What the preverb does, e.g. in *educo* or *adduco*, is to make this local relation an expressed part of the meaning of the verb. Thereby, the *relata* of the local relations involved move nearer to the verb and become adjoinable with a mere case, whereas if the preverb were not there, they would have to be adjoined by a preposition.

We might mention here the hypothesis that *relata* of preverbs are always verbal complements, whereas *relata* of prepositions may be complements or adjuncts (see Horrocks 1980: 201-204). But this syntactic consequence is epiphenomenal. We have seen that it is very common (after Cicero with decreasing frequency) that the *relatum* of a preverb is adjoined by a preposition, in particular by duplication. The preverb does not make the preposition superfluous, neither paradigmatically nor even syntagmatically.

We might rather take recourse to a semantic hypothesis and conceive of the argument structure or case-frame of a verb as composed of various concentric ranges (cf. Pinkster 1972:91-101). The innermost would be the verb with its absolutive argument; the next would include the nearest oblique arguments and might be called the nucleus. Adding to this other oblique arguments which might be said to belong to the periphery, we come to the next range which is the center; and adding to this certain elements such as sentence modals, we arrive at the sentence level. We might then say that the *relata* of prepositions tend to belong to the periphery, but those of preverbs tend to belong to the nucleus. Similar considerations apply to the *locatum*. Additional syntactic justification of this semantically-based hypothesis would be called for.

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