Relative Absoluteness:
The Case of Participial Clauses in Latin

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The aim of this article is to reopen the investigation of the ablative absolute in Latin and to analyse this construction and its use from one angle, namely, the coreferentiality rules. The examples for analysis have been taken from the *Gallic Wars*. As has been noticed before, in several works, the use of the absolute construction in texts written by classical authors, such as Caesar or Cicero, allows us to formulate a rule concerning its coreferentiality. As far as the syntactical coreferentiality is concerned, the classical rule requires an absolute construction to be — unsurprisingly — absolute, i. e., non-coreferential. This rule seems to be increasingly ignored by later authors. However, a deeper analysis taking into account not only syntactical but also semantical coreferentiality shows that the absoluteness of the construction is not so absolute after all, even in classical Latin. The examples of such use of the *ablativus absolutus* may be seen as forerunners of the change that occurred between classical and late Latin. The author proposes a hypothesis that an independent but similar development of the use of absolute constructions in different languages may suggest that there is a kind of interlinguistic tendency to substitute nominal phrases for subordinate clauses, especially in spoken language.

Keywords: absolute constructions, coreferentiality, nominal phrase, conjunct participle.

1. Introduction

The evolution of participial clauses in Latin, from the classical to the late period, has been described by many scholars. Piera Molinelli, for example, has observed that in late Latin the participle acquired a new role: "as a verb, [it] governs a following object, […] as a preposition, it introduces a prepositional phrase" (Molinelli 2001, 483). She considers this as the effect of "a syntactic reanalysis". An important result of this reanalysis is the grammaticalization of some participles in the ablative. Italian *eccetto*, for example, derives from Latin *excepto* used with a noun or pronoun in the ablative. Classical *domine excepto* became *excepto dominus* or *excepto dominum* in late Latin texts and then produced a preposition in Romance. In this work, I propose that this syntactic reanalysis may be viewed as the breaking of the coreferentiality rules (or guidelines) and that some symptoms of this change may be found in classical texts.

I will also present a hypothesis that the use of participial constructions in Latin shares several specific features with the use of similar constructions in some modern languages, such as English, French, or Polish, even if the grammatical rules governing such use at first seem completely opposed. In both cases, participial constructions tend to be used as

finite subordinate clauses, even if this requires speakers to violate grammatical restrictions limiting their use.

2. Absolute constructions in Latin grammar

Among the many differences between classical and late Latin morpho-syntax, the use of absolute constructions has been brought to our attention by several scholars. Besides the emergence of new constructions, namely, the *accusativus absolutus* and *nominativus absolutus*, their relation to the main clause has also changed. Paolo Greco in his study on the participial construction in the work of Gregory of Tours, remarks that "the absoluteness" of the participial clauses was becoming less and less respected (Greco 2005, 20). This observation echoes the statement by Helttula, that "no rule any longer forbade the appearance of the NP (= subject) of a present participle ablative absolute as a constituent in the main clause, too. The NP of a past participle ablative absolute is even more often a constituent in the main clause" (Helttula 1987, 63).

In other words, what happened in late Latin was that participial clauses could replace subordinate clauses regardless of the corefentiality rules that may have been broken in the process. Therefore, in my opinion, what we are dealing with in late Latin texts is the breaking of coreferentiality rules.

However, was this change an abrupt one and completely unforeseen? I think not. Some irregularities in the use of the *ablativus absolutus* (henceforth AA) have already been observed in classical Latin. Robert Coleman, who outlined the development of the absolute constructions from PIE onwards, presents some observations concerning their evolution in Latin. He states that a participial construction was able to "assume a functional range equivalent to a whole variety of adverbial clauses" and "its subject lexeme could appear in another grammatical form elsewhere in the sentence" (Coleman 1989, 363). He exemplifies this statement with a passage from the *Gallic Wars*:

(1) *Omnesque et animo et opibus in id bellum incumberent. Coactis equitum VIII milibus et peditum circiter CCL haec in Aeduorum finibus recensebantur.* (*BGall.* 7. 76. 2–3)

"And all earnestly directed their energies and resources to that war, and collected eight thousand cavalry, and about two hundred and forty thousand infantry. These were reviewed in the country of the Aedui."[1]

In his paper *Les ablatifs absolus irréguliers: un nouvel examen du problème*, F. Hoff also investigated the relative absoluteness of AA. He states that the rules proposed by grammarians do not always correspond to attested linguistic material. He discusses some 'irregular' ablative absolutes, i. e., the cases where a participial clause presents a syntactical or semantical connection with the constituents of the superordinate clause. His study begins with the quoting of a general rule that, more or less, forbids coreference between the constituents of a participial clause and the constituents of a clause. Hoff then presents 16 examples of AA taken from the *Gallic Wars* that in some way or another do not respect the aforementioned rule. All 16 are present passive AA, and it is important to emphasize this fact. It is not surprising in itself because examples of the active AA are less frequent

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[1] All the excerpts from Caesar are accompanied by English translations from: McDevitte W. A. and Bohn. W. S. *Caesar's Gallic War*. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1869.

in Latin. However, when analysing the 'regular' or 'irregular' use of the construction, one should keep in mind that the two types are quite different. Among other differences, there is one that concerns the problem of coreferentiality. While in the active AA the nominal element is both the subject and agent of the action/state described by the participle, in the passive AA it is only the subject, while the agent is, in most cases, not explicitly indicated.

Moreover, while the active AA, in general, follows the rule quoted above, this is not the case with the passive AA. Hoff illustrates this very convincingly. He shows that the constituents of the passive construction quite often happen to be coreferential with that of the main clause. One of the examples he gives concerns the coreferentiality[2] between the implicit agent of a participial clause and the subject of a superordinate clause:

(2) *Quibus rebus (a Caesare) cognitis … ad hostium castra peruenit.* (*BGall.* 7.18.2)

"On learning these facts, he (…) reached the camp of the enemy."

Similar instances of coreferentiality can also be pointed out in other examples provided by Hoff.

3. Absolute constructions in Latin texts: statistics

Hoff also provides some statistics, although, as he acknowledges himself, these are not perfect, as in some cases more than one constituent of the main clause can be coreferential with the constituents of the participial clause. However, as imperfect as his statistics are, we can quote one point important for our analysis: "Le complément d'agent non-exprimé de l'AA constitue un contact avec le sujet de la phrase: env. 60 % des AA" (Hoff 1989, 407). This means that in 60 % of the occurrences taken from one book of the *Gallic Wars*, the implicit agent of the ablative absolute is coreferential with the subject of the superordinate clause.

Additional statistics are presented by M. Gayno. In her work, dedicated to the use of the participle in late Latin, she studies, among other subjects, the problem of coreferentiality: "Il s'agit ici d'étudier la coréférentialité du sujet du verbe de la proposition principale ou régissante et de l'agent du participe employé dans la construction absolue, c'est-à-dire les cas où le sujet du verbe principal, ou du verbe de la proposition dans laquelle est insérée la construction absolue, est l'agent du participe prédicat" (Gayno 2015, 201). As she is discussing the evolution of this coreferentiality, Gayno compares the use of absolute constructions in the works of classical authors, such as Caesar, Tacitus, or Livy, with its use in late Latin. Her data is interesting because, first of all, she isolates all occurrences of absolute constructions where the 'criterion of coreferentiality' is not applicable, i. e., all instances of active participles and present participles of deponent verbs. An analysis of the occurrences from the first book of the *Gallic Wars* of Caesar provided the following results: present participles of deponent verbs do not occur, and only 7.9 % of participial clauses contain an active present participle (Gayno 2015, 202).

It is worth noting how Gayno deals with ablative absolute constructions in which the participle, while formally passive, has an active meaning, being derived from a deponent verb. In such cases, Gayno considers that the criterion of coreferentiality is not applicable in the same way as it is in occurrences with the active present participle. She did not find any example of this type of construction in the first book, but her analysis of the whole

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[2] Although he does not call it coreferentiality but rather "contact par ellipse".

of the *Gallic Wars* does provide some examples of the *ablativus absolutus* with the passive participle of deponent verbs. For example:

(3) *ne tum quidem insecutis hostibus tertio die ad flumen Elaver pontes reficit eoque exercitum traducit.* (7, 53, 4)

"The enemy not even then pursuing us, on the third day he repaired the bridge over the river Allier, and led over his whole army."

In terms of her analysis of coreferentiality in occurrences of passive absolute constructions (semantically passive, containing the past participle of "normal" verbs), Gayno states that in 78 % of cases the 'coreferentiality criterion' was observed (Gayno 2015, 205).

An interesting point in Gayno's study is her approach towards those occurrences where the absolute construction is inserted into a passive clause. In such a case, the implicit agent of the participial clause may be coreferential not with the subject, but with the agent of the finite clause. Gayno counts those examples among the 78 % percent already mentioned. This means that, in her opinion, in such cases, the coreferentiality criterion is respected. However, this is not always the case. In fact, in many instances, the implicit agent of the passive AA may not be coreferential with any constituent of the finite clause. This point is quite important as passive clauses are clearly a different case. Let us look at two examples and their translations:

(4) *simul in medios hostes inrupit duobusque interfectis reliquos a porta paulum submovit.* (*BGall.* 7. 50. 6)

"At the same time he rushed into the midst of the enemy, and slaying two of them, drove back the rest a little from the gate."

And:

(5) *Interfecto Indutiomaro, ut docuimus, ad eius propinquos a Treveris imperium defertur.* (*BGall.* 6. 2. 1)

"Indutiomarus having been slain, as we have stated, the government was conferred upon his relatives by the Treviri."

In the first case, an active participial phrase in English may be used, but in the second case a passive participial phrase is required. In example (5), the killer of Indutiomarus is not named. The Gallic chief has been slain by Romans, but they are not mentioned anywhere in the sentence. What we infer from the sentence itself is that the agent of the participial clause (i. e., Indutiomarus' killer) is not coreferential with the subject of the finite clause (*imperium*), neither with its agent, which is also absent. It means that examples such as (5) should not be counted among those that "respect the coreferentiality criterion".

Considering the uncertainties I had about Gayno's statistics, I decided to revise them. First, I isolated occurrences of coreferentiality with the subject from the examples of coreferentiality with the agent of the superordinate clause. In the *Gallic Wars*, I analysed 677 examples of the passive AA and found 9 occurrences of the past participle of a deponent verb — where the 'coreferentiality criterion' is not applicable; there are thus 668 occurrences to which the 'coreferentiality criterion' is applicable. Among them are 429 occurrences (64 %) with the agent coreferential with the subject of the superordinate clause and 239 occurrences (36 %) with the agent non-coreferential with the subject. These sta-

tistics differ from those proposed by Gayno, as I isolated only those occurrences, where the implicit agent of the AA is the same as the explicit subject of the superordinate clause.

Nevertheless, I would add that among the 239 occurrences where the implicit agent of the AA is not coreferential with the subject of the superordinate clause, I found 77 examples where this superordinate clause is in the passive voice and the agent of the absolute construction may be considered coreferential with the agent of the verb of the finite clause.

Therefore, while my statistics differ from those proposed by Gayno, they are quite similar to the data provided by Hoff.

4. Interpretation

What conclusions can be drawn from these statistics? How should this data be interpreted? Is it "only" 60 % or "as much" 60 %? Is there any rule, or at least a guideline, regarding the coreferentiality of the implicit agent? In my opinion, what Hoff's study shows is that despite the rules the grammarians claim to reveal, the ablative absolute may not be so absolute after all. This statement is particularly useful if we analyse the evolution of absolute constructions from classical to late Latin.

In grammar manuals, the active and passive *ablativus absolutus* are usually put under one title, so that the similarity between these two constructions is emphasized. We know that the active participial clauses in classical Latin have a very strict rule about coreferentiality, one paraphrased succinctly by Hoff: "Le NP sujet de l'AA ne peut être repris ni en position de sujet, ni de complément à l'accusatif, au datif ou à l'ablatif dans la phrase. Dans ce cas, il faut la structure du participium conjunctum" (Hoff 1989, 402).

Granted, at the syntactic level, the similarity between active and passive AA is evident, the constituents of a participial clause should not be coreferential with the constituents of a finite clause. Therefore, the coreferentiality of any overtly expressed constituents (mainly of the subject) is forbidden in both constructions.

However, among other differences between the two types of AA one is essential for our inquiry. In the case of the active construction, the subject is also the agent, while in the case of the passive construction it is not. In the passive *ablativus absolutus*, the agent is implicit, and there is no rule forbidding it from being coreferential with the subject of the main clause.

Two statements by P. Ramat describe this situation adequately:

1) The NP (formed by a Noun + Passive Past Participle) has no syntactic relation with other elements of the finite sentence;
2) AA has no necessary semantic connection with the subject of the main clause. (Ramat 1994, 262)

In other words, the passive AA seems to share a feature common to all passive forms: it allows the speaker to describe an action without mentioning its agent. And the addressee can guess the identity of the agent. This guessing of the identity of the agent has been studied by H. W. Remmelink. In his paper, the scholar analyses the possibility of inferring first-argument participants of the passive AA, which is not a trivial problem considering that, as he remarks: "As is touched upon by, e. g. Siewierska (1984: 217–218, 237–254), one of the passive's pragmatic functions may be to push the identity of the A1-participant involved into the background of attention" (Remmelink 2002, 308).

It is therefore interesting to see that the reader is quite often able to successfully guess this identity. As has been mentioned, in the *Gallic Wars*, the agent is coreferential with the subject of the finite active clause in 64 % of cases. There are also 77 occurrences (11.5 %) where the agent is coreferential with the agent of the finite passive clause, including situations when the latter is also implicit, as in the following case:

(6) *Eorum qui domum redierunt, censu habito ut Caesar imperaverat, repertus est numerus milium centum et decem.* (BGall. 1.29.3)

"When the census of those who returned home was taken, as Caesar had commanded, the number was found to be 110,000."

Moreover, there are some examples where the subject of the participial construction describes a natural phenomenon that just happens without any agent helping it. There are also occurrences where the agent of the participial clause is overtly expressed, as in:

(7) *Quo praecepto ab iis diligentissime observato, cum quaepiam cohors ex orbe excesserat atque impetum fecerat, hostes velocissime refugiebant.* (BGall. 5.35.1)

"Which command having been most carefully obeyed, when any cohort had quitted the circle and made a charge, the enemy fled very precipitately."

In fact, ambiguous occurrences where the subject could be the agent but is not, are rare. For example:

(8) Trinovantibus defensis atque ab omni militum iniuria prohibitis Cenimagni Segontiaci Ancalites Bibroci Cassi legationibus missis sese Caesari dedunt. (BGall. 5.21.1)

"The Trinobantes being protected and secured from any violence of the soldiers, the Cenimagni, the Segontiaci, the Ancalites, the Bibroci, and the Cassi, sending embassies, surrendered themselves to Caesar."

In this example, the agent responsible for the protection of Trinovantes is Caesar, not the other Gallic tribes that are the subject of the main clause. However, the reader must deduce this from the larger context. There are no clues in the sentence regarding the identity of the agent of the participial clause. It is interesting, however, that in the whole of the *Gallic Wars* only 20 % of the passive AA fall into this category.

Moreover, in some cases, the participle may even be interpreted as an adjective (i. e., not having an agent):

(9) *At omnium animis impeditis Dumnorix cum equitibus Haeduorum a castris insciente Caesare domum discedere coepit.* (BGall. 5.7.5)

"But, while the minds of all were occupied, Dumnorix began to take his departure from the camp homeward with the cavalry of the Aedui, Caesar being ignorant of it."

The Oxford Latin Dictionary recognizes *impeditus* (and its comparative and superlative forms) as an independent lexical item, not exclusively as a participle of *impedio*.

Therefore, even if the grammatical 'rule' states that the "AA has no necessary semantic connection with the subject of the main clause" (Ramat 1994, 262), such a semantic connection frequently occurs,[3] and when it does not, in many cases, it causes no confusion in guessing the identity of the agent.

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[3] As has been pointed out by C. Touratier: "Le complément d'agent généralement non exprimé de la participiale est identique au premier actant du verbe principal" (*Syntaxte latine* 1994, p. 658).

5. Conjunct participle

Another factor that may have influenced the evolution of the use of participial constructions was the fact that the grammatical rules actually allowed for the speaker to use participles as attributes of constituents of the main clause, provided they were in agreement. Such a participle is usually called a conjunct participle.

Concerning the difference between the conjunct participle and the absolute participial construction, it is worthwhile to quote Christian Lehmann: "The distribution of the conjunct participle and the ablativus absolutus is mainly governed by the identity or distinctness of the subjects of the matrix clause and the infinite construction: if they are identical, the conjunct participle is in order, while if they are distinct, the ablativus absolutus is needed" (Lehmann 1989,169). Lehmann's observations are part of a larger study on the typology of subordination. Both constructions, the AA and the conjunct participle, are placed within the continuum of hierarchical downgrading, which is one of the parameters Lehmann proposes for ordering the various phenomena comprised by the notion of subordination.

In late Latin, with the emergence of the *nominativus absolutus* and the *accusativus absolutus,* the conjunct participle became less distinctive, formally, from the absolute participial constructions. This may have helped a merger between both. Moreover, it seems that they tended to replace finite subordinate clauses. In fact, they were treated as finite subordinate clauses not limited by any coreferentiality rules or even guidelines.[4] In describing the characteristics of Gregory of Tours' language and style, Pascale Bourgain sums up the conclusions of other scholars:[5] "In reality, the traditional distinction between coordination and subordination loses its importance. The functional ties are more semantic than syntactic. Gregory structures his text by participles and participial subordination becomes central, in fact, to the manner of constructing sentences. Qualifying or absolute participles (two less and less distinct formulas) represent more effective means of building a narrative period" (Bourgain 2015, 164).

6. Digression: a hypothesis

At this point I would like to present a hypothesis. As a native speaker of the Polish language, I've noticed how often my compatriots use participial constructions without any regard to the coreferentiality rule. This rule is however quite strictly established by Polish normative grammarians. According to Hanna Jadacka, for example, there is a "restriction in using participial sentence equivalents", namely that "the subjects of the main clause and of the sentence equivalent have to be identical" (Jadacka 2005, 185).[6] In an earlier work, she observes that one particularly privileged (in terms of frequency) syntactical construction in the contemporary Polish language is a nominal sentence with an adver-

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[4] Bourgain P. The works of Gregory of Tours: Manuscripts, Language, and Style, in: A. C. Murray (ed.), *A Companion to Gregory of Tours.* Turnhout, Brepols, 2015, 141–190.

[5] Cf. Greco P. La subordinazione participiale nel primo libro della *Historia Francorum* di Gregorio di Tours. *Medioevo romanzo* 2005, 29, 3-71; Tarrino-Ruiz E. La evolucion del ablativo absoluto en Gregorio de Tours, in: M. Perez Gonzales (ed.) *Actas del III Congreso Hispanico de latin medieval (Leon, sept. 2001).* Leon, Universidad de León, 2002, 697–705.

[6] In Polish: *Ograniczenie w stosowaniu równoważników zdań (…) tożsamość podmiotów w zdaniu głównym i równoważniku.*

bial participle expressing simultaneity. Jadacka argues that the rule concerning the use of adverbial participles of simultaneity in the function of nominal sentences is one most commonly disregarded by writers. She finds this correlation not surprising, as the excessive expansion of a construction often leads to the destabilization of the rules governing its use (Jadacka 1991, 183).[7] This expansion of participial clauses and their destabilization reminds us of the state of affairs in late Latin. However, Jadacka and other normative grammarians[8] accept the adverbial use (i. e., without any restriction concerning the coreferentiality) of some participles such as *prawdę mówiąc* ("telling the truth") or *zważywszy* ("having considered").

The same thing happens in English. Participial clauses in English are supposed to have their agent coreferential with the subject of the clause in which they are embedded; otherwise, we are dealing with so-called 'dangling' or 'misplaced' participles. I will not go into detail about the history and evolution of these clauses as such a study would be beyond the scope of this paper. I am rather interested in the state of affairs observed within English (or Polish) at a given moment in its history as described by scholars. I am quite certain that there is no direct link or any influence between Polish and English in this area. The tendency to break the coreferentiality rule while using participial clauses cannot be explained by the influence of the English language. The participles themselves are not related either, even if Polish and English belong to the family of Indo-European languages. Thus, it seems that in two languages chosen randomly a similar phenomenon occurs independently.

As in Polish, in English as well, it has been noted that the grammatical rule mentioned above tends to be ignored by speakers: "In English, the subject of a participial clause is generally supposed to be identical with that of the main clause. Following the prescriptive guide, some grammarians claim that the examples [like] Jogging through the park, a brilliant idea suddenly came to me are "semantically anomalous". (…) However, corpora like the British National Corpus (BNC) abound with dangling participles. (…) Some are even conventionalized,[9] as (…) strictly speaking, Mr. Smith is going to retire at the end of this year [or] Taking everything in account, the thing seems to be going fine" (Hayase 2011, 90).

We can add here some data from another language. In the *Le Bon Usage* we find the following statement: "Pour la clarté de la phrase, le participe en tant qu'épithète détachée et le gérondif, qui est toujours détaché du nom (ou du pronom) support, doivent se con-

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[7] "Jedną z wyjątkowo uprzywilejowanych (w sensie frekwencyjnym) konstrukcji składniowych współczesnej polszczyzny jest równoważnik zdania wyrażony imiesłowem przysłówkowym współczesnym. (…) właśnie reguła używania imiesłowów przysłówkowych współczesnych w funkcji równoważników zdań jest jedną z najczęściej naruszanych przez piszących. Zależność taka nie zaskakuje — nadmierna ekspansywność jakiejś konstrukcji nierzadko prowadzi do rozchwiania zasad jej użycia." Jadacka H. Imiesłowowy równoważnik zdania — norma a praktyka języka. *Prace filologiczne* 1991, 36, 183–194.

[8] For example, professor Mirosław Bańko, one of the Polish linguists co-creating the website for language counseling. Cf.: https://sjp.pwn.pl/poradnia/haslo/imieslowowy-rownowaznik-zdania;10349.html

[9] What Hayase calls "conventionalization" is often referred to as "grammaticalization". Cf. for example: *Brinton & Traugott (2005:120) consider the shift from present participle to preposition/conjunction to be a clear instance of grammaticalization. (…) Norde (2010, Chapter 5) also cites the development of prepositions such as* considering/notwithstanding *as cases of grammaticalization*. (Brinton 2005, 143). The works referred to in this quote are: Brinton L. J., Traugott E. C. *Lexicalization and Language Change*, Cambridge, CUP, 2005, and Norde M. "Grammaticalization: Three common controversies" in: K. Stathi, E. Gehweiler, E. König (eds), *Grammaticalization: Current views and issues*. Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 2010, 123–150.

struire de telle sorte que leur rapport avec le nom (ou le pronom) ne prête à aucune équivoque. <u>Il est souhaitable, notamment, que le participe ou le gérondif détachés, surtout en tête de phrase ou d'une proposition, aient comme support le sujet de cette phrase</u> et de cette proposition" (Grevisse 2003, 1306). In other words: there is a guideline concerning the coreferentiality of participial clauses in French, albeit not as strict as in English or Polish.

For English, Naoko Hayase notes that "the dangling participial construction is strongly tied to the speech situation" and that it is "extensively used in spoken dialogue" (Hayase 2011, 103). In Polish as well, it is more frequent in spoken language.

I hypothesize that in all these languages, Latin, English, French, Polish (and maybe in other languages, too) speakers tend to break the coreferentiality rules. It happens independently and, in my opinion, it belongs to the more general predilection for nominal clauses to be used — especially in spoken language — instead of subordinate clauses. Any coreferentiality rule restricts the use of nominal clauses, so the tendency to use them freely and to replace subordinate clauses with them leads to the breaking of such rules.

This breaking of the coreferentiality rule is a necessary condition for the emergence of adverbs and prepositions (already mentioned above) that are etymologically ancient participles, such as *considering* in English, or *prawdę mówiąc* in Polish. It is also a necessary condition for the emergence of prepositions such as *excepto* in late Latin — the process described e. g., by Molinelli (2001, 483).

7. Conclusion

After this digression about dangling or misplaced participles in modern languages, let us conclude the analysis of the use of participial clauses in classical Latin.

While there is no actual breaking of the syntactic coreferentiality rule in all examples quoted from Caesar's work, they all feature a semantic coreferentiality. The actual breaking of the rule is present, as has been mentioned, in late Latin texts. For example, we can find sentences like *exeuntis nobis* (…) *venimus*, or *Revertentibus nobis* (…) *venimus*.[10] We are dealing here with an active *ablativus absolutus* where the agent (and subject) of the participle is coreferential with the subject of the main clause — something unheard of in classical Latin.

This is one of the new features characterizing participial clauses in late Latin, as I've already mentioned. Some scholars linked this phenomenon with the popularity of the construction. Giovanbattista Galdi,[11] for example, argues that the "extension of the present participle" in general and "within absolute constructions" is "related to the general high frequency of the present participle in late antiquity" (Galdi 2016, 653). He remarks as well that in late Latin participial constructions are preferred to subordination (cf. Galdi 2016, 656). His observations are concordant with Anne Helttula's conclusions: "From Caesar on, the general trend is towards a larger use of participles instead of embedded finite clauses" (Helttula 1987, 16). In my opinion, it is possible to point out a forerunner of this process: the "relative absoluteness" of the passive AA in classical Latin may have led to the final breakdown of the coreferentiality rule.

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[10] Examples taken from *Itinerarium Antonini Placentini*, quoted by Milani (2009, 162).
[11] Galdi G. Remarks on temporal clauses and participial phrases in late historical texts, in: Pocetti P. (ed.) *Latinitatis Rationes*. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2016, 651–667.

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