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EXPRESSIONS TO INDICATE GOAL OF MOTION IN THE COLLOQUIAL LATIN OF
THE EARLY EMPIRE

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Our knowledge of Vulgar Latin derives from two sources. First there are reconstructions of hypothetical forms as indicated by the comparison of the surviving Romance languages. Next are the aberrations from the Classical standard which appear in literary works and inscriptions ostensibly written in Classical Latin. The former source can be illuminating in the areas of lexicon and phonology but cannot say much about the syntax of case usage since, with the partial exception of Romanian, the Romance languages have gone over from the synthetic case usage of Classical Latin to the analytical use of word order for nominal syntax. The traces of the spoken language which surface in literary works are inherently difficult to assess. Naturally anyone producing a literary composition would have been exposed to the Classical language in his education and the interaction of the “substratum” of Vulgar Latin and the learned speech of the educated, which itself seems to have undergone an independent development of its own from Classical Latin, renders the solecisms of literary works treacherous evidence for the natural development of the non-literary spoken language.¹ Furthermore, the written works of the “degenerate” Vulgar Latin tend to be rather late, mostly dating from the period when the collapse of the synthetic system of Classical Latin was far advanced.² The “errors” of documents written during the Early Empire by and for Romans of more moderate station both on papyrus and stone are more likely to give us insight into the kind of Latin spoken among the common people. Furthermore, documents with noteworthy deviations from the Classical standard often date to a much earlier period than comparable literary works.³ Documentary evidence, however, is not without its own difficulties. Most of it consists of simple texts like funerary inscriptions which are formulaic in character. Hence the deviations are mainly of a phonological nature. Information on syntax is often meager, largely restricted to simple matters like changes or confusions in the cases governed by prepositions. In addition, texts like funerary inscriptions usually have no explicit indications of date and can only be broadly dated on the basis of general criteria like the presence of a *hedera* or the style of writing. In this context, the phenomenon that I will investigate in this paper is particularly useful: it is a small detail of case usage reflected in a few unusual documents which can be dated with some precision. These documents, mostly of a military character, can also be located to particular areas of the Empire. In addition, they are also important in that data can be gleaned from them regarding the status and, sometimes, the origin of the parties concerned. This

* I use the following abbreviations:

CEL: P. Cugusi, *Corpus epistularum Latinarum papyris tabulis ostracis servatarum* (1992)

H-S: J. B. Hofmann – Anton Szantyr, *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik* (1965)

K-S: Rafael Kühner – Carl Stegmann, *Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache: Satzlehre*³

VLWT: A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, *Vindolanda: The Latin Writing-Tablets* (1983)

VWT: A. K. Bowman and J. D. Thomas, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets (Tabulae Vindolandenses II)* (1994).

¹ There is the additional difficulty of distinguishing the aberrations that can be ascribed to the author from the vagaries to which the text is subject in its manuscript tradition.

² The miserable efforts of the writers of the *Tablettes Albertini* to manipulate simple, fixed formulae seem to indicate that the use of cases was in an advanced state of obsolescence, if not total desuetude, in North Africa in the last years of the fifth century; see *Tablettes Albertini; acts privés de l'époque vandale, fin du v. siècle* (1952).

³ While there is much evidence in late antique and Christian texts for the changes in usage that I am going to discuss, I have deliberately chosen not to discuss this late evidence. While it is true those later examples can ultimately be attributed to the influence of the colloquial language, it is always difficult, when dealing with literary texts written in an idiom that is to some extent alien to the author, to determine to what extent deviations from earlier norms derive from the interference of contemporary usage or simply from the author's unfamiliarity with “proper” usage (apart from any considerations of the question as to whether the later literary language itself developed its own conventions distinct from both earlier and contemporary idiom). I will discuss the changes as they are attested in mostly documentary sources of the first two centuries after Christ and leave it to others to interpret the later attestations in light of the earlier evidence.

small grammatical point has interesting implications for the state of Latin as it was spoken in the first and second centuries of the Christian era.

To describe the goal or origin of motion in Classical Latin a prepositional phrase governing respectively the accusative or ablative is normally used. An exception to this usage presents itself when the goal is either the name of town or, quaintly, a small island.⁴ If such a place was the goal of motion the simple accusative (the terminal accusative) was used; if it was the origin, then the simple ablative was used. This appears to be the invariable usage of early and Classical Latin. Plautus always uses the terminal accusative with the names of Italian towns. Greek names appear with prepositions.⁵ This either reflects adherence to the Greek model Plautus was adapting or indicates that the Greek names were not fully assimilated. Cicero was taken to task by Atticus for using a preposition with the name Piraeus. In his own defence, Cicero cites other authorities for this usage. However, the issue in his mind is whether the deme of the Piraeus was to be considered an *oppidum*, as Atticus would have it, or a *locus*. The clear implication of Cicero's discussion is that if the place was a town there could be no question but that the preposition would be inadmissible.⁶ Suetonius informs us that Augustus used prepositions with the names of towns but characterizes this as merely a personal quirk of Augustus', indicative of his desire to achieve clarity, even to the detriment of style.⁷ Thus we see that by the end of the Republic, the usage of the terminal accusative was unquestionably adopted in educated speech.

Two changes, one of case usage, one of morphology, brought about a major development in this system in spoken the spoken Latin of the Early Empire. The first is the replacement of the terminal accusative with the simple locative case, itself a vestigial case preserved only for the names of towns (and a very restricted number of common nouns). The reason for the change is that the special use of the accusative with a verb already indicating motion is redundant. A similar change has occurred in English in which the adverbs of motion like "whither" and "thither" have been replaced by the static "where" and "there".⁸ The fourth century grammarian Donatus cites as a potential example of a solecism the response *Romae* to the question *quo pergitis?*⁹ As far as I can tell, the first example of this usage is

⁴ For a general treatment of the topic and earlier bibliography, see H-S 150-51.

The usage with only small islands doubtless arose from the situation of small Greek islands with the single *polis* or town present on them. The island was then equated with its political settlement, which in turn was treated like any other town in its syntax. A larger island like Lesbos with several *poleis* on it (not to mention *ἐκατόπολις Κρήτη!*) was considered simply as a geographical area and treated as such syntactically.

⁵ K-S § 88 Anm. 3; W. M. Lindsay, *Syntax of Plautus* (1907) 25–26 and C. E. Bennett, *Syntax of Early Latin* (1914) 235–38 provide little beyond unanalyzed collections of examples of usage.

⁶ *Venio ad "Piraeae", in quo magis reprehendus sum quod homo Romanus "Piraeae" scripserim, non "Piraeum" (sic enim omnes nostri locuti sunt), quam quod addiderim "in". Non enim hoc ut oppido praeposui sed ut loco. Et tamen Dionysius noster et qui est nobiscum Nicias Cous non rebatur oppidum esse Piraea. Sed de re videro. Nostrum quidem si est peccatum, in eo est quod non ut de oppido locutus sum, sed ut de loco, secutusque sum non dico Caecilium, "Mane ut ex portu in Piraeum", (malus enim auctor Latinitatis est), sed Terentium cuius fabellae propter elegantiam sermonis putabatur a C. Laelio scribi, "Heri aliquot adolescentuli coimus in Piraeum", et idem, "Mercator hoc addebat, captam e Sunio". Quodsi δήμουσ oppida volumus esse, tam est oppidum Sunium quam Piraeus. Sed quoniam grammaticus es, si hoc mihi ζήτημα persolveris, magna me molestia liberaris (Att. 7.3.10).* One might note against Cicero's use of Terence (and for that matter Caecilius) as an *auctor* Plautus' anomalous practice with the names of Greek cities.

⁷ *Praecipuamque curam duxit sensum animi quam apertissime exprimere. Quod quo facilius efficeret aut necubi lectorem vel auditorem obturbaret ac moraretur, neque praepositiones urbibus addere neque coniunctiones saepius iterare dubitavit, quae detractae afferunt aliquid obscuritatis, etsi gratiam augment (Aug. 86.1).*

⁸ It is interesting to note that the old opposition of motion versus stasis has been restored in some varieties of English in which "where" is retained for motion and a new adverb "where . . . at" has been created for the static: e.g., "Where are you at?" On the other hand, one can also hear "Where are you going to?"

⁹ . . . *multi errant qui putant etiam in una parte orationis fieri soloecismum, si . . . interroganti quo pergamus respondeamus "Romae" (GL IV 393).* Donatus of course rejects this as an acceptable example of a solecism, but that is beside the present point (H-S 150).

found in Petronius' *Satyricon*: *forte dominus Capuae exierat* (62.1).¹⁰ This usage is attested at about the same time at Pompeii (see below p. 233). For the first declension, we next see it in the Terentianus archive. This archive is a collection of letters found in the Egyptian town of Karanis and relating to a certain Claudius Terentianus and his father, a Roman soldier stationed in that country.¹¹ The letters are dated to the early second century on the basis of orthography. In a letter written by Terentianus, who was trying to enlist in Alexandria, the form *Alexandrie* (i.e., *Alexandriae*) is used five times, four times with the verb *venire*, once with *exire*.¹² Clearly, the substandard form attested by Petronius was not an isolated occurrence peculiar to the likes of a Trimalchio but indicative of a wide-spread usage.

In the second declension, the syntactical shift was combined with a morphological one. We begin with the epitaph of a scribe of the Imperial fleet stationed in Misenum:

D. M. L. Calpurnio Rufo scribae cl(assis) pr(aetoriae) Mis(enensis). Hic Epheso in munere missus defunctus est et ibi sarcophago marmoreo situs est. M. Sittius Africanus municeps et heres ad castra memoria<m> fecit. (ILS 2888)

The stone was found in the vicinity of Misenum, and serves as a cenotaph for the scribe. The sense of the phrase *Epheso in munere missus* clearly is that he was sent *to* Ephesus on duty: he died and was buried *ibi*.¹³ In normal Classical usage the form *Epheso* would be an ablative of origin. The usage in this cenotaph is explained by two shifts in usage. First, the use of the locative form with verbs of motion as already explained. With this is combined the replacement in the second declension of the fossilized locative form ending in *-i* with the regular ablative in *-o*. This shift is attested as early as Cato the Elder.¹⁴ Put together, these two changes lead to a usage which means exactly the opposite of what Classical syntax would lead one to expect.¹⁵

One can make reasonable conclusions about the date of the inscription and, perhaps, of the origin of the author. The title *praetoria* was granted to the fleet by Vespasian, and this provides a *terminus post quem* of A.D. 71. The absence of the additional epithet *pia vindex* supports a date before Caracalla.¹⁶ The Imperial fleet normally recruited its sailors from non-Romans, and at some time around the turn of

¹⁰ This is spoken in the *Cena* by the freedman Niceros. The *codex Parisiensis lat.* 7989, our sole source for this part of the *Cena*, has the form *Capuae*, which used to be emended into the Classical *Capuam*. Since the text of the *Cena* has several instances of *au > o*, perhaps the change *ae > e*, so common in the Terentianus corpus (see immediately following text), should be retained here.

¹¹ P. Mich. 467–72 (= *CEL* 141–42, 144–47).

¹² P. Mich. 471 (= *CEL* 146) 15 (*exire*), 22, 25, 33, 35. For an extensive treatment of the Latinity of this corpus, see J. N. Adams, *The Vulgar Latin of the Letters of Claudius Terentianus* (1977); for the use of the dative for goal of motion, see p. 38.

¹³ One could conceivably take *Epheso* only with *defunctus est*, interpreting *in munere missus* as an intervening unit, but it seems more natural to take *Epheso* with *missus*.

¹⁴ The following forms appear in *agr.* 135: . . . *Romae* . . . *Calibus et Menturnis* . . . *Venafro* . . . *Suessae et in Lucanis* . . . *Treblae, Albae, Romae* . . . *ex Venafro* . . . *Pompeis, Nolae, ad Rufi maceriam* . . . *Romae* . . . *Capuae, Nolae* . . . *Capuae* . . . *Suessae, Casino* . . . *Romae* . . .; see K–S § 88 Anm. 2.

¹⁵ In commenting recently on the stone John D'Arms (*Puteolana analecta: Seven Inscriptions from the G. de Criscio Collection in the Kelsey Museum, Puteoli* 9–10 [1985–86] pp. 41–78 at 77) notes that one would expect the accusative and cites Dessau's having listed the inscription under the heading *nomina urbium alio casu posita quam quo debuerunt* (*ILS* 3.2, p. 87). An unattributed translation in *Michigan Today* (Vol. 17, No. 4 [Dec. 1985]) 3 shows the confusion that results from attempting to interpret *Epheso* in terms of Classical syntax: "He was sent here on detachment from Ephesus, died and was interred there . . ." Here one has the bizarre situation that it was thought worth mentioning that a member of the fleet normally stationed at Misenum is sent on duty *from* Ephesus *to* Misenum – and is then transported back to Ephesus for burial! Furthermore, this involves taking *hic* as a mistake for the adverb *huc*. Instead the nominative of *hic*, *haec*, *hoc* is very commonly used in inscriptions as a resumptive pronoun to mark the transition to a complete sentence after an initial dedication in the dative, and indicatives the dedicatee's role in that complete sentence. Hence *hic* is nominative singular and refers to L. Calpurnius Rufus. One might also note that *situs est* means "is buried", not "was buried".

¹⁶ The title was granted by Caracalla and was often but not always used thereafter; see C. G. Starr, *The Roman Imperial Navy*² (1960) 206 n. 91.

the second century, recruits received the right to adopt the *tria nomina* of Roman citizens immediately upon entry, even though they received citizenship only upon completion of twenty-six years' service. The first datable example of this practice comes from the year 129.¹⁷ The scribe's stone is thus most likely of second-century vintage. This conclusion is supported by the observation that marble sarcophagi became common under Hadrian.¹⁸ The *nomen* Sittius was common only around Cirta in Numidia, site of a settlement for the soldiers of the Caesarian *condottiere* P. Sittius.¹⁹ The erector of the scribe's epitaph is thus most likely to have come from Numidia.²⁰ The term *municeps* is doubtless non-technical and the two men were peregrine *incolae* rather than citizens of this Caesarian colony. These men seem to have been rather unusual recruits. Normally, the navy recruited in the more backward and un-Romanized areas of the Empire like Thrace, Cilicia and Sardinia.²¹ The choice of the *nomen* Sittius must have been made by the recruit himself and shows he was familiar with Roman usage in his *patria* (the *cognomen* Africanus points in the same direction).²² Calpurnius is likewise common in Numidia. This suggests a certain degree of Romanization. The fact that Calpurnius became a scribe suggests that he was not only familiar with Latin but even literate before entry into the fleet.²³ Although one cannot say the same of Sittius with any certainty, the two men seem to have been of a common origin, and in any case the non-formulaic content of the inscription is likely to have been composed by Sittius himself. It is thus reasonable to conclude that in the late-first or second century the usage of the locative ablative to indicate the goal of motion was current either in North Africa or in the military patois of the Misensian fleet.

Another example of this usage is preserved in the epitaph of another common soldier, who played a notable, if small, rôle in history. This inscription preserves the career of Ti. Claudius Maximus, a legionary cavalryman of the *legio vii Claudia pia fidelis* in the late-first and early-second century.²⁴ Among many other distinctions, Maximus notes a promotion to the rank of *decurio* granted by Trajan during the Dacian War *quod cepisset Decebalu(m) et caput eius pertulisset ei Ranisstoru*. He captured the fleeing Dacian king and brought his head to Trajan in the otherwise unknown town Ranisstorum. Here we again have the same anomalous (from the Classical point of view) case and form. The stone was erected during Maximus' lifetime ([*s(e)*] *v(ivo)*), and in light of its remarkable, non-formulaic content was probably composed by Maximus himself. The first dated award that he mentions was made by Domitian during his *bellum Dacicum*, that is, in the late 80s. Since Maximus remained a simple *equus* all the way until his exploit with Decebalus more than fifteen years later in 105, the award by Domitian probably came at the start of Maximus' career. This would place his likely date of birth in the late 60s. The nomenclature Ti. Claudius indicates that an ancestor received citizenship under Claudius

¹⁷ For the terms of sailors' service, see M. Reddé, *Mare nostrum* (1986) 525–26, Starr (n. 15) 71–73. F. Heintz, A Domitianic Fleet Diploma, *ZPE* 120 (1998) 250–52 has recently argued that a small fragment of a diploma attests the use of the *tria nomina* in early 85. The argument is good, but nonetheless tenuous given the exiguous evidence (e.g., the dating is based on very common cognomina preserved for the witnesses in this fragment and attested in dipomata of the Domitianic period).

¹⁸ D'Arms (n. 14) 76.

¹⁹ P. Sittius came from Nuceria, where the name is not very common, as the index to *CIL* 10 indicates.

²⁰ D'Arms (n. 14) 78.

²¹ See the chart in Starr (n. 15) 75, where only 10 of the 213 sailors for the period of our inscription come from Africa.

²² BGU 423, a letter back home from an Egyptian recruit, indicates that he received his Roman name when he reported to the fleet in Misenum. There is no indication of who gave him the name, but the choice (Antonius Maximus) suggests little imagination.

²³ For an amusing letter in which a young recruit describes his importuning a governor to give him a position as scribe upon entry into the army, see P. Mich. 8.466. It would seem that the Roman military received sufficient numbers of literate recruits not to have to train them itself. For the institutional use of writing in the Roman military, see W.V. Harris *Ancient Literacy* (1989) 217–18, for the literacy of the soldiery, 253–55.

²⁴ Published by P. Speidel, *JRS* 60 (1970) 142–53 (= *Roman Army Studies* [1984] 173–84). Speidel makes no comment on the syntax of *Ranisstoru*, the form in question.

or Nero. The most likely cause is for military service. The man is more probably Maximus' father, though his grandfather is also possible. Since the *legio vii Claudia* was stationed since the 50s in Moesia, Maximus probably grew up in the Balkans.²⁵ While in the case of the sailor's epitaph, there was doubt as to whether the form in *-o* came from Numidia or was associated with military life, there can be no doubt about Maximus' case. Whether or not he was directly involved in the composition of the inscription (and it is hard to think he was not), the usage here is associated with the speech of the Roman inhabitants of the Balkans in the late first to early second centuries.

Our next example concerns not so much a direct attestation of the new usage as a deformation in more regular Latin caused by interference from a speaker's use of the newer construction. So-called military diplomas are documents attesting the award of citizenship to non-Roman soldiers upon honorable discharge after completion of the requisite number of years of service.²⁶ These documents partially transcribe bronze tablets erected on the Capitol which listed units whose veterans were granted discharge and the names of those discharged; the general heading is copied along with the name of the individual soldier (and family members if included in the grant) for whom the document was intended. Two such documents record the discharge of veterans of the fleet at Misenum who took part in a colony sent to Paestum. One diploma (*CIL* 16.15) unobjectionably characterizes those awarded discharge as *qui... sunt deducti Paestum*. The other (*CIL* 16.13) repeats the same formula, but in place of *Paestum* we find the anomalous form *Paesti*. It would seem that whoever transcribed this document partially converted it into his normal idiom, using his own syntax but with the Classical form. Presumably, he would naturally have said *Paesto* and has replaced the Classical terminal accusative with the colloquial locative case, but instead of using the colloquial locative in *-o* he has replaced it with the Classical form in *-i*. The two diplomata are copies of the same original.²⁷ This original must have had the heading preserved at the start of each diploma (lines 1–10), followed by a long series of the names of the recipients. Accordingly, the variation *Paestum/Paesti* must have been introduced at the point of transcription. It is far more likely that the form *Paesti* was a garbling on the part of the transcriber rather than that *Paestum* was the correction of an error on the original.²⁸ In any case, it is clear that in the year A.D. 71 the use of second declension forms in *-o* to represent the terminal accusative of Classical prose was such a prominent feature of the idiom of a scribe in Rome that it led him to deform the terminology of an official document.

We can see a similar phenomenon in a (doubly!) vulgar *graffito* from Pompeii: *Hic ego veni, futui, deinde redei domi* (*CIL* 4.2246). Once again, the Classical locative form in *-i* (*domi*) is used to indicate the goal of motion. One might speculate that the common adverbial usage of *domi* has led to the preservation of the historically correct and anomalous locative form and prevented its replacement with the more colloquial (and synchronically comprehensible) ablative/locative *domo*. Conceivably, it is just such a common form that has led to the peculiar deformation of *Paestum* to *Paesti* in the military diploma just discussed. On the other hand, it is still possible that both *Paesti* there and *domi* here are to be explained by a misguided attempt to introduce correct Classical morphology into the contemporary practice of employing the "locative/ablative" to indicate goal of motion. While it may seem a bit odd to

²⁵ Previously the unit was stationed in Dalmatia, see *RE* 12.1616–19 s.v. *legio*.

²⁶ These documents are conveniently collected in *CIL* 16; for more recent discoveries, see M. Roxan, *Roman Military Diplomas 1954–77* (1978) and *Roman Military Diplomas 1978–84* (1985).

²⁷ The document with the Classical form (*CIL* 16.15) lists its origin as *tab(ula) I pag<i>na V loco XI. Descriptum et recognitum ex tabula aenea quae fixa est Capitolio in podio parte exteriore arae gentis Ilu(iae) contr(a) Lib(eri) patris*; the other (*CIL* 16.13) as *Descriptum et recognitum ex tabula aenea quae fixa est Romae in Capitolio ad aram gentis Iuliae in podio parte exteriore tab(ula) I*. Both thus derive from the first tablet.

²⁸ It is noteworthy in this regard that while the diploma with *Paesti* also has the form *in classe Misenense* (l. 3), the diploma with classical *Paestum* likewise has the classical form *Misenensi*. It seems far more likely that the copy made for the centurion Hezbenus the son of Dulazenus and his sons Sappa(eus) and Doles had defects of classical Latinity introduced into it rather than that an official document, ostentatiously displayed on the Capitol, should have been drawn up in this clearly subliterary idiom, which the transcriber of *CIL* 16.15 then would have had to restore to the expected Classical usage.

have such a vulgar statement as that of the Pompeian *graffito* “jazzed up” through the attempt to make it seem more Classical in expression, nonetheless the very fact that its author was able to scratch it idly on the wall of the bordello of his choice indicates that he was a man of some education, and it is by no means impossible that even in such a setting he, like the scribe of the military diploma, attempted to couch his colloquial thoughts in a higher sounding register.

Further evidence for the use of the “locative” for goal of motion comes from some recently discovered British texts. These are the fragmentary remains of wooden tablets used for correspondence at Vindolanda, a fort in northern Britain. The remains owe their preservation to favorable soil conditions. Most tablets date to the period *ca.* 95–105.²⁹ In these tablets the locatival ablative is used in addresses to indicate the area where the letter is to be delivered. This usage is properly explained by the editors. However, this mode of expression is also used in full sentences to indicate the goal of motion, and this usage of the “locative” has been misunderstood in discussion of the texts.³⁰ The evidence collected above will help put this usage in the broader context of the development of colloquial Latin throughout the empire. What interests us at present is the use of locatival expressions to indicate the goal of motion, but a review of the locatives/ablatives in the addresses is necessary before we go on to consider the expressions for motion.

These addresses appear without any verb. The addressee’s name is given in the dative and along with it appears a town name in a case of locatival significance. The editors of *VWT* have collected a great deal of evidence for the locative/ablative in addresses. From addresses on stylus tablets, we have *Vindolande* (inv. no. 689, 1022), *Coris* (inv. no. 851, *Vinouis* (inv. 851), *Cataractonio* (836) and *Eburaci* (inv. n. 575). On wooden tablets we have *Londini* (310.21–5) and *Coris* (312.13). By Classical standards, one would understand the forms in *-o* as ablatives indicating origin. However, while the form *Londini* could be an abbreviation for *Londinio*, there can be no doubt that *Eburaci* is a properly formed Classical locative in place of the ablative serving the function as *Cataractonio*. What then is the sense of these verbless addresses?

The answer was provided by wooden tablets found in modern Windisch in Switzerland. This site was the ancient Vindonissa, a major legionary base in Upper Germany. These tablets date from the first century after Christ.³¹ Here, one often finds the verb *dabis* plus the dative of the recipient.³² After the dative, one occasionally finds a town name in the ablative case.

CEL 31bis:

dabis .uco
Augusta
Treuirorum
c̄hmv

CEL 35

dabis Atico Luciano
qui est in Girece³³
Vindoinsa³⁴

²⁹ For the archaeological context and dating of these tablets, see *VWT* 17–20.

³⁰ *VWT* 43–44 discusses the matter at length; see also Adams, *The Language of the Vindolanda Writing Tablets: An Interim Report*, *JRS* 85 (1995) 108–09.

³¹ For the dating on the basis of the replacement of legions stationed there and for the assignment of the tablets to various periods, see *CEL* 2.31–32.

³² For a full listing of the forms of address, see *CEL* 2.33.

³³ The significance of *in Girece* is unclear; see commentary in *CEL* ad loc.

³⁴ This form, repeated in the next example and diverging from the form *Vindonissa* used in literary texts and most inscriptions, is to be retained; see commentary in *CEL* on 35.3.

CEL 37

dabis Vindoinsa . . .

In his commentary in *CEL*, P. Cugusi grants that in ns. 35 and 37 the ablative forms indicate “il luogo di destinazione” but asserts that in a number of other instances where no verb is present, including *CEL* 31bis, similar ablatives indicate “la località donde arriva la lettera, senza che, per brevità, sia indicato il nome del mittente”.³⁵ These instances are the following:

CEL 14

Tul(l)o Loucoru(m)
Albano medico

CEL 25

Verano
militi l(egionis) XIII
Vasione . . .

Now in *CEL* 25 one might expect that Vasio was the place of origin since the tablet was found in Vindonissa. However, *CEL* 14 was itself found not in Tullum Leucorum but in ancient Cingulae. Hence both were presumably received in those towns and later taken to the locations where they were found.

It is very hard to see what the point of indicating the origin but not the destination of a letter would have been. Hence, on the basis of the formula with *dabis* it is best to take the ablatives in the addresses of letters in which the verb is omitted as indicating the place at which the letter is to be delivered to the addressee. We have numerous examples of this from Britain. In *CEL* 87, a wooden tablet found in London, we find on the exterior:

Londinio
L.Ṽiṭa(lis?) ḁd S vac

The second line is rather uncertain. It does not seem to represent the recipient, as the letter begins *Rufus Callisuni salutem Epillico et omnibus contubernilibus*. In any case, *Londinio* would seem to indicate the destination of the letter.³⁶

Likewise *Vindolande* is also the correct Classical form (if not phonology), unlike the ablative in *CEL* 31bis.³⁷ The interpretation of these forms as the static location of delivery is clinched by *RIB* 2443.10: *Trimontio aut Luga[l]io*. Here the use of the disjunctive *aut* indicates clearly that the point of delivery and not that of origin is meant.³⁸

Thus what we have in these addresses is the morphological replacement of the Classical locative with the corresponding colloquial ablative, but otherwise the syntax is unobjectionable. These locative/ablative forms indicate the place *at* which the letter is to be delivered.

There is other evidence in the new British material for the use of ablatival forms of the second declension and of plurals to indicate the static location of an activity. In *VWT* 185 we have an account listing sums spent on particular days. On one day we have listings for expenses under the rubrics *Isurio* (23), *Çataractonio* (24) and *Vinouis* (26). These rubrics clearly indicate what was going on *at* these locations. A similar use appears in a complete sentence: *Coria que* [scil. *quae*] *scribis* | *esse Cataracto-*

³⁵ Ad *CEL* 14.1.

³⁶ In the relevant commentary in *CEL* Cugusi again prefers to explain the form as the origin but then admits the possibility that it indicates the destination.

³⁷ *VWT* 45 n. 27 suggests that in *CEL* 37 *Vindoinsa[e]* is to be read. This is certainly possible, though *CEL* 31bis and 35 indicate that the ablative could be used as a locative.

³⁸ As pointed out in *VWT* 45. Adams (n. 30) 109 also points out that Claudius Terentianus instructs his father to address a letter to him in *Liburna N[e]ptuni* (P. Mich. 8.467 [= *CEL* 141].25), though this evidence is not as decisive as Adams thinks, since the context within the address is not made clear.

nio, scribe | dentur mi . . . (VWT 343.15–17). Here the ablative *Cataractonio* is clearly standing in for the Classical locative. We have further attestation of the use of the ablative for the locative in three similar documents asking for military leave.

VWT 174

ṛ[ogo
 diḡ[num me habeas
 cui des commeatum
 Uḷucio

VWT 175

.....[.] ḡa[b]eas cui
 des commeatum
 Coris . . .

VWT 176

Buccus t . [
 rogo, domiṇe diḡnum
 me habeas cui des c[o]m=
 meatum p ṛ ṣo . . .

The form *Coris* in VWT 175 is clearly an ablative serving as a locative, and presumably the forms *Uḷucio* and *p ṛ ṣo* serve the same function.³⁹ For the first declension we have examples of the locative case: *domiṇi Brigae maṇ[serunt]* (VWT 190.c.38–39) and *.ṛa eram et Brigae maṇsuṛa* (VWT 292.c.2).

Now that we have seen clear evidence for the use of the ablative case of the second declension and plural to indicate the sense of the older locative, we can turn to the case usage to indicate the goal of motion in the Vindolanda texts. First, we do have evidence for the Classical terminal accusative. One very fragmentary tablet appears to preserve a possible instance: *Ṛomam petere . . .* (VWT 283.4). Since a *viaticum* is mentioned in this letter, a trip to Rome is presumably being mentioned. Here, however, the accusative is probably not terminal but the direct object of *petere*, which is really a transitive verb and not a verb of motion. On the other hand, there can be no doubt about the preservation of the Classical usage in another tablet: *ḡraṣ bene mane Vindo/landam veni . . .* (VWT 242.1–2). Whoever wrote this text clearly understood and used the proper Classical usage. Another writer seems, however, to have used the colloquial syntax with the ablative indicating goal of motion. In VWT 266 we read: *uolo ueniat ad me / Cōris et accipiat . . .* (1–2). Now it is true that one might take *Cōris* to be an ablative used in its Classical significance, the writer in that case wishing the person being spoken of to come from Coria. Evidence from demonstrable ablatival syntax, however, indicates that if “from” had been meant, a preposition would have been used.

If the ablative was used for the vestigial locative forms of Classical usage and if further this new locative/ablative was used to indicate the goal of motion, then the old syntax whereby the ablative indicated origin of motion was now thrown into confusion for much of the case system.⁴⁰ In the first declension the forms for “I come from Rome” and “I come to Rome” could still be distinguished: *Roma uenio* and *Romae uenio*. For the singular of the second declension and for all plurals, there would no longer be any formal distinction: *Puteolis/Brundisio uenio* could equally mean “I come from” or “I come to Puteoli/Brundisium”. Clearly, this situation could not subsist, since the same words could signify diametrically opposite situations. If the ablative in its new locatival signification was to be used to indicate goal of motion, then the obvious solution to the problem was to use a preposition to indicate the

³⁹ No town *Ulucium* is known: see VWT ad loc.

⁴⁰ Note the confusion that results from interpreting the inscription from Misenum in terms of Classical usage (see n. 14).

origin of motion. As early as the Cato passage cited to show the early switch to a locative in *-o* one finds the form *ex Venafro*.⁴¹ The Vindolanda tablets indicate that this was exactly the solution taken in the colloquial Latin of the late first century.

Ha[ec ti]bi a Vindolanda scribo⁴² (225.24–25).

. . . quos cum epistulis ad consularem n(ostrum) miseras a Bremetennaco⁴³ . . . (295.6).

. . . a Cordonoluis⁴⁴ amicus misit mihi ostria . . . (299.2–3).

It is noteworthy that in every instance the preposition *a* is used, never *de* or *ex*. This suggests a specialization of usage.⁴⁵ Certainly, there is no instance in the Vindolanda tablets of the ablative being used without a preposition to indicate origin of motion. Accordingly, it is best to assume that *ueniat . . . Coris* in *VWT* 266 indicates that the person should come “at” *Coria* and not “from” it.

In their discussion of the passage, the editors of *VWT* point to their own discussion of “the locative place-name in addresses”, but this is not particularly germane apart from the morphology. As we have seen, the addresses diverge from Classical usage in using the ablative in place of the locative for the second declension and for all plurals, but otherwise the usage would be unobjectionable to Cicero. The important point in *VWT* 266 is the syntax, which diverges from the Classical usage in expressing goal of motion. In his recent discussion of the Latinity of the Vindolanda tablets, J.N. Adams thinks that the form *Coris* is an ablative indicating origin.⁴⁶ This discussion is confused. He states that “The usual Latin idiom equivalent to Eng. ‘come to me at Coria’ was *veni ad me Coria*, ‘come to me to Coria’ . . . Moreover, *ad me* . . . + ablative (= ‘from X’) is a standard collocation . . .” But “standard” in the Classical usage of Cicero and Caesar. The many examples discussed above should indicate that the static case of location was used colloquially with verbs of motion to indicate goal. Adams dismisses the evidence for the use of *ab* to indicate origin in the Vindolanda tablets on the grounds that “it cannot be deduced from the limited evidence available that *ab* was absolutely invariable”. Perhaps not. But by that logic, nothing can be proven to be “absolutely” invariable since we do not have all instances. The fact that in all three of the instances that we do have of origin of motion in connection with town names the preposition *ab* is used is very suggestive, especially given the shift in usage of the ablative case already discussed. Adams claims that “If *Coris* is to be taken as locative, it could only be a highly unusual (perhaps unparalleled) adnominal locative attached to a pronoun.” That *ad me Coris* could ever mean “to me (being) at Coria” is, as Adams indicates, impossible. Furthermore, that Adams’ interpretation – “come to me from Coria” – is implausible can be seen if one simply considers the context. The writer of the letter is clearly indicating to the addressee that he wishes a third party to come meet him and to receive something. Though the loss of the rest of the document renders interpretation somewhat specu-

⁴¹ *agr.* 135 (quoted n. 13). One might compare the usage *Venafro*, which, to judge by the comparable forms like *Suessae* and *Romae*, must be locative. Since the verbs are only implicit in the passage, it is a little hard to see what is meant by the shift in usage. It is not readily apparent why one should get jars and pots at Alba and Rome, and tiles from Venafrum.

⁴² Adams (n. 30) 86–134 at 111 has a rather confused discussion of the usage of *scribo*: “Though the locative does occasionally occur in Classical Latin with *scribo*, do etc. of the point at which the letter was dispatched, the ablative was preferred.” But of course *scribo Romae* and *scribo Roma* mean entirely different things. In the former, the sense of *scribo* is literal, the locative indicating merely the location at which the letter was written. In the latter, *scribo* is equivalent to *litteras mitto* (see *OLD* s.v. 14b [“elliptical”]) and construes accordingly.

⁴³ The editors (*VLWT* 30) suggest that the prepositional phrase, after which the fragment breaks off, goes with the lost main verb of the main clause rather than with *miseras*. This does not affect the present argument.

⁴⁴ The nominative of this place is unknown: *VWT* ad loc.

⁴⁵ Note that in all the instances cited in K–S § 88.1 Anm. 3–4 for the restricted number of acceptable uses of the preposition with town names to indicate origin in Classical usage, *ab* is always used. Presumably, then, the colloquial usage was simply an generalization of the limited Classical usage.

⁴⁶ Adams (n.) 110–11.

lative, in such a context one would hardly specify where this third party is to start his journey but not the destination to which he is to go. Even if one were to assume that the author had already made his intended location clear, what is the point of specifying the origin of the journey? If the third party is already at Coria, the detail is otiose. If he is not, then there should be an injunction that he go there first. In any case, since in the Vindolanda tablets the concept of “motion from” is indicated in all three instances with a preposition, since in Classical Latin the desired sense of “come to me at” would be rendered with a terminal accusative, and since, finally, such terminal accusatives were as we have seen commonly replaced with the ablative/locative in the syntax of colloquial Latin, it is most reasonable to conclude that here too we have this usage.

Now that the broad expanse of the use of the “locative” case (whether in the form of the vestigial locative or of the ablative case) to indicate goal of motion has been established, it might legitimately be asked what case a Roman would have conceived forms like *Alexandriae* or *Epheso* to be. Could they not be dative? Certainly there is attestation of the dative being used to indicate the goal of motion. Such usage, however, seems to be a poetical outgrowth of certain uses of the standard use of the dative to indicate the person indirectly affected by the action of the verb. Cicero has the sentence *tendit ad vos virgo Vestalis manus supplices, easdem quas pro vobis diis immortalibus tendere consuevit* (*pro Font.* 48). Here the dative *diis immortalibus* appears to be completely parallel to *ad vos*. In this instance, the dative of the person affected by the extension of the hands overlaps with the prepositional phrase overtly indicating the person *towards* whom the hands are extended.⁴⁷ Caesar similarly has *matres familiae quae . . . Romanis manus tetenderunt* (*BG* 7.48.3). Virgil seems to mark a transition from such metaphorical usage of the dative to its full use as a indication of the goal of motion. He has a usage that is very similar to those already cited from prose: *caelo palmas cum voce tetendit* (*Aen.* 2.688). Here, *caelo* would seem to be metonymy for *diis immortalibus*. The shift in semantics from “to the gods” to “to heaven (where the gods live)” is not very hard to understand. Once again, the dative could simply be an extension of the indirect object. Yet on the basis of this, Virgil has the striking phrase *it clamor caelo* (*Aen.* 5.451). Here the sense is clearly one not simply of extending hands “in connection with the gods” but of literal motion towards and arrival at (the sound in question is that made by the contestants at Anchises’ funerary games). This phrase must have pleased Virgil, as he used it a second time in modified form (*it caelo clamorque virum clangorque tubarum* [*Aen.* 11.192]). One also finds a common extension of the dative of the indirect object in expressions involving death like *morti* or *leto dare*.⁴⁸ Here we presumably have a form of personification.⁴⁹ In Virgil one then finds a striking use in *caput orantis . . . deturbat . . . terrae* (*Aen.* 10.554–5). Here *terrae*, whatever its case, clearly indicates the ultimate place of repose for the severed head.

All such forms are fundamentally personifications, and their origin in the literary language can be traced back to the Augustan poets. Since Virgil quickly became one of the fundamental texts of Roman education, it is not surprising that his verbal affectations came to affect the speech of the educated. It is much less likely that such a source would have influenced the speech of the common people. In assessing Virgil’s effect on case usage it is well to bear in mind the judgment of that ancient literary critic, M. Agrippa, who remarked that Virgil’s perversity consisted in the use not of pretentious or unadorned

⁴⁷ See E. Löfstedt, *Syntactica* (1942) 187–93 for the contrary development whereby the directional *ad* plus accusative is used in place of the dative of the indirect object. Here we have the purely physical relationship being stressed in place of the more abstract connection indicated by the dative.

⁴⁸ For a full discussion of these terminal usages of the dative, see Löfstedt (n. 47) 180–82; K–S § 76.6 f.

⁴⁹ E.g., *Merc.* 472. One should note, however, the Plautine *ad mortem dare* (e.g., *Amph.* 809), which brings to mind the double construction of *manus tendere* in Cicero. In the Silver period one increasingly finds a personification of the dative case, which is used in instances where the earlier language would have used a preposition; cf. the comments of Walter Summers *Select Letters of Seneca* (1910) lvi–lvii on the “strain put on the dative of advantage . . . thanks to Seneca’s tendency to personify inanimate objects . . .”

vocabulary but of regular words and thereby escaped notice.⁵⁰ Thus, while the use of the dative to indicate goal of motion is adopted in the later literary language, it is hard to imagine this as either derived from popular usage or the cause of it. Furthermore, the error in the military diploma and the *graffito* at Pompeii is about the closest thing we are likely to have to a contemporary's interpretation of the form in *-o*. The replacement of the Classical terminal accusative with the Classical locative indicates that in their regular speech the men who introduced this error into texts conceived of themselves as normally construing verbs of motion with the locative. It would seem, then, that we should not assume that when in popular documents first declension forms in *-e* (*-ae*), second declension ones in *-o*, and plurals in *-is* are used to indicate the goal of motion, the poetical usage of the dative either reflected popular speech or filtered down into it. Instead, in these instances the locative is used colloquially to indicate this relationship, with the forms in *-o* providing a further deviation from Classical usage, this time in the sphere of morphology. These changes represent a natural development of the syntax and phonology of the Classical language as it was spoken by common people in the Early Empire rather than a perversity of usage derived from the Augustan poets.

Let us recapitulate the evidence for the extent of the use of the locative/ablative to indicate the goal of motion. We first find it in Petronius and at Pompeii, thus attesting for it among lower class speech in mid first-century Campania. Next we find it in the speech of the army stationed in the Balkans in the late first century. At the same time it is attested in the speech of the Roman army in Egypt around the early second century. It is next attested in the fleet at Misenum in the late first or second century. In this instance, the usage may be local, but could reflect the idiom of the dedicator, who came from Romanized Numidia. Finally, around A.D. 100 we have the usage attested in the army in Britain. Thus we see this usage extended throughout the empire in the century that is centered in the year A.D. 100.

These documents give a fleeting but valuable glance at a form of Latin not normally accessible to us, the popular spoken language of the Early Empire. We see a development of case usage not reflected in standard literary works. This new usage marks not a step on the road to the eventual dissolution of the use of cases and their replacement with analytical construction of the Romance languages, but a natural shift within the synthetic syntax of the cases. Since so many of the documents preserving this usage are associated with the Roman military, it is possible that a sort of Latin *κοινή* developed among the soldiery and that this usage was particularly characteristic of military speech.⁵¹ However, the attestation in Petronius and at Pompeii in a completely non-military context suggests that the usage was instead one characteristic of the common language in general. Furthermore, the fact that the evidence indicates the use of the new syntax in the Balkans, Italy, North Africa, Egypt and Britain speaks for the unity of spoken Latin throughout the Early Empire.

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⁵⁰ *A Maecenata eum suppositum appellabat novae cacozeliae repertorem, non tumidae nec exilis sed ex communibus verbis atque ideo latentis (vita Donati 44)*. This is presumably the context in which to interpret the notorious lines . . . *aegram nulli quondam flexere mariti | non Libyae, non ante Tyro* (*Aen.* 4.35–36). *Libyae* is a locative with the name of country, while *Tyro* is the ablative used in a locative sense with the name of a town. While the former usage was acceptable even in Republican prose (see K–S § 88.3), the latter reflects the sort of colloquialism discussed above. It is clear enough what the latter must mean (though commentators have been confused by regular Classical usage), though such usage must have seemed jarring in the diction of an epic.

⁵¹ Even if one might imagine that the frequent transfer of troops and units from one border to another could have facilitated the development of such a *κοινή*, the navy, a branch of service normally completely distinct from the army, would be unlikely to share in such a *lingua franca*.