

THE PREPOSITION DE

THE PREPOSITION DE. A STUDY IN
LATE LATIN AND OLD FRENCH SYNTAX

by

GLYN SHERIDAN BURGESS, B.A. (OXON.)

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AUTHOR: Glyn Sheridan Burgess, B.A. (Oxon.)

SUPERVISOR: Dr. G. Laurion

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SCOPE AND CONTENTS: This work studies historically the preposition de, tracing the development of three important constructions with de from Latin to Old French. It also attempts to draw conclusions from the historical facts in accordance with modern synchronic linguistics, the aim being to promote the integration of synchronic and diachronic linguistics, particularly in the field of syntax.

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G. S. B.

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ERRATA

- Page 31, line 1. The full quotation reads: Romae vereor ne ex Kal. Jan. magni tumultus sint.
- Page 34, line 3. Delete the quotation: Psa., 57, 4 a vulva.
- Page 38, line 14. Delete the quotation: S. John, 8, 41 nos ex fornicatione non sumus nati.
- Page 43, line 3-4 Delete the quotation: Cic. Pont., 4, 13, 23 laudes de Caesare.
- Page 71, line 17. The line should read: since the Old French period, the importance for our study, of the category of...
- Page 88, line 2. The abbreviation Cat. should be explained as follows:
Cat. C. Valerius Catullus
Cat. Orationes in Catilinam.

INTRODUCTION

The following study is intended as a contribution to the historical syntax of the Romance languages, and in particular to that of the French language in its earliest stages. This study will treat of the evolution of the preposition de and of other prepositions insofar as they are in direct competition with de, from Latin to Modern French, with particular emphasis on the post-Republican Latin period (until this merges with the French language in its earliest written form) and the period generally designated as Old French.

All terms such as Republican Latin, Classical Latin, Vulgar Latin, Old French, etc. present great problems of definition, but for the purposes of a study of this nature a statement of what is to be understood by such terms is essential. No hard and fast lines of demarcation can ever be drawn between linguistic periods, but this does not prevent the appearance of general features to differentiate with reasonable clarity between one era and another.

The most frequent terms to be found in this study are Early Latin, Classical Latin, post-classical or Late Latin, and Old French. By Early Latin is to be understood the older poetry, such as that of Ennius, the older prose (Cato and others) and the comedy of Plautus and Terence, more or less colloquial in spite of many features in common with the stylized Classical language. By the latter term the formal prose of Cicero and Caesar is covered together with other prose writers such as Sallust, and the poetry of Virgil, Ovid, and others. The principal source of writings

in the post-classical or Late Latin period is the Ecclesiastical Latin of the early Christian fathers, but in addition are the multitude of inscriptions, and the glossaries and legal documents written from the close of the Republican period until the ninth century which saw the first vernacular French text.

We must throughout this study, as in any other of similar scope, bear in mind that the occurrence or lack of occurrence in a particular genre of Latin of any given construction is governed by factors beyond our control. The essential aim of any attempt to describe a language whether it be diachronically or synchronically, is to discover which constructions (or vocabulary etc.) are freely productive at a given period or periods of a language, i.e. which constructions are regular and which are isolated or unusual examples. When the languages are no longer spoken various problems and difficulties of interpretation present themselves. For, in the words of De Groot:

Generally speaking, the most practical way of describing how a language is used is to start with a description of its use under the most normal circumstances, i.e. subject to the fewest limitations. This is, normally, the spoken language. The non-spoken, written language is eo ipso subject to the limitation that it is not spoken. This is a real limitation, because the language symbol is primarily an auditory symbol; the written word is a derivative symbol. Thus the most practical way is to start with a description of the spoken language, and to describe the use of the language in writing in terms of its difference from speech.¹

¹A. Willem de Groot, "Classification of the Uses of a Case Illustrated on the Genitive in Latin", Lingua, VI. (1957), 8-66.

Thus, when in this study we attempt to trace the history of a particular use of de in Old French back to its origins in Early Latin or Classical Latin, the fundamental aim is to determine the extent of the occurrence of a similar use in the spoken Latin of the period under discussion, a task which can only be accomplished by searching for such glimpses of colloquial usage as the written texts afford. Hence, the accent on Late Latin texts or the works of Plautus, whose syntax often provides examples of constructions suggestive of the Romance languages. The Christian authors with their stress on intelligibility rather than correctness (at least in the majority of cases), consequently come nearer than the Classical authors to the impossible ideal of a written form of spoken Latin (because of this impossibility the frequently employed term Vulgar Latin has been avoided in this study).

The importance of Classical Latin to a work embracing Latin and Romance syntax is perhaps twofold. By its very existence as a comparatively neatly confined and highly studied body of literature, reference to the usage to be found in the Classical authors is necessary for purposes of comparison with other forms of the Latin language. Secondly, sources of the colloquial language at the time of Cicero and Caesar are almost non-existent (setting aside reconstructions possible as a result of comparative Romance philology) and in consequence even the formal stylized Classical prose is of immense value to the student of the Romance languages. It is undeniable that in the Classical language occasional examples of what must have been the common usage of the spoken language penetrate the hard crust of linguistic purity, and these isolated examples are grist to the

mill of the student of this period. When studying Classical Latin from the philological standpoint one must, of course, remain constantly aware of the limitations of such a study, in that this type of Latin is essentially a divergence from the norm, the freely productive, regular patterns, which are the object of descriptive linguistics.

The particular method to be employed in this study is to select from the many uses of de, of which a full list is given later in this introduction, three whose importance is incontestable - the de of separation, the partitive de and the de of instrument, matter, means, and agent - and to trace the history of these constructions and of the rival methods of expressing the particular concepts involved at the disposal of writers at the various stages of the linguistic evolution from Ennius to present-day French. An attempt is constantly made to distinguish between the freely productive constructions and the isolated examples insofar as this is possible, considering the lack of evidence and the difficulties discussed above. The evidence of the Latin language is, of course, as far as this study is concerned, only background to the description of the state of affairs in Old French, hence the larger number of quotations from this period, when they are available, and the different arrangement in the text of the examples from Old French, the Latin quotations, except in those cases in which they are of necessity numerous, being set into the text, the French quotations set apart from it. The very term Old French is again difficult to define within clear-cut boundaries. It must start with the Strasbourg Oaths of 842 A.D. but, from the point of view of a syntactic study of Old French the earliest texts are of little value, there being no way

of distinguishing between the regular and the irregular type of construction. Only with the Vie de saint Alexis can one make general statements about Old French syntax, although, not until the Chanson de Roland and the other chansons de geste is there a substantial body of Old French literature. At the opposite end of the Old French period one could claim that it continues as far as 1549 the date of the publication of Du Bellay's Deffence et Illustration de la langue françoise, but in the following text, examples are in fact virtually confined to the period before 1328, a date often given as the starting point of a Middle French period, a term avoided in this study. Comparisons with Modern French are inevitable when considering Old French and have not been shunned in this work, in view of the importance of comparative philological and linguistic studies and of the detrimental effect, in the face of constant linguistic flux, of leaving a period isolated from its later developments.

As a result of the extraordinarily large number of texts whose relevance to our purpose is indisputable, the examples presented in this study are fundamentally of two kinds, those obtained by a personal and detailed study of a selected number of texts and those provided by dictionaries of the various periods of the Latin and French languages, in particular the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, the Latin dictionary of Lewis and Short, the dictionary of the Christian authors by Blaise and the Old French dictionary of Godefroy. The texts examined and extensively used in quotation are the Peregrinatio Aetheriae ad Loca Sancta, a fifth-century A.D. account of a nun's pilgrimage to the Holy Land, written in a Latin of Classical design, but with many features of the spoken Latin of the period, the Strasbourg Oaths, the Sequence of St. Eulalia, the Life of St. Alexis, the Chanson de Roland, and Yvain (Chevalier au Lion). Use has also been

made of the monographs on individual authors and groups of documents. A full list of these is impossible to provide, but those from which quotations or commentary have been taken for use in our text will be found in the footnote references and a larger number of references to works of this nature has been included in the bibliography, because of the importance of each and every one of the monographs, whether or not space has allowed quotation in the text. Those of particular value were Bonnet's study of the Latin of Gregory of Tours, Pei's work on the eighth-century texts in Northern France and Van Oorde's Lexicon Aetherianum, a glossary to the Peregrinatio Aetheriae. To reduce reference matter to essentials in our text, references, when examples are taken from dictionaries or monographs, are given according to the edition used by the writers of the works cited, and recourse may be necessary to these works to ensure that the correct edition is being consulted.

With regard to the three chapters which make up the body of this study, nothing need be said to justify the inclusion of any of the three chapters per se. Their importance to the history of the preposition de is self-evident. But a word about omissions, and an attempt to integrate these three chapters into the overall picture presented by the preposition de in Latin and French, will be of relevance to our study. There are perhaps two very fundamental factors in the evolution of usage traced in the following pages: the first, that the evolution of the preposition de entailed a considerable extension in the number of functions and the frequency of occurrence of de in each of its functions as the centuries passed by: the second, that de was one of the most potent instruments in the breakdown of

the Latin case system and its replacement by prepositional phrases. In the first centuries of the French language only the nominative and oblique cases had survived, with the exception of the interesting Old French appositional usage e.g., li fiz le roi, in which, in spite of the loss of a distinctive genitive case ending, the genitive function lingered on in le roi.² The normal possessive genitive in Old French involves the preposition de just as the dative case of Latin has been largely supplanted by the preposition à. This metamorphosis represents a swing from synthesis to analysis in language, a swing, notwithstanding the gradual nature of all linguistic change, more difficult to pinpoint in time than one would expect. The breakdown of the genitive case is barely observable in the writings of Gregory of Tours, and, in the Peregrinatio Aetheriae, only twelve examples of de replacing the possessive genitive are to be found.³ By the eighth century, this function of de, the commonest of all in Modern French, seems more frequent, but the struggle between the appositional and

²A peculiarity of this construction in Old French is that it was only viable in the case of personal substantives (la mort Roland but la mort del chien), and even then only the subjective genitive could be understood by the apposition not the objective genitive. This is illustrated by the phrase por le corouze de son ami (La Chastelaine de Vergi, 878), meaning "à cause du courroux qu'elle avait contre son ami", whereas por le corouze son ami would mean "à cause du courroux que son ami avait contre elle". (For a full discussion of this question, cf. L. Foulet, Petite Syntaxe de l'ancien français (3rd ed.; Paris, 1965), pp. 14-31.)

³Cf. W. Van Oorde, Lexicon Aetherianum, (Amsterdam, 1930; Hildesheim 1963), art. de. Examples of de for the possessive genitive are: (p.) 7, (l.) 3; 10, 3; 11, 21; 13, 24 (ed. Prinz, Heidelberg, 1960).

prepositional constructions in Old French would bear out the fact that victory for de with the function of indicating the possessive in French was a more lengthy procedure than would perhaps have been anticipated from the success of de in a multitude of functions in Late Latin and Old French.

In this connection, a table of the rise of de from its beginnings in Early Latin and Classical Latin to the Old French period is of great importance in order to situate clearly the general progress of the preposition and the particular progress of the three functions which constitute the main part of this study. The best method of attaining the full picture of the development is to compare the categories into which de is divided at the two principal termini of our work.

For Early and Classical Latin the dictionary of Lewis and Short provides the following division of usage:

A. In space, lit. and trop. with verbs of motion:

- (1) In gen. to indicate the person or place from which anything is taken, etc. with verbs of taking away, depriving, demanding, requesting, inquiring, buying.
- (2) To point out the place from which any thing is brought, and hence, trop., to indicate its origin, derivation, etc.
- (3) Transf., to indicate the quarter from which motion proceeds.

B. In time:

- (1) Immediately following a given moment of time.
- (2) De nocte, de vigilia, etc., to designate an act which begins or takes its origin from the night-time.

C. In other relations implying separation, departure from, etc.:

- (1) To designate the whole, from which a part is taken, or of which a part is separately regarded.
- (2) Sometimes de with abl. takes the place of the gen. partit. or gen. obj.
- (3) To indicate the property from which the costs of any thing are taken.
- (4) To designate the material of which any thing is made.
- (5) In mental operations, to indicate the subject-matter or theme on which any mental act is founded.
- (6) To indicate the producing cause or reason.
- (7) To indicate the thing with reference to which any thing is done.
- (8) To indicate the thing in conformity with which any thing is done.
- (9) With adjectives to form adverbial expressions.

In the Old French dictionary of Godefroy the following categories for de are listed:

I De marquant le point de départ.

- (1) Dans l'espace.
- (2) Dans le temps.
- (3) Au sens figuré, la préposition de et son complément se joignent aux verbes ou aux locutions qui renferment l'idée de séparation.
- (4) De marquant l'origine.
- (5) De unit un verbe ou un participe passif à son complément.
- (6) De marquant l'instrument ou le moyen.

- (7) De marquant la matière ou servant à désigner la personne ou la chose aux dépens ou au profit de laquelle s'exerce une action.
- (8) De marquant la quantité et le degré de la différence ou le prix.
- (9) De marquant la cause.
- (10) De marquant la manière.
- (11) De marquant la conformité.
- (12) De marquant la partie.
- (13) Locutions adverbiales.

II De partitif.

III De joint aux différents termes de la proposition (sujet, attribut, complément).

- (1) De construit avec le sujet ou l'attribut.
- (2) De construit devant le complément des verbes.
- (3) De construit avec l'infinitif de narration.
- (4) De marquant le but de l'action.
- (5) De annonçant la personne ou la chose dont il s'agit.

IV De équivalent au génitif latin complément d'un substantif.

- (1) De équivalent au génitif subjectif.
- (2) De équivalent au génitif objectif.
- (3) De sert à marquer l'opposition.
- (4) De correspond au génitif de qualité.

V De construit avec les adjectifs.

- (1) De construit avec le complément des adjectifs.
- (2) De construit avec le complément des comparatifs.

VI Constructions particulières.

e.g., Filz Alexis, de ta dolente medre!
(Vie de saint Alexis, 396)

VII De joint au mot suivant par réduplication de la consonne initiale.

If these tables serve to deflate the importance of any single use of the preposition de, such as those studied in this work, they also fill the vital rôle of stressing the burden borne by the preposition de in Old French after the virtual disappearance of the system of case-endings. Whether it be the rise of de as a genitive indicator, of which the outline alone has been sketched in this introduction, the three categories discussed in some detail in the following pages, or the diverse functions of de for which no place has been found for extensive illustration, each single development gains in force by being considered as part of a whole. This whole, represented by the table from the dictionary of Godefroy is of twofold importance, the one diachronic, coming as the end-product of an evolution, which in most cases commenced more than a millennium before the earliest written documents in the French language, the other synchronic, the statement concerning what contribution the preposition de has made to language as such, about which historical grammars of the Romance languages⁴ are often disappointing.

The synchronic aspects of the state of the preposition de will be discussed in the conclusion of this work after the more detailed study

⁴E.g., W. Meyer-Lübke, Grammatik der romanischen Sprachen, (Leipzig, 1890-1902), F. Diez, Grammatik der romanischen Sprachen, (5th ed.; Bonn, 1882).

of certain uses of de has been completed. However, a word may be said at this stage concerning the terminology to be employed in this discussion and to explain fully some references of this nature in the text itself. Use will be made of the terms autonomous moneme, functional moneme and grammatical moneme, and these terms can be illustrated in the following manner with examples taken from English. The moneme is defined as the minimal significant unit. It has a signifié and a significal,⁵ a meaning and a phonic shape.⁶ The moneme embraces two spheres, expression and content, unlike the phoneme which covers expression alone.

The moneme admits of subdivision into various categories. All monemes do not have the status of fully-fledged monemes with respect to the signifié. In the sentence Yesterday I bought a loaf from the baker, it will be seen that there are four autonomous elements of experience, yesterday, I bought, a loaf, from the baker, and some variety of position is permitted within the utterance as a whole for the individual segments. But within these autonomous segments there is no choice of word order. In the phrase from the baker, which is an autonomous unit, there are three monemes, but no autonomous monemes. The moneme baker has no specific function in relation to the rest of the utterance until this function is indicated in some way. It is consequently a dependent moneme. From and the are the monemes which perform the necessary grammatical function

⁵For these terms cf. F. de Saussure, Cours de linguistique générale, (5th ed.; Paris, 1962), pp. 23ff.

⁶The phoneme, the minimal distinctive unit has a phonic shape, but no meaning.

and they are thus functional monemes or functionals. The criterion for this threefold division of monemes, into autonomous, dependent and functional monemes, is syntactic autonomy and this leads in its turn to a further subdivision of functionals, because in the phrase from the baker, the moneme baker is a dependant and is connected with the rest of the utterance by the functional from. The, on the other hand, while still a functional only helps to specify baker without granting it syntactic autonomy within the sentence, as the speaker would still not be free to choose the position of the phrase the baker in relation to the three autonomous units yesterday I bought a loaf. The moneme the is thus a modifier or grammatical determinant.⁷

Before the importance of analysis into monemic patterns becomes useful a full historical account of the constructions involved is necessary. From this study will emerge the freely productive patterns at various epochs for three concepts in which the preposition de played an important rôle in Old French. Also, insofar as it is possible to ascertain such facts, the very rare exceptions to the standard procedure will be brought to light and the consequence of this will be the synchronic importance of a group of possibilities for the expression of one concept subsisting at a given period in time. No more than three aspects of the preposition de need be examined in detail, for, as the following pages will demonstrate,

⁷In view of the proliferation of linguistic theories it is important to indicate that the above discussion is based on the work of A. Martinet, particularly as set out in his series of lectures, published under the title A Functional View of Language, (Oxford, 1962).

the patterns of development from Latin to Old French are of a consistency to obviate the necessity for an historical account of each and every function of de in Old French.

CHAPTER I

DE OF SEPARATION

In Classical Latin, de, whether as a verbal prefix or as a preposition, had as its primary function the task of indicating separation, i.e. the going out, removal or departure of an object from a fixed point. Lewis and Short¹ observe that: "[De] occupies a middle place between ab, away from, which denotes² a mere external departure, and ex, out of, which signifies² from the interior of a thing." In theory, as Ernout and Thomas³ point out: "Ab et ex s'opposent...de la même manière que ad et in", but, in practice, the Classical authors did not make a rigid distinction between de, ex, and ab.⁴ Speaking of a series of verbs capable of being followed by the simple ablative, Bennett⁵ writes: "Many of these are found also construed with various prepositions, a, ex, de, but the employment of the prepositions seems to be governed by no special principle." This

¹A Latin Dictionary (Oxford, 1879), art. de.

²The danger of using the words denotes and signifies will be discussed below, p. 80.

³Syntaxe latine (Paris, 1953), p. 80.

⁴Cicero himself gives us the theory of the distinction between the prepositions ex and ab: "Si quis mihi praesto fuerit cum armatis hominibus extra meum fundum et me introire prohibuerit, non ex eo, sed ab eo loco me dejecerit...unde dejecti Galli? A Capitolio. Unde qui cum Graccho fuerunt? Ex Capitolio." (Caecin., 30, 87).

⁵C. E. Bennett, Syntax of Early Latin (Boston, 1910-14), Vol. II, pp. 280-81.

is true of both Early and Classical Latin. To indicate movement from top to bottom was a basic function of de, perhaps by virtue of its intermediate position between ex and ab, but although this usage is common in the literal (Pl., Cas., 931 decido de lecto) and the figurative sense (particularly with verbs, e.g., despicere), even this principle was not rigidly upheld by the Classical authors, e.g., Cic., Clu., 62 cecidisse ex equo dicitur.

The general concept of separation or departure of an object from a fixed point admits of a variety of subdivisions. The following study will be tripartite. The division of usage will be: (i) in space, (ii) in time, (iii) a point of origin or derivation. The partitive usage, which will be considered as related to the notion of separation, will be treated in the following chapter. Within each division the problem will be studied in a further three parts, the Classical Latin evidence, that of spoken or Late Latin and that provided by the first centuries of the French language.

(i) IN SPACE

This category is defined as the separation of a person or an object from a stated position. Movement is implied, but the problem of whether the function of the preposition depends partly or entirely on the verb (i.e. where does the lexical element lie?) will be discussed after the examples have been brought forward. De in such a context can be found in Latin from the earliest period: e.g., Enn., Ann., 216⁶ animam de corpore mitto. With verbs of motion of the egredi, excedere, exire type de occurs in Classical Latin, but ex and ab tend to preponderate. Exact

⁶Apud Non.Marc. p. 150, 6. This quotation is from the Vahlen edition.

figures are not available, but Lewis and Short⁷ report that de with excedere is "very rare", and a study of Plautus reveals that he favours ex and ab with verbs of separation: e.g., Aul., 56-57 si hercle tu ex istoc loco/digitum transvorsum aut unguem latum excesseris; ibid., 46 illuc regredere ab ostio.⁸ The prefix of the verb does not restrict the use of a different preposition, i.e. de can be found after a verb such as exire: Caes., B.G., 1, 2 civitati persuasit, ut de finibus suis cum omnibus copiis exirent. This is further proved by couplets, e.g., Cic., In Verrem, 2, 2, 20 decedere de provincia and ibid., 2, 2, 65 decedere ex provincia.

There are thus in general four constructions used in Classical Latin with verbs of separation, the three prepositions ex, de and ab and the ablative case alone. In practice each verb of separation does not offer attested examples of all four possibilities. However, it can happen that a non-attested possibility is found in a later author. For example, during the Classical period, with the verb excedere, we find excedere e vita, de vita, and vita.⁹ But excedere a vita is found later in Gregory of Tours.¹⁰ The verb abire was constructed in Classical Latin with the prepositions ex, or ab, and at times with the simple ablative. In Tertullian, however, de is also attested.¹¹

⁷Op. cit., art. excedo.

⁸Cf. also: Aul., 44, 70, 105, 235, 273.

⁹Cic., Rep., 2, 27; Phil., 9, 2; 13, 40 etc. e vita.

Cic., Fin., 3, 60: de vita.

Cic., Phil., 2, 12; Brut., 262; Tusc., 1, 29; Nat. Deor., 3, 41: vita. Cf. Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, art. excedo.

¹⁰H.F., 5, 3, p. 195, 23.

¹¹Ux., 1, 2 de rebus abire ("to pass away").

Although the failure to maintain a rigid distinction between the four possible constructions is a general feature of Classical Latin, certain general trends can be observed. De, by virtue of its special position between ab and ex mentioned above was found with persons to indicate from whom a thing is taken. The most common verbs in this connection are capere, sumere, emere, quaerere, discere, trahere and their compounds. Examples are: Cat., R.R., 1, 1 emere de aliquo; Cic., Fl., 20 aliquid mercari de aliquo; Ter., Eun., 2, 2, 31 ut sibi liceret discere id de me. As Lewis and Short¹² point out, in the Classical authors petere de of a place is used, but petere de of a person is a post-classical development: Dig., 13, 6, 5 si de me petisses. When ab is used with persons, violent separation is usually implied: Enn. apud Cic., Ac., 2, 29, 89. pestem abige a me; Cic., Sen., 22 cum a vobis discessero. When ab is used, it is occasionally the person's house rather than the person himself to which reference is made: Ter., Heaut., 2, 2, 6 videat forte hic te a patre aliquis exiens; Cic., Att., 5, 3 a Pontio. Ex is used figuratively for mental and physical derivation or separation: Sall. J., 102, ex populo Romano bona accipere; Cic., Rep., 1, 13 quaesierat ex me Scipio; id. ibid. 2, 38 ex te requirunt. But these last examples do not detract from the general comment that a Classical or early Latin author had four possible constructions at his command whenever he used a verb of separation.

Historical grammars of the Romance languages tell us that the preposition de had outstripped all its competitors by the time the French language emerged, and had acquired a large number of new functions. As far as the concept of separation is concerned, where we find de, ex and

¹²Op. cit., art. de and art. peto.

ab used in a virtually indistinguishable manner in Classical Latin, the position in Old French is that de alone is used, except where separation from a person is at stake, in which case the more frequent de of Classical Latin has given way to French à, the result of a merger between the Latin prepositions ad and ab. Although what the grammar books tell us cannot be challenged, the task remains to examine the Latin of the period extending from the first centuries A.D., with the rise of the Christian Church, to the date of the first French texts. The best method is to examine the monographs on the Ecclesiastical authors and the early Mediaeval Latin authors, whose Latinity stemmed largely from a secularization of Ecclesiastical Latin.

In his study of the Latin of Gregory of Tours, Bonnet warns us against seeking the Romance syntax of the preposition de too soon: "Il y aurait de la précipitation à vouloir trouver au VI^e siècle la langue du XI^e. De se prépare au rôle qu'il aura à jouer un jour, mais lentement, et sans que rien pour le moment lui assure la victoire sur ses compétiteurs; à qui ne connaît pas l'événement il peut sembler que c'est plutôt ab qui l'emportera."¹³ In fact, reports Bonnet, Gregory uses prepositions in general almost as they were used in Classical Latin.¹⁴ Goelzer's study of the Latinity of St. Jerome led him to a different conclusion: "C'est dans l'emploi de la préposition de que saint Jérôme s'écarte le plus de l'usage classique. En cela, il ne fait que se

¹³M. Bonnet, Le Latin de Grégoire de Tours (Paris, 1890).

¹⁴Op. cit., p. 581.

conformer au goût de son époque. De est la préposition favorite de la latinité postérieure."¹⁵ A different point of view arose from the same author's work on St. Avitus: "La préposition de est chez Avitus d'un emploi au moins aussi fréquent que la préposition ab. Mais elle est loin de remplir déjà le rôle qu'elle aura plus tard et qui lui assurera le premier rang sur toutes les autres dans les langues romanes."¹⁶

These three conflicting results can be explained almost certainly by the degree of consciousness of the particular author concerning the stylization and correctness of his "Classical" predecessors. For example, St. Avitus was more concerned with correct Latin than St. Jerome, as Goelzer's two syntactic studies show,¹⁷ and this led perhaps to deliberate archaizing on the part of the former which makes it difficult to determine the exact stage of the syntactic evolution of any given construction from a study of his writings. When studying Ecclesiastical and Medieval Latin in search of Romance syntax we are forced to consider monographs devoted to the Latin of such individual writers as St. Jerome and St. Avitus, but we have to bear in mind constantly the various factors affecting this search, in particular the conflict between intelligibility and purity of language.

¹⁵H. Goelzer, Etude lexicographique et grammaticale de la latinité de saint Jérôme (Paris, 1884), pp. 338-39.

¹⁶H. Goelzer, Le Latin de saint Avit, évêque de Vienne (Paris, 1909), p. 178.

¹⁷"L'emploi de la préposition ab est, dans la syntaxe d'Avitus, un des points où apparaît le mieux le grand souci qu'il a d'écrire correctement." id. ibid., p. 171.

However, statistics of the following type are of significance for our study. W. Van Oorde reports¹⁸ that de occurs 253 times in the Peregrinatio Aetheriae,¹⁹ of which 120 examples can be considered to fall into our category of de in space. Ex is used twenty times in all, of which five come under the heading of separation in space. Ab appears sixty-seven times, but only sixteen of the examples are with verbs of separation, and an additional ten indicate distance without reference to motion.²⁰ A study of the verbs of separation in the Peregrinatio adds the fact, not covered by the work of Van Oorde, that the single ablative is not used in such a context. A good example of this and of the extended use of the preposition de, is the fact that with the verb exire, which occurs thirteen times with a functional moneme to indicate the fixed point of the origin of the movement, de is used in every case.

A work embracing a wider range of texts, which is relevant to our purpose, is Pei's study of the texts of Northern France in the eighth century.²¹ Pei informs us that in the period 700-17 A.D., de occurs,

¹⁸W. Van Oorde, Lexicon Aetherianum (Hildesheim, 1963), art. de.

¹⁹This text will subsequently be referred to as the Peregrinatio or by the abbreviation Pereg. The edition used is that of Prinz (Heidelberg, 1960) and references are given as: (page) 10, (line) 15 etc.

²⁰Examples of the de of separation in the Peregrinatio are: quemadmodum profecti sumus de rubo (6, 26). ac sic exeuntes de Hero, (11, 1). Cf. also: 3, 34; 8, 2-3; 9, 15-16; 9, 22-23; 48, 14-15; 48, 35; 49, 1, etc. With ex: quasi ex ipsius montis terra aliquos fructus capiant (4, 5-6). Also 12, 15-16 etc. With ab: nobis ergo euntibus ab eo loco (2, 11). Also: 2, 11-12; 12, 22; 28, 14-15; 43, 22-23.

²¹M. A. Pei, The Language of the Eighth-Century Texts in Northern France (New York, 1932). The quotation is from p. 244.

where one might have expected ex or ab, twenty-seven times. In the period 750-70 the same phenomenon is reported twenty-six times. Ex, says Pei, appears nine times in 700-17 in connections which can be considered separative, and three times in 750-70. Pei's general comment is: "De also aids in the general process of the breakdown of ab by taking over in large part its function of denoting separation from a thing or place, just as ad partly takes over ab's function of denoting separation from a person. This state of affairs presents great resemblance to the new Romance syntax of the preposition."

The general impression given by monographs on the Latin of this period is overwhelmingly that de with verbs of separation, and, in fact, in all the constructions which are of interest to the student of the Romance languages, is tending towards the position it will occupy, by the appearance of the earliest texts in Old French.²² "De wird von den Chronisten sehr häufig und in romanischer Weise verwendet", writes Haag.²³ Pirson, Dubois, Taylor²⁴ and many other scholars would agree with this. However, we should not forget the warning of Bonnet, not to be over anxious to see de used as in Romance, or neglect Goelzer's findings that de is not as frequent

²²In Italian we have to wait until the end of the twelfth century for anything other than fragments of the vernacular. Castilian Spanish, too, is not represented until ca. 1140, the date of the Poema del Cid, except for some brief Mozarabic harg'a's (cf. W. D. Elcock, The Romance Languages (London, 1960), pp. 399 ff.).

²³O. Haag, Die Latinität Fredegars (Erlangen, 1898).

²⁴J. Pirson, La Langue des inscriptions latines de la Gaule (Bruxelles, 1961), p. 196.
A. Dubois, La Latinité d'Ennodius (Paris, 1903), pp. 412-14.
P. Taylor, The Latinity of the Liber Historiae Francorum (New York, 1924), pp. 110-11.

as one might expect, with verbs of separation, in St. Avitus.²⁵

The paucity of Old French texts before the eleventh century renders precarious the task of making categorical statements about syntactic features in the period between the Strasbourg Oaths (842 A.D.) and the Vie de saint Alexis (mid-eleventh century). The one example of a de of separation in the Oaths indicates a point of departure in time. The Cantilène de sainte Eulalie is even more barren, but the Fragment de Valenciennes, in spite of the difficulties of interpretation it often presents, does provide some examples of separation in space:

quant il se creut convers de via sua mala. (verso 1, 50)²⁶

si exit foers de²⁷ la civitate. (verso 1, 16)

The example: est venu de cist tres dies super. (recto 1,2) could be considered as separation in time or in space.

The Vie de saint Alexis, the first text to offer any scope for syntactic study, reveals at once that there is now only one method (with

²⁵

Le Latin de saint Avit..., p. 179.

²⁶References are given according to the text published by F. Génin (Paris, 1850).

²⁷Cf. next paragraph for a discussion of foers de.

some slight variation) of indicating separation in space, from an object. The preposition de must be used. The variation is that de is often²⁸ found in combination with an adverb, particularly fors, an indication perhaps, that in the speech of this period the Vulgar Latin preference for the more substantial form subsisted in the French vernacular. Fors, in spite of its etymology (Latin foris) is reminiscent in form and function of the Latin foras,²⁹ which from the time of Plautus had been used for emphasis (e.g., Am., 1, 2, 35 Amphitruo exit foras). In the Peregrinatio, foras occurs eleven times, a typical example of it as an intensitive being: tunc nos gavisi satis statim egressi sumus foras. (15, 31-32). This would seem to be a reflection of spoken usage and helps us to explain these examples from the Vie of saint Alexis:³⁰

Donc en ist fors de la chambre son pedre. (14)

Vint une voiz treis feiz en la citet
Fors del sacrarie. (292-93)

De alone is, of course, more frequent, when the context is one of separation in space:³¹

²⁸Not in fact as often as in a later text such as Yvain, but the implications of this are difficult to determine.

²⁹Cf. B. Brall, Lat. foris foras im Gallo-romanischen (Berlin, 1918).

³⁰Ed. Gaston Paris (7th ed.; Paris, 1965).

³¹Additional examples are: 75, 83, 188, 222, 260, 279, 332, 520. It is to be noted that en is already found to replace de followed by a pronoun (Latin inde), but, the development of this en in French has been threefold. In s'en vult esloignier (260), the en indicating the fixed point of the separation has remained in modern French. In s'en deit aler (279), the en after the XVIIIth century assumed its modern position (s'en aller), with a loss of much of the force of inde. But in s'en fuit (75) then en has become agglutinated (s'enfuir).

Quant tot son cuer en at si afermet
 Que ja son vuel n'eistrat de la citet. (166-67)
 Ist de la nef e vait edrant a Rome. (211)

The Chanson de Roland³² confirms the obligatory nature of the use of the preposition de in a separative context.

Se deus ço dunet que jo de la repaire. (289)
 De Marcilie s'en fuient por la chrestientet. (686)
 Ist de la prese, si se met en bandon. (1220)
 Isnelement issent de la citet. (2766)

However, it is not irrelevant to observe that de is not always used as in Modern French. For example, in the phrase: issent de mer, venent as ewes dulces (2640), the moneme la has not been inserted. The declining force of Latin ille, to take over the function of definite article, is of extreme importance (cf. chapter II) because it has not yet lost all its demonstrative force, and could be omitted where there was no deictic function for it to fill. Also, in the phrase: pleine sa hanste l'abat mort de la sele (1295), de is used to indicate the origin of the movement in a way impossible in Modern French, but not in Modern English.³³ The Classical Latin notion of ex indicating motion from the interior of an object is found in the Chanson de Roland as a compound preposition with de: d'enz de [la] sale uns veltres avalat (730). The compound preposition is a prominent feature of Vulgar Latin and its occurrence in Old French is

³²Ed. Whitehead (Oxford, 1962).

³³There are many instances of similarity between Old French and Modern English syntax, from which Modern French differs. Cf. J. Orr, Old French and Modern English Idiom (Oxford, 1962).

a natural extension of this.³⁴

The evidence provided by Yvain of the use of de for separation in space is not fundamentally different. Fors, as mentioned above (note 28), is particularly frequent:

Cil qui Leissus erent anclos
oïrent la voix et le son,
s'issirent fors de la meison. (218-20)³⁵

...vos m'avez de ma meison
fors chacié. (504-5)

li rois fors de la chambre issi. (650)³⁶

With simple de:

repeirié furent de l'eglise...(1256)

de la mort ne puet eschaper
li senseschax...(4527-28)

S'avoit tierz jor que la reïne
ert de la prison revenue...(4734-35)

Que qu'il l'aparloient ensi
Lunete del mostier issi. (4957-58)³⁷

³⁴These compound forms, in which de was a common ingredient, have given rise to some of the important French prepositions: e.g., de intus > denz; de usque > jusque; de retro > derrière; ab ante > avant; ab hoc > avuec, avec. For d'enz de la sale etc. cf. Pereg. ubi iam de inter montes exitur (8, 31). Also 9, 8; 9, 12-13.

³⁵Ed. Mario Roques (C.F.M.A. Paris, 1960).

³⁶Cf. also: 1570-71; 1576, 2842, 4849-52, 6203-4, and in absolute usage: 1119, 3532, 6652-3.

³⁷Cf. also: 1536, 2431, 3482-3, 5490-1, 5597, 6180 etc.

Again we find interesting and significant divergences from Modern French usage. De is used in the compound preposition delez (Latin de latus) which has not survived in Modern French, in a way which would be virtually impossible in Modern French, but again not in Modern English:

Que que il son conte contoit
et la reïne l'escoutoit,
si s'est delez le roi levee. (61-63)

The Old French construction with oster differed occasionally from that of the Modern French ôter:

Dex vos saut, bele et si vos ost
de cusançon et de pesance! (5046-47)

The same construction existed with toleir, which has not survived in Modern French:

ne point de s'enor li toloit. (6180)

Again we find the definite article omitted in a construction with de:

lor ialz n'en pueent retreire
de terre. (5204-05)

As in the Chanson de Roland, a compound preposition is used in a way which would be avoided in Modern French:

L'autre des baruns se remue. (2799) ("He rises from among the knights.")

Another interesting compound preposition with de is d'avoec:

...departir ne le leira
mes sire Gauvains d'avoec lui. (2670-71).

But departir is also used with de alone:

Mes sire Yvains molt a enviz
est de s'amie departiz. (2641-42).

The conclusion that we must draw from the foregoing study of the de of separation in space from the early stages of the Latin language

to the time of Chrétien de Troyes, is that the monopoly of de, used either alone or in a compound, is complete in French from the first available texts, except in those cases in which the object is separated from a person.³⁸ From the four Classical Latin and pre-classical possibilities,³⁹ there has developed through a transition period of uncertain interpretation but evidently growing popularity of de, the Old French position, which, in spite of significant divergencies from Modern French usage, always makes use of the preposition de to indicate the starting point for example from an object in space.

³⁸This category of separative use is beyond the scope of this study but the remark can be made that a(d) is not well attested with this function (i.e. Modern French prendre à, ôter à qq'n) in Old French. Yvain, for example, offers many examples of oster and toleir ("to take away"), but in every case a pronoun is used to indicate the person: e.g.,

trestotes ses armes li oste...(5408)
cui il voloit tolir l'arçon...(2822)

When a part of the body is referred to the preposition de is used accompanied by the pronoun to indicate the indirect object, a construction reminiscent of the Modern French pattern with parts of the body:

...Dex, s'il li plest
cest duel que ne sai don vos nest,
vos ost del cuer et tort a joie. (5242-44)

si li oste l'anel del doi. (2779)

³⁹This number does not, however, exhaust all the possibilities. The genitive of separation used in Classical Latin, (e.g., Pl., Rud., 247 ut me omnium iam laborum levas; Hor., Germ. 2, 2, 17 desine mollium tandem querellarum) could be included in this section on the notion of separation, but examples are rare. It is listed by Gildersleeve (cf. bibliography) under "Occasional Uses". Cf. also, for the example and a discussion of related problems concerning the genitive case in Latin. A. Willem de Groot, "Classification of the Uses of a Case Illustrated on the Genitive in Latin", Lingua, VI (1957), 8-66.

(ii) DE OF SEPARATION IN TIME

When we approach the question of separation in time, we again find in Classical Latin constructions with de, ex, ab, and the simple ablative.⁴⁰ De in this construction is usually translated into English as "after" or "directly after": Cic., Att., 12, 3 Velim scire hodiene statim de auctione aut quo die venias; Pl., Most., 3, 2 non bonus somnus est de prandio. Hence the expression diem de die in Livy (5, 48), meaning "day after day" (cf. Ecclesiastical Latin de die in diem (Vulg., Psa., 60, 8)). De can be used in Classical Latin, in the words of Lewis and Short,⁴¹ "to designate an act which begins or takes its origins from," e.g., de nocte, de vigilia, as in Ter., And., 5, 3, 55 Immo de nocte censeo; Cic., Sest., 35, 75 multa de nocta; Suet., Calig., 26 media de nocte. De die became no more than an adverb, and de die was sometimes used as the equivalent of per diem: e.g., Pl., Asin., 4, 2, 16 de die potare; Livy, 23, 8 epulari de die. De mense is also possible: e.g., Cic., Q. Fr., 2, 1 navigare de mense Decembri.

When ab is used for separation in time it denotes "a point of time, without reference to the period subsequently elapsed" (Lewis & Short⁴²): Pl., Poen., 3, 3, 4 mulieres jam ab re divina adparebunt domi ("immediately after"); Sallust, J., 63, 5 ab eo magistratu. In the sense of "immediately

⁴⁰For an example of the genitive case with this function in Late Latin, cf. note 46.

⁴¹Op. cit., art. de.

⁴²Op. cit., art. a(b).

after" or "soon after", ab is often strengthened by an adverb; e.g., Suet., Caes., 85 statim a funere; Cic., Att., 5, 3, 1 ibi mihi tuae litterae binae redditae sunt tertio abs te die ("the third day after their departure from you"); Livy, 21, 38, 1 quinto mense a Carthagine Nova. Hence, the poetic expression ab his, "hereupon", frequent in Ovid. Ab often means "from", "since", "after", with reference to a subsequent period: Cic., Agr. 2, 21, 56 ab Sulla et Pompeio consulibus; Cic., Vat., quod augures omnes usque ab Romulo decreverunt. Adverbial expressions with ab were common: ab initio, a principio, a primo, ab integro. Ab... ad was used in Classical Latin for "from...to": Cic., Att., 7, 8, 4 ab hora octava ad vesperum secreto collocuti sumus; Pl., Am., 1, 1, 97 pugnata pugna usque a mane ad vesperum. Ab...in was rarer: Livy, 27, 2, 9 Romani ab sole orto in multum diei stetero in acie. Ab was particularly common where a time of life was concerned: Cic., Tusc., 2, 11, 27 a pueritia; Ter., Ad., 1, 1, 16 iam inde ab adulescentia; Cic., Att., 7, 8, 5 usque a toga pura.

Ex too could mean "immediately after", "directly after", "after" (and it was more common than ab): e.g., Livy, 4, 31; 40, 1 ex consulatu; Livy, 40, 5 ex quo "since". Phrases like aliud ex alio, "one thing after another"; diem ex die, "from day to day", were also common.⁴³ Ex was frequent in the sense of "from", "onward", "since": e.g., Pl., Pers., 4, 3, 10 bonus volo iam ex hoc die esse; Hor., C., 2, 1, 1 motum ex Metello consule civium tractas. Ex was possible, but rare, in a future

⁴³In Post-classical Latin ex, especially in inscriptions, could mean "one who had completed his term of office": Cod. Just., 1, 17, 29 vir excelsus ex quaestore et ex consule Tribonianus, but this is of only incidental relevance to this particular study.

context: Cic., Fam., 16, 93 Romae vereor ne ex Kal. Jan. magni tumultus.

When the ablative alone is used in Classical Latin to indicate time, the reference is usually to time when or time within which: vere novo "in early spring"; septima hora "at the seventh hour"; quattuor annis "within four years". The ablative to express a point of departure in time is not unknown, but only in negative expressions: Cic., Rosc. Am., 74 Romam multis annis non venit. On this example Ernout and Thomas make the following comment: "Cet emploi est habituellement interprété par le locatif "dans l'espace de nombreuses années"; en fait, les deux cas [i.e. le locatif et l'ablatif de point de départ.] se rejoignaient."⁴⁴

In the post-classical period these subtle distinctions between the three prepositions de, ex and ab and the use of the simple ablative have been largely abandoned. De again gains ground over ex and ab, but not to such an extent to make certain its success. In the Peregrinatio, de is used for tempus a quo (Van Oorde's phrase) twenty times. Examples are: 36, 27-28 sane quadragesimae de epiphania valde cum summo honore hic celebrantur; 47, 30-32 aguntur ea, quae per ipsas septimana de hora nona qua ad Martyrium convenitur, consueverunt agi... The lack of distinction in meaning is spot-lighted by the close proximity of two of the three prepositions used in a temporal context with no noticeable variation in meaning: 12, 4-6 sanctus episcopus, sanctus et vere homo Dei, notus mihi jam satis de eo tempore, a quo ad Thebaidam fueram; 38, 26-28 sed sexta feria vigiliae in Anastase celebrantur ab ea hora, qua de Sion ventum fuerit cum ymnis, usque in mane, id est de hora lucernarii.

⁴⁴Op. cit., p. 70.

Ex is also used in the Peregrinatio to express time from which: 24, 10-11 ex ea die hi fontes usque in hodie permanent hic gratia Dei; 24, 35-36: 25, 1 Illud etiam retulit nobis sanctus ipse dicens, eo quod ex ea die, qua⁴⁵ Ananias cursor per ipsam portam ingressus est. The full figures for the Peregrinatio, provided by Van Oorde, are that de indicating tempus a quo occurs twenty times, and tempus, quo aliquid fit eight times. Ex occurs five times with a purely temporal function, but it is to be noted that only two types of construction with ex are found, ex ea die, and ex illa(ea) hora, indicating perhaps that ex is already somewhat fossilized, and that ab or de are used whenever the expression breaks away from a pure formula: e.g., 43, 25 a pullo primo (also de pullo primo many times); 48, 8 alii sera alii de media nocte. Ab with the task of indicating time occurs some thirteen times, four of which Van Oorde designates as sequente usque ad (as in 47, 13 ab hora sexta usque ad horam nonam). Unlike de, ex and ab are not used to indicate tempus, quo aliquid fit.⁴⁶

While it is not possible to foresee from these statistics the eventual ascendancy of de in the Romance languages, it is incontestable that Late Latin provides examples of de in temporal contexts, which are

⁴⁵N.B. Where the context is not separative the simple ablative can still be used in Late Latin (The gender of dies, now preponderantly feminine, is also to be noted).

⁴⁶There also occurs in the Peregrinatio the interesting and rare use of the genitive case in a separative context. In the phrase ante sex dies paschae (41, 18) the genitive has a separative force ("six days from Easter"), although this use of the genitive is clearly not far from the pure possessive genitive.

extensions or modifications of Classical usage. Bonnet discussing the expression de nocte consurgens, which he found in Gregory of Tours, explains it as an extension of the de media nocte type, and continues: "L'idée d'un temps pris sur la nuit, déduit de la nuit, idée déjà bien obscurcie à l'époque classique, fut probablement tout à fait effacée pour Grégoire."⁴⁷ This means that de nocte in its "pure" Classical sense is an example of separation in time, but that post-classical Latin reduced this notion and extended it to cover time at which. Brunot⁴⁸ makes the point thus: "Du classique de nocte on passe à de praesenti". Both Pei and Bonnet have examples in their texts of de praesente for the usual Classical Latin ad or in praesente (cf. Old French de present). Most of the monographs on Late Latin have examples of de used in a way reminiscent of the Romance languages: nona de opere "the ninth hour after the operation" occurs in the Mulomedicina Chironis (284, 32).⁴⁹ Pei⁵⁰ has examples of de longo tempore, and de ipsa vice, de pluremum annorum spacia. But ab

⁴⁷Op. cit., pp. 608-9.

⁴⁸Ferdinand Brunot, Histoire de la langue française (Paris, 1905), Vol. 1, p. 95.

⁴⁹For the quotation see H. Ahlquist, Studien zur spätlateinischen Mulomedicina Chironis (Uppsala, 1909), p. 78.

⁵⁰Op. cit., p. 246.

was still used in the Christian authors for separation in time: Act., 9, 23 ab octo annis iacentem; Psa., 24, 6 a saeculo ("for all time"); Psa., 57, 4 a vulva ("from the very moment of birth"); Aug., Civ., 16, 24 a prima promissione.⁵¹ Parallel to the type de portam in portam (e.g., Pereg., 7, 6), we find in Ecclesiastical Latin de die in diem (e.g., Vulg., Psa., 60, 8), which is at the root of the modern French de jour en jour (cf. also Chanson de Roland, 2843, de ures ad altres, "from time to time".).

In Old French examples of de to indicate time are not frequent for reasons of context, but the extension of a point of separation in time to a point in time itself is continued. Clairin's general comment concerning the de of time in Old French is: "La préposition de sert à marquer un rapport de temps, et comme l'ablatif latin, elle indique soit le point de départ de l'action dans le temps, soit le moment où elle s'accomplit, soit enfin la durée."⁵² Examples are:

(i) A point of departure in time:

d'ist di in avant. ("from this day foward")
(Serments de Strasbourg)

d'oi cest jur en un meis. ("this day next month")
(Chanson de Roland, 2751)

de lonc tens ere profeticié qu'il auroit un empereor
en Constantinople qui devoit estre gitez aval cele
colonne. (Villehardouin, 308)

Les viandes que il nous donnerent, ce furent oef
dur cuit de quatre jours ou de cinc.
(Joinville, 376).⁵³

⁵¹A. Blaise (op. cit. art. ab), for the quotations with ab and full textual references.

⁵²P. Clairin, Du Génitif latin et de la préposition de (Paris, 1880), pp. 194 ff.

⁵³For Joinville and Villehardouin, ed. de Wailly (Paris, 1874).

(ii) Tempus, quo aliquid fit.

vindrent a la sorcière de nuit (Rois⁵⁴ 1, p. 109)

Si escripture ne fust faite
et puis par clers litte et retraite
mult fussent choses ubliées
ki de viez tens sunt trespasées.
(Roman de Rou, 10)

(iii) Duration:

il n'en out de treis jurz ne de treis nuiz de pain
mangied, ne beud. (Les Quatre Livres des Rois, 1, 115)

je n'en istrai fors de semaine
en larrecin ne an enblee.
(Yvain, 1574)

onques hom lays de nostre temps ne vesqui si saintement
de tout son tems. (Joinville, 4).

While these last examples do not fall strictly into the category of the de of separation in time, they are, as we have seen, closely connected with it, and consequently of interest to our study. Of course, the possibilities for expressions of time in Old French were not limited to the preposition de, particularly those concerned with time at which, or duration of time. Other methods of indicating this function fall in general outside the range of this study. From the earliest texts a(d) was used to express time at which: e.g., a cels dis (Cantilène de sainte Eulalie); Al tems Noe ed al tems Abraam (Vie de saint Alexis, 7). A was used in Old French, occasionally, where modern French would have pour: e.g., a plus de trois semaines, "for more than three weeks". Omission of any preposition is also attested, where Modern French would have à:

⁵⁴Les Quatres Livres des Rois (ed. Leroux de Lincy, Paris, 1841).

e.g., puis icel tems que deus nos vint salver,/nostre anceisour ourent crestiantet. (Vie de saint Alexis, 11-12).

The modern French dès which has the function of indicating separation in time in those contexts in which we find simple de in Old French, and de, ex or ab in Late and Classical Latin appears to have its origin in Ecclesiastical Latin, one manuscript of the Vulgate having the reading invenit unum deex conservis suis; with deex being the almost certain etymology of dès, in spite of its partitive function in this example.⁵⁵ De alone to indicate a starting point in time has lost ground in Modern French to a greater extent than the simple de of separation of a thing from a fixed point, examined earlier in this study. The fuller forms depuis, dès, and à partir de are now extensively used. But the Latin prepositions ex and ab, of which many examples in separative contexts in time can be discovered in Latin texts right up to the time of the formation of the French vernacular, have given way before de by the emergence of texts in the French language, and this is the most important conclusion which we must draw from the foregoing evidence.

(iii) DE OF ORIGIN

In Classical Latin the ablative of origin with or without a preposition is closely associated with the ablative of separation. "With this use [ab urbe proficiscitur]", writes Woodcock,⁵⁶ "should be included

⁵⁵A. Blaise, op. cit. art. deex. Cf. also the unattested de ad or de ab, the postulated etymologies of Italian da.

⁵⁶E. C. Woodcock, A New Latin Syntax (London, 1959), p. 27.

figurative extensions, as when the ablative denotes the source or origin of a person or thing: ex improbo patre nasci." In general the rule existed in Classical Latin that with nasci, parere, natus, ortus, prognatus etc., the preposition ex was used for direct descent, as in the above example, and ab for less close relationships: Caes., B.G., 6, 18, 1 Pherecraten quendam...a Deucalione ortum. But again in practice no rigid distinction was maintained in this matter. Natus was used with the simple ablative: Caes., B.G., 4, 12, 4 amplissimo genere natus. This use of the ablative, however, where rank or condition is concerned (also used with expressions such as summo loco, equestri loco etc.) could be interpreted as an ablative of manner or of instrument. De too is found with natus: Ovid, M., 9, 613 de tigride natus; Cic., Rep., 2, 34 cum de matre familias Tarquiniensi duo filios procreavisset. Cicero virtually confines the ablative alone to natus: Cl., 27 Papia natus; but in poets and early Latin it is found with other words indicating origin: Pl., Am., 365 Davo prognatum patre (cf. also, Vg., A., 9, 642). A more unusual use of the preposition de to denote origin occurs in Cic., Br., 131: accusator de plebe, already indicative of Romance. The preposition was generally omitted in Classical Latin for the country of origin: Caes., B.C., 1, 24, 4 N. Magius Cremona; Livy, 1, 20, 3 Alba oriundum. But we also find the preposition used: Livy, 1, 50, 3 Turnus Herdonius ex Aricia; Livy, 1, 52, 2 ab Alba oriundi. For "born in", either in and the ablative or the locative case was used: e.g., in Hispania natus, Romae natus, but in Late Latin the ablative alone is known: C.I.L. 3422d13 natus Arava.

De in Late Latin was the preponderant preposition, when the context was one of origin. In the Peregrinatio there is in fact no example

of this type of expression,⁵⁷ but the Vulgate has a large number of examples:

1 Chr., 2, 3 hi tres nati sunt ei de filia Sue Chananitide.

1 Chr., 3, 10-11 de hoc quoque natus est Josaphat, pater Joram; qui Joram genuit Ochoziam ex quo ortus est Joas.

From the last example, we can see that ex was still used in this context, but the distinctions of Classical Latin were not maintained. De is probably more frequent than ex in the Vulgate, but examples of the latter are certainly not wanting:

1 Ez., 10, 44 et fuerunt ex eis mulieribus quae peperant filios.

S. John, 8, 41. nos ex fornicatione non sumus nati.

All in all, information about the de of origin in Late Latin is difficult to obtain. From the many examples in the Vulgate one can conclude that de is frequent, but that ex too is widely used. Ab seems not to be used in this sense. The monographs on Late Latin supply little further evidence. Régnier's work⁵⁸ contains the example de virgine natus, but, as we have seen, this was possible in Classical Latin.

For Old French the ascendancy of de is easier to establish, with the reservation that the notion of origin is occasionally difficult to differentiate from that of pure possession, the descendant of the Latin genitive case. There is a good, straightforward example of a de of origin

⁵⁷ It is difficult to distinguish between the closely-knit categories of origin and material, but the latter will be discussed in Chapter III. The examples given by Van Oorde under the heading designat materiam vel originem all fall into the category of material.

⁵⁸ A. Régnier, De la Latinité des sermons de saint Augustin (Paris, 1886), p. 54.

in the Vie de saint Léger: cil ne fud nez de medre vius/qui tal exercite vidist (137-8). The Chanson de Roland has numerous examples:

ci vos enveiet un sun noble barun
ki est de France, si est mult riches hom. (421-22)

ahi culvert, malvais hom de put aire! (763)

e cil d'Espaigne s'en cleiment tuit dolent. (1651)

In addition there are the innumerable proper names followed by the country town or province of origin: e.g., Oger de Danemarche, Justin de Valferree.

In Yvain we find the following examples:

Mes dites moi, se vos savez...
quiez hom est il, et de quel gent. (1801, 1804)

einz liplevist qu'il s'oroit randre
a la dame de Norison. (3282-83)

Other examples are:

N'en iert nuls evesches mais de tun lignage. (Rois, 1, 101)

Si l'out engendred un géant de une femme ki
fut de Geth. (Ibid. 61)

La vegile de ladite Pasque fu nez Jehans mes
fuz de ma premiere femme. (Joinville, 110)⁵⁹

The major difficulty which permeates our whole study of the preposition de is that the full statistics are not available for the period, so crucial for the Romance languages, which separates the Classical Latin period from the earliest monuments of Old French. Commenting on the expression nasci de aliqua, and filium habere de aliqua, Bonnet writes:

⁵⁹For further examples, see Clairin, op. cit., pp. 188-191.

"il n'y aurait d'intérêt qu'à en compter les exemples, afin de montrer que ce qui se rencontre parfois chez les anciens est ici l'usage commun".⁶⁰

This is the crux of the whole matter. But our only resort at this stage is to point to examples in the Low Latin writers of a probable numerical increase of de used with a function found in Classical Latin, but perhaps not extensively used. In each case (with some slight exceptions in the use of the de indicating time) the three categories studied so far offer the tentative results that the use of the preposition de was more widespread in Low Latin than in Classical Latin, that ex and ab were used less frequently in that period than in Classical Latin, and in fact were probably used several centuries before the first French texts only as an archaic reminiscence of correct Latinity on the part of the comparatively negligible number of writers of Latin after the destruction of the schools.⁶¹ By the time of the Strasbourg Oaths de, ab and ex had fallen into disuse in the vernacular, and although the syntax of the preposition de differs in some important respects from that of Modern French it was in most cases the only possible functional moneme in Old French in those contexts studied in the above pages.

⁶⁰Op. cit., p. 607.

⁶¹Cf. V. Väänänen: "Les scribes des VII^e et VIII^e siècles ne connaissent ab et surtout en qu'à titre de réminiscence". ("La préposition latine "de" et le génitif. Une mise au point." R.Li.R. XX, pp. 1-20.), p. 1.

CHAPTER II

THE PARTITIVE DE

French is the only Romance language to have an obligatory partitive construction to express an indefinite part of an indefinite whole. Modern Spanish has abandoned the partitive de construction, although it continued to be used until the seventeenth century. However, this partitive de in Spanish did not indicate an indefinite part of an indefinite whole, but an indefinite part of a definite whole, and this is also true of the French language in its early stages. It is only by the sixteenth century that the French partitive de was used as it is in Modern French. Italian occupies an intermediate position between Modern French and Spanish. In Old Italian, as in Old Spanish and Old French, the totality had to be definite for the partitive de to be used; from the sixteenth century the partitive construction in Italian is theoretically similar to that of Modern French, but in practice it is usually omitted in ordinary speech, or only used when the totality is in fact determined by some other feature of the sentence. The following study is an attempt to trace the Modern French partitive construction with de back to its origins in spoken Latin and to show the way in which Classical Latin handled cases in which Modern French makes use of du, de la, and des. It is obvious that a multitude of factors have been at work at various stages of the Latin and French languages, and to disentangle the relative importance of each of these and thereby provide a satisfactory explanation of this partitive construction is a task never yet accomplished, and one which may well

be impossible, but which students of the Romance languages cannot but attempt.

In Classical Latin there existed at least three ways of expressing the Modern French partitive forms with de. The particular context of an expression like aquam bibo ("Je bois de l'eau") could indicate a partitive force. The second related means of expressing the partitive notion, used particularly with numerals was the unus ex (de) his hominibus type of construction. Thirdly, and overwhelmingly the most popular Classical Latin usage was the genitive case (genitivus partitivus), e.g., pars equitum, mille hominum, optimus civium, multum auri, and other, perhaps stylized expressions quo loci? ubi terrarum? quid novi? These three methods are of only incidental interest to the student of the Romance languages, whose attention is attracted mainly by the occasional example which deviates from the norm. For, from the earliest times the preposition de was used in contexts which are indicative of the later breakdown of the case system and of the emergence of a partitive construction with de. A good example of this is: Pl., Ps., 1164 dimidium de praeda.¹ A similar construction occurs in Cato, Agr., 96, 1 faex de vino. Even the later Classical authors occasionally use de in an unusual way, but this is probably merely to avoid ambiguity: Cic., Verr., 2, 1, 12 ut aliquam partem de istius imprudentia reticere possim; id., Phil., 2, 27, 65

¹Cf. in the same authors the more usual constructions: Pl., Ps., 452 dimidium mali; Bacc., 1184, 1189 dimidium auri; Cato, Agr., 24, and 108 dimidium helvoli, vini.

persona de mimo; id., Tusc., 4, 7, 16 si quae sunt de eodem genere. The ablative with de is occasionally used by the poets for the sake of metre: Ovid, F., 6, 309 aliquid de more vetusto; id. Pont., 4, 13, 23 laudes de Caesare; Hor., Sat., 1, 1, 13 cetera de genere hoc.

However, these examples, while of importance for the background of the partitive construction, do not yet suggest the quite new construction to be developed in French and the early forms of the other Romance languages. It is not impossible to find more telling examples in Classical Latin (e.g., Cic., Fl., 91 dat de lucro), but one of the best examples occurs in Plautus, whose Latin, although stylized and polished in some respects, offers many good examples of constructions which are not found again until the post-classical period of Latin: St., 400 ibo intro ad libros et discam de dictis melioribus. But such examples are rare. We have perhaps to wait until the Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius, a text in which Professor Palmer² detects "a whiff of the gutter", to discover another example, which suggests Romance syntax so clearly: quantum de vita perdiderit. Although this last example is not a pure partitive in the sense the word is used with respect to Modern French, examples of this type are important for our purpose, because scholars of the French language have seen these indefinite adverbs (quantum, aliquid, tantum, etc.) as the most potent factor in the formation of the partitive construction. But all in all there is little to be gained by a study of Classical and

²L. R. Palmer, The Latin Language (London, 1954), p. 151.

pre-classical authors, except in the negative sense that we find there a different syntactic pattern for the expression of an indefinite part of both a definite and an indefinite whole.

However, with the Ecclesiastical authors more interesting evidence begins to emerge and a large number of examples of what we have seen hitherto to be a very rare use of de, begin to appear. The Vulgate contains a number of Romance partitive constructions:

S. John, 21, 10 afferte de piscibus, quos predidistis nunc.

S. Mat., 15, 27 nam et catelli edunt de micis quae cadunt de mensa dominorum suorum.

1 Sam., 14, 30 quanto magis si comedisset populus de praeda inimicorum suorum.

S. Mat., 24, 8 date nobis de oleo vostro.

11 Mach., 12, 40 invenerunt autem sub tunicis interfectorum de donariis idolorum.

Gen., 2, 17 de ligno autem scientiae boni et mali ne comedas.

Bonnet³ provides several examples of a new type of construction with de, with and without an indefinite antecedent, found in the work of Gregory of Tours:

H.F., 3, 34 si pietas tua habet aliquid de pecunia.

H.F., 2, 42 non habeo de parentibus qui mihi possit adiuvere.

Mart., 83 ut mererer aliqua de sanctorum virtutibus contemplare.

Mart., 1, 34 de sancta cera super arborem posui.

Jul., 24 ut de pulvere...potui darent.

³Op. cit., p. 610-11.

These two examples from Goelzer's study of St. Jerome⁴ are very close to the French partitive construction: S. Mat. IV, 26, 29 dicit se dominus de hac vinea nequaquam esse bibiturum; de vino eorum bibet dominus.

In the Peregrinatio we find four examples of a partitive de, and thirteen additional examples which Van Oorde qualifies as vi partitiva:

3, 34-35 dederunt nobis presbyteri loci ipsius eulogias,
id est de pomis, quæ in ipso monte nascuntur.

19, 23-24 Nos ergo accipientes de presbytero eulogias,
id est de pomario sancti Johannis baptistae.

7, 10-11 Ostenderunt etiam nobis locum, ubi de spiritu
Moysi acceperunt septuaginta viri.

46, 19-21 Et quoniam nescio quando dicitur quidam fixisse
morsum et furasse de sancto ligno.

Other examples of a partitive de in the Peregrinatio are:

16, 9 quæ tamen Segor sola de illis quinque in hodie
constat.

33, 9-10 dicet psalmum quicumque de presbyteris et
respondent omnes.

33, 30-32 De laicis etiam, viris aut mulieribus, si
qui volunt, usque ad lucem loco sunt.⁵

In spite of these numerous examples taken from post-classical Latin, we must remember that the Classical Latin accusative case (da mihi aquam) was still favoured to express the partitive notion, and also that ex was also used in this way in Late Latin. Brunot⁶ considers it to be more

⁴Op. cit., p. 342.

⁵Cf. also: 33, 110; 34, 2-4; 37, 10; 39, 31; 40, 12; 48, 3; 49, 8; 53, 1; 53, 16-17; 54, 6.

⁶Op. cit., p. 95 (note).

frequent than de: "Mais c'est surtout ex qui dans la première période sert de partitif: dabis ex vino et oleo (Mul. Chir., 60, 20)." In this text ex is frequently used as a partitive, but other Late Latin texts have examples. In the Peregrinatio there are four examples:

8, 20-21 Plurimi autem ex ipsis sanctis.

15, 3 Multi autem et ex ipsis monachis sanctis.

32, 2-3 unus ex diaconibus.

49, 20-21 unus ex discipulis ibi non erat.

However, these examples are extensions of the Classical construction with ex rather than instances suggesting the Romance partitive. Pei⁷ found in the eighth-century texts that: "Ex, almost altogether displaced by de with the meaning of place from which, survives partially in its classical function of replacement of the partitive genitive (this function, however, is mostly taken over by de)..." The Vulgate does have examples of a Romance type partitive with ex:

Gen., 2, 16 Ex omni ligno paradisis comedet;

S. John, 1, 24 et qui missi fuerant, erant ex pharisaeis.

S. Mat., 23, 34 ideo ecce ego mitto ad vos prophetas, et sapientes et scribas et ex illis occidetis et crucifigetis, et ex eis flagellabitis in synagogis vestris.

In general the background evidence we find in Late Latin for the French partitive construction is that the Classical constructions continued to dominate, but that virtually all Ecclesiastical and Medieval Latin

⁷Op. cit., p. 244.

authors began to make use of new construction. Ex and de were used at first, with de assuming the ascendancy after the first centuries of post-classical Latin. In addition the Classical Latin construction with adjectives such as multus (e.g., da mihi multam aquam), was occasionally changed, becoming da mihi multum aquae,⁸ which was used, says Beberfall,⁹ not just as an alternative form for multam aquam, but when the writer or speaker wished to convey with greater precision a set of circumstances in which the whole to which he wished to refer was a definite entity, specifically mentioned in another part of the text. In Vulgar Latin, says Beberfall:¹⁰ "If the preposition de introduces a particular whole, of which an indefinite part is expressed, its omission will imply that the whole is indefinite, or that it is expressed in the generic sense. Or, if the preposition implies that the part is indefinite and the whole is definite, its omission implies a corollary; namely, that the part is indefinite and the whole is also indefinite". We must, of course, bear in mind before approaching the Romance languages that the relationship between the Classical Latin partitive with ex or de, or the Classical Latin partitive genitive, and the Romance pure partitive of the da nobis de aqua type or even the multum de aqua type, is not at all clear. How, or exactly when the Romance forms developed is impossible to state with any certainty. Although the extended use of a preposition corresponds to the

⁸ E.g., Mul. Chir., primum adicies oleum sequens acetum, de inde salis triti; Cat., De Re., 74 aquae paulatim addito.

⁹ L. Beberfall, A History of the Partitive Indefinite Construction in the Spanish Language (unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, 1952), p. 10.

¹⁰ Op. cit., p. 19.

trend from synthesis to analysis in Late Latin and the Romance languages, one cannot be sure how spontaneous is each extension in the use of the preposition de. Whether the partitive de of the Romance languages (i.e. not the de following the expressions of quantity, beaucoup, molto etc. but that characteristic of Modern French with no equivalent in Modern Spanish and sparingly used in Italian) arose as the result of influence from the de of separation, from that of the Classical partitive with de or ex, or from some other source, cannot be ascertained at this stage of our knowledge of the causes that determined the evolution of the Romance languages or of the nature of linguistic change at any time.

The most striking feature of the partitive construction in Old French is the sparing use made of it. Not until the sixteenth century with the Heptaméron of Marguerite de Navarre is the partitive de used with the consistency of Modern French.¹¹ The two problems which confront the student of this construction are the nature of its use in Old French and the cause of its development towards its position in Modern French and its concomitant disfavour in other Romance languages such as Spanish. Although in the very earliest French texts an occasional example of this construction can be discovered (e.g., Quatre Livres des Rois, 213 et pristrent de l'ewe), in general the de is omitted: e.g., Elle colpes non auret in the Cantilène de sainte Eulalie ("elle n'avait pas de culpa"); ibid., Ne

¹¹Cf. P. B. Fay, Elliptical Partitiv Usage in Affirmativ Clauses in French Prose of the Fourteenth, Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries, (Paris, 1912).

por or ned argent ne paramenz/por manatce regiel ne preieient. In the Vie de saint Alexis de is omitted in the following examples:

Desprient Deu que conseil lour en doinst
D'icel saint ome par cui il guariront. (329-30)
(="Des conseils")

Si veirs miracles lour at Deus demostrez
Qui vint plorant chantant l'en fait raler. (559-60)
("Et Dieu leur a montré de vrais miracles")

Bons fut li siecles al tems anciënour,
Quer fait i eret e justisie ed amour,
S'ert credance, dont or n'i a nul prout. (1-3)

N'at plus enfant, li vult molt onorer. (43)

In the Chanson de Roland there are very few examples of the partitive de. But one such is: e si n'avrez, ço quid de plus gentilz. (150) This is the only example of its type in this text, but also of great interest is the use of the partitive de and the definite article in:

Pur sun seignur deit hom susfrir granz mals
E endurer e forz freiz e granz chalz,
Sin deit hom perdre del sanc e de la char. (1117-19)

The phrase perdre del sanc e de la char is only ostensibly equivalent to the Modern French perdre du sang et de la chair, which expresses an indeterminate quantity of flesh and blood. In Old French the oblique case alone would have been used to give this meaning. The use of the preposition de and the definite article indicates that the amount of flesh and blood is fixed, that which you yourself or he himself possesses. Foulet¹² quotes two examples from Aspremont¹³ which help to illustrate this point:

¹²L. Foulet, Petite syntaxe de l'ancien français (3rd ed.; Paris, 1965), p. 70.

¹³La Chanson d'Aspremont (ed. L. Brandin 2nd. ed.; Paris, 1923), p. 24.

sempres i perdent de le car e del sanc. (6796)

vostre soit il et en vostre comant
qui en perdes e le car et le sanc. (3430-31)

In Old French there were three ways of expressing the idea of a definite whole, the use of a possessive adjective as in Modern French, the definite article and the partitive article. The occurrence of the definite article in the second example from Aspremont, which has the meaning "your particular flesh and blood", helps us to see that the partitive article in the first example also represents a specific and well-defined quantity (Foulet translates the first examples as "de leur chair et de leur sanc" [sic.]). The definite article does not lose its force in Old French when it is combined with de. This is perhaps more important than has been generally recognized. In Old French the definite article was used with substantives only when its function was to render the noun specific. The substantive was used without article when it was general or of an unspecified nature: "Dès qu'un substantif est pris dans un sens vague et indéfini", writes Foulet, "dès que les limites de son extension s'effacent un peu, l'article disparaît". (Op. cit., p. 49). This usage of the definite article results from its etymology, the Latin demonstrative pronoun ille, and the declining force of this article in the later Middle Ages towards the position it holds in Modern French, that of a grammatical sign, a signifiant virtually without a signifié in many cases, could well correspond to the evolution of the partitive construction from an indefinite amount of a definite whole to an indefinite amount of an indefinite whole.

Foulet,¹⁴ who has produced the most comprehensive survey of Old French syntax and a detailed account of the partitive article, explains the second difficulty which concerns the partitive article, its very existence, in a rather unsatisfactory way, but one which deserves consideration, namely its development through the use of de with expressions of quantity. Foulet asks himself the following question, to illustrate Old French usage: "Un seigneur, répondant à l'appel du roi, mène une cinquantaine d'hommes au combat: il en perd quelques-uns; comment énoncera-t-il le fait?"¹⁵ If he says barons i ai perduz, this would imply that the knights were being considered as forming part of an undetermined body of men, the whole of the king's men perhaps, not just his particular band of knights. If he said mes barons i ai perduz he would imply that all his knights had been lost. The answer, says Foulet, was to make use of one of the adverbs of quantity molt, poi, tant, az(z)ez etc., particularly asez which had no vague meaning in Old French, corresponding to the pas mal de of colloquial Modern French. There were two constructions in Old French with these expressions of quantity, one an adjectival use,¹⁶ the other an adverbial use in which, as in Modern French, the adverb is followed by the preposition de. Usually the de was followed by the definite article, or by a possessive or demonstrative adjective, as in these examples from the Chanson de Roland:

¹⁴Cf. note 12.

¹⁵Op. cit., p. 63.

¹⁶E.g., La Vie de saint Alexis (112) Par moltes terres fait querre son enfant; (471-3) "Sire Alexis tanz jorz t'ai desidret/e tantes lairmes por le ton cors ploret.

trop ad perdut del sanc. (2229)

qu'asez i ad de la gent paienur. (2427)

asez i ad de cele gent paienur. (2694)

asez i moerent e des uns e des altres. (3277)

But occasionally de alone is found after expressions of quantity. Foulet quotes the following three examples:

Mil tanz plus d'enor i aura li vainquerres.

(Li Contes del Graal, 8832-33).

Par foi, fet il, bele ge oi

tant d'eise com ge avoir poi. (ibid., 3445-6)

De cers de biches, de chevreus

ocist asez par le boscage. (Bérout, Le Roman de Tristan, 1426-7).

It is on the basis of this usage, not extensively attested that Foulet founds his theory of the development of the partitive de. The seigneur can now say de mes barons asez i ai perduz. The next step was the omission of the adverbs, making the phrase de mes barons i ai perduz. This became possible, says Foulet, when it was realized that in the adjectival use, the adjective could be suppressed at will, as in the lines from Chrétien de Troyes' Perceval:

s'i ot contes et dus et rois. (2788)

mout ot reïnes e contesses. (2789)

The difference between the adjectival and adverbial usage was that in the latter de was left as a residue after the omission of the adverb; and this de is that used to express an indefinite part of an indefinite whole in French after the fifteenth century.¹⁷ However, this ingenious theory

¹⁷ Examples of the partitive to express an indefinite part of an indefinite whole can be discovered as early as the thirteenth century, but interpretation of these examples is often varied. Cf. Foulet, op. cit., pp. 82-83.

could well be wrong or unnecessary. It is possible that the partitive de and the de with adverbs of quantity developed side by side without direct influence on each other. The general extension in the usage of ~~in the usage of~~ the preposition de in Vulgar Latin and Old French is sufficient to justify a completely new and spontaneous construction, even if there were not examples in Late Latin of the comedere de aliqua re type which already contains a partitive de without an adverb of quantity. The partitive construction in Old French could have arisen as a natural continuation of these Late Latin examples, which seem to have their origin in the separative notion considered in the previous chapter, to eat a portion from something, and which are also closely linked to the multi ex his hominibus type of partitive usage in Classical Latin. Foulet admits the separative origin of the negative expressions (e.g., plus hisdos om ne puet de pain mangier¹⁸) in which the de is not strictly partitive at all: "On en vient à soupçonner que, dans ces cas, de n'a pas eu pour rôle premier d'exprimer l'idée partitive, mais bien de marquer un mouvement "pour s'écarter de" et, par conséquent, d'indiquer l'origine de l'action."¹⁹ There is little evidence to show that this explanation of the de with this type of negation²⁰ will not suffice for the partitive de itself, although no explanation is satisfactory which cannot explain why the other Romance

¹⁸Le Couronnement de Louis (ed. E. Langlois, 2nd ed.; Paris, 1925) 1. 512.

¹⁹Op. cit., p. 75.

²⁰Normally in Old French the oblique case alone was used in negative expressions as it was with positive ones. However, with verbs of eating and drinking and related verbs (e.g., vivre, gouster, coillir, prendre, vestir) the de of origin was employed (Cf. the development of vivre and manger in Modern French: vivre de pain; manger du pain, the former still being the preposition de, the latter the partitive article indicating an indefinite part of an indefinite whole).

languages did not follow the same course as French and extend the partitive de to cover in all cases the notion of an indefinite part of an indefinite whole, and this remains to be elucidated.

CHAPTER III

DE OF INSTRUMENT, MATTER, MEANS, AND AGENT

One of the prominent features of the syntax of the preposition de in Modern French is its use as a means of linking a complement to a passive verb. Par shares this function, and is in fact favoured in most cases, except perhaps with verbs of feeling (e.g., il est aimé de ses enfants). In Old French de is the dominant preposition: par, as the following pages will attempt to demonstrate, is much less frequent than in Modern French with this function.

The use of de in Old French is again a continuation of a construction possible in Classical Latin, more common in Late Latin, and clearly of major importance in the earliest Old French texts. In Classical Latin de was not one of the most frequent devices for indicating the agent with a passive verb. The two most extensively used constructions involved a distinction between inanimate and animate substantives. When the agent was a thing, the instrumental ablative fulfilled the function of providing a grammatical link with the verb, and when the agent was a person a or ab was the general construction, with per existing as a possible alternative.

This chapter will also discuss the de of instrument, matter, means and accompaniment. To distinguish clearly between these categories is a difficult and, for the purposes of this study an unnecessary task, particularly in the early history of the constructions involved. For the further we retrace the origin of the de introducing the complement of a past participle, the closer the links become between all these categories,

as the following remark of Bennett¹ illustrates: "The notion of means is an outgrowth of the idea of association inherent in the Instrumental. Thus hostem telo percussit primarily meant 'he along with his spear', i.e. with his spear in his hand; smote the enemy." The fact that a sociative idea lies at the basis of the instrumental is even more clearly demonstrated by the use of cum occasionally in Early Latin, a construction which, like many others, makes its reappearance in written Latin with the Christian authors.² Examples from Early Latin are: Pl., frag., 101 cum virgis caseum radi potest; id. Curc., 289 incedunt suffarcinati cum libris, cum sportulis; id. Capt., 1003 aut anites, aut coturnices dantur, quicum lusitent.

In Classical Latin, the use of cum was restricted to pure accompaniment with the result that obsedere cum gladiis curiam was not the equivalent of obsedere gladiis curiam.³ The relationship between accompaniment and instrument was not, however, unknown to Classical Latin, but on this occasion the preposition concerned is ad. Bourciez makes the following comment about the use of ad to express instrumentality in Classical Latin and its extended use in Late Latin: "De l'idée de concomitance, a pu se dégager celle d'instrument, qu'on entrevoit déjà dans canere ad tibiam clarorum virorum laudes (Cic., Tusc., 4, 3) mais qui apparaît nettement surtout à la décadence: flexo ad pectinam capillo (Spart., Hadr., 26, 1); ad manus illum trahentes (Act., 9, 8 Vulg.); ad latiores lanceas beluas occidebant (Veg., 3, 24)."⁴

¹Op. cit., p. 325.

²Vide infra, p. 62.

³Cf. Cic., Cat., 1, 32.

⁴E. Bourciez, Éléments de linguistique romane (5th ed.; Paris, 1956), p. 114.

For our particular study the most important evidence provided by Classical and pre-classical Latin is the rarity of de with the function being discussed in this chapter.⁵ In addition to cum, and ad, there are other methods of indicating instrumentality to be found competing with the instrumental ablative and the preposition ab.⁶ Per, which has survived as a rival to de in French,⁷ was used in Classical Latin particularly when the agent was animate: Cic., Verr., 2, 2, 3 statuerunt injurias per vos ulcisci; Cic., Rosc. Am., 29, 80, quid ais? vulgo occidebatur? per quos? et a quibus ("by whom? and by whose command?"). But per was also possible with an inanimate noun: Cic., Verr., 2, 1, 60 per ludum et jocum; Sall., J., 11, 8 per dolum. When de was used in Classical Latin it was usually the material out of which a thing was made, which was indicated by the de: Ovid, M., 14, 313 niveo factum de marmore signum; Virg., Georg., 3, 13 templum de marmore; Cic., Phil., 5, 7 de templo carcerem fieri. The most favoured method of indicating the material in Classical Latin was the use of the adjective: e.g., Virg., E., 7, 35 facere aliquem marmoreum etc. Ex also had this function: Cic., Verr., 2, 2, 21 statua ex aere facta, but de prevailed in Late Latin and has, of course, survived, widely in the

⁵It is true that the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae has a large number of examples of de, pro ablativo instrumenti, but the majority do not suggest Romance syntax.

⁶The pure ablative of instrument when the agent was personal was not unknown in Classical Latin, but this was perhaps a Classical refinement, with the special nuance of meaning - that the agent was playing a passive rôle - and of no great consequence for our study: e.g., Caes., B.G., 1, 18 legione quam secum haberat militibusque qui ex provincia convenerunt... murum fossamque perducit. Other ablatives of personal agent are found, which are somewhat fossilized expressions, and as such contrary to the norm: Cic., Verr., 2, 40, quid hoc homine facias?, Plaut., Tri., 157 si quid eo fuerit.

⁷Per became par in French through the tendency of atonic [e], to be lowered to [a] before [r] (cf. mercatum, marché).

Romance languages (French couronne d'or; Italian corona d'oro; Rumanian cunună de aur; Spanish corona de oro). Apart from this de indicating material, only a few rare examples of interest for Romance syntax can be discovered before the end of the Classical period. Perhaps the first example of pure Romance instrumentality introduced by the preposition de is: Ovid, M., 6, 80 percussam...sua...de cuspidē terram. Other isolated examples are: Enn., 514 equus...de praesepebus fartus; Cic., Phil., 8, 13 quid te facturum de belua putas?

It is once again with the Late Latin authors that the preposition de becomes more frequent although the Classical constructions are still favoured; and in spite of the fact that Blaise in his dictionary of the Christian authors can bring forward a large number of examples, the ratio of new to old is still by no means equally balanced. Examples from the Christian authors are: Filostr., 97, 8 corpus de terra plasmatum; S. S. Reg. 26, 8 ap. Lucif., Athan., 1, p. 30 occidere de lancea; Iren., 2, 22, 3 de quinque panibus satiavit multitudinem. Aug., Ep., 153, 25 de falsitati vicisti ("through falsehood").⁸ Bonnet quotes several examples from the writings of Gregory of Tours: H.F., 1, 48, p. 56, 13 de quorum vocibus...expergefati; Mart., 50, p. 523, 5 de qua visione concussus. Bonnet rightly sees a close connection between the Classical de of material and the Late Latin de of instrument or means: "A l'idée

⁸For further examples and full references to texts, cf. Blaise, op. cit. art. de.

de matière celle de cause ou de moyen se substitue insensiblement et ainsi on se rapproche davantage encore de l'instrumental proprement dit."⁹

As in the previous chapter, the monographs on Late Latin authors have examples of the de of instrument, means, or agent. Goelzer's study of St. Jerome provides examples of facere de; vivere de, and contains the example digiti de anulis radiant (Ep., 22, 28).¹⁰ In Dubois' work we find the following examples: de sermonum vestrorum flumine pectus ardescit (40, 6); de religionis causis elocutio ventosa componitur (63, 20).¹¹ Two examples from the Mulomedicina Chironis are: defricatione de vino et oleo utere hieme (164, 11); de ambobus oculis videre (235, 3).¹² There are many examples in the Itala or Vulgate of the de of instrument: Ex., 21, 6 pertundet ei dominus auriculam de subula; 3, Esdr., 4, 30 caedebat regem de sinistra manu. From the eighth-century texts, Pei has brought forward some ten instances of instrumentality with de: e.g., de ipso teleneu revestire;¹⁴ de potestate accinctus¹⁵ etc.

⁹Op. cit., p. 612.

¹⁰Jér., pp. 341-2.

¹¹Op. cit., p. 416.

¹²Cf. H. Ahlqvist, op. cit., p. 78.

¹³Cf. H. Rönsch, op. cit., pp. 392-3.

¹⁴From a text of the year 710 A.D. in the reign of Childebert III, the scribe being Actulius.

¹⁵768 A.D; Pepin, Rex: Hitherius.

Pirson in his book on the Latin inscriptions of Gaul makes the following interesting comments: "Il est rare que le moyen soit exprimé par l'ablatif seul... La langue des inscriptions le transcrit généralement au moyen de de surtout dans des formules de suo, de sua pecunia, de proprio..." But, adds Pirson: "le véritable instrumental n'est exprimé qu'une seule fois à l'aide de cette préposition dans une inscription chrétienne": verba d(e)i toto de pectore prompsit (XII 944).

The warning necessary when putting forth a large number of examples in this way, that it is in general the old constructions which still dominate and the new are exceptions to the norm, is well supported by a study of the Peregrinatio. De is not used in this text with a personal agent. On the few occasions when the need to introduce a complement to a passive verb arises, ab is still used: 1, 9-10 consuetudo est ut fiat hic oratio ab his, qui veniunt; 11, 7 arbor sicomori quae dicitur a patriarchis posita esse; 15, 16-17 hic positus est sanctus Moyses ab angelis.¹⁶ De is in fact used only three times in the Peregrinatio in place of the Classical instrumental ablative and in each case the substantive is inanimate: 46, 14-15 episcopus sedens de manibus suis summitates de ligno sancto premet; 46, 23-24 primum de fronte sic de oculis tangentes crucem et titulum. De occurs in the Classical function of designating the material out of which a thing is made seven times in the Peregrinatio: 5, 17 et in medio ibi quasi altarium de lapibus factum

¹⁶Cf. also: 12, 7; 15, 19; 15, 20-21; 15, 23; 28, 11; 28, 28; 33, 12; 35, 14; 46, 21; 54, 1.

habet; 23, 10-11 nam erat et juxta archiotipa similiter de tali marmore facta; 23, 4-6 ibi ostendit michi archiotepam ipsius ingens, simillimam, ut ipsi dicebant marmoream tanti nitoris ac si de margarita esset.

(N.B. the use of the adjective marmoream, the favoured method of expressing material in Classical Latin.)¹⁷

There is a good example in the Peregrinatio of per used to indicate a personal agent with a passive verb: 54, 23 ea, quae dicuntur vel exponuntur per episcopum. Per is also found to indicate means with an inanimate noun: 47, 16 ostendatur tam per evangelia quam etiam per apostolorum scripturas factum esse; 27, 6 scio per scripturas in eo loco venisse. Per appears to become more frequent in Late Latin than in Classical Latin, particularly when the noun was inanimate. Blaise has brought forth several examples from the Christian authors: e.g., Cypr., Ep., 69, 2 salvus per aquam fieri; Ambr., Ep., 74, 11 liberat per sanguinem Christi; Hier., Ep., 58, 3 si loca sancta per idola polluisent.¹⁸

One conclusion which must be drawn from a study of the de of of instrument, matter, means and agent in Late Latin is that, unlike the de of separation and the partitive de, powerful rival prepositions existed some of which, as is the case with par, are still dominant in Modern French. In addition to per in Late Latin there existed such prepositions

¹⁷Cf. also: 18, 22; 25, 30; 40, 6; 40, 7.

¹⁸For further examples, cf. Blaise op. cit. art. per.

as cum,¹⁹ ad, in etc. side by side with de. Cum, which had been quite strong with this function in Early Latin, but very rare in Classical Latin²⁰ is found once more with the definite task of indicating the instrument: Greg., H.F., 8, 15 confractum cum malleis; Eccli., 7, 33 propurga te cum brachiis (translated by Blaise as "par le travail de vos mains"); 15, 11 adimplebis me laetitia cum vultu tuo (cf. Act. 2, 28 cum facie tua).

Ad, as the early French texts and some idioms in Modern French would lead us to expect, was also used to express instrumentality. There is an obvious example of this in the Peregrinatio: sic redirent mature ad candelas ("by means of candles"). Other instances of the ad of agent or instrument are: Act., 9, 8 ad manus illum trahentes; Oros., Hist., 5, 4, 6 ad unum gladii ictum caput desecare; Ps. Vigil., Taps. Trin., ad stylum luminis viam demonstrare iustitiae. Such examples prove what the evidence of Old French must make one suspect, that ad and ab, merged in function to a great extent in Late Latin, eventually producing the French preposition a(d), which usually represents ad, but occasionally ab. Ab in Late Latin was extended from time to time to cover inanimate agents: Sid., Carm., 2, 380 suis hic ultus ab armis; Sap., 4, 4 a vento commoveri;

¹⁹Cum has not survived in French although it has in other Romance languages (e.g., It. con, Sp. con, Rum. cu). In Old French av(o)ec, od(o), etc. were used in place of cum. The etymology, (ab hoc, apud hoc?), origin, and interrelationship between these words in Old French are still badly explained.

²⁰As we have already seen, it is often difficult to distinguish between accompaniment and instrument. One or two examples in Classical Latin (e.g., Cat. 98, 3 cum lingua lingere) could perhaps be considered as falling into the category of instrument & means.

Hier., Ep., 46, 10 demonstratus a stella; Greg., Mart., 2, 41 a fuste percussus. By the eighth century, as the texts studied by Pei indicate, the prepositions ab and ad were virtually indistinguishable. In examples such as ad homene comparassit;²¹ ad deo timentibus hominibus fuit concessum,²² it is impossible to know whether the examples are true instances of ad, or merely phonetically corrupted uses of ab.

In conclusion to this discussion of the variety of prepositions indicating instrumentality in Late Latin it is necessary to add to the list the preposition in, which perhaps required this function by influence of its Greek counterpart ἐν. Examples of the in of instrument are: Ps., 60, 5; 45, 4 protegar in velamento alarum tuarum; Pass., Perp., 3 motus in hoc verbo; Ital., Exod., 17, 5 virgam in qua percussisti flumen.

A study of the early Old French texts illustrates the fact that de must have been stronger in the spoken Latin and earliest vernacular than any written texts suggest. De still has several rivals in French in the category of instrumentality, means, and agency, i.e. at all periods of the French language, but whereas de is strong over the whole range of the fairly wide field covered by this chapter, other prepositions tend to be more sporadic. In the discussion of the French descendants of the constructions we have been studying in the previous sections, it is perhaps necessary to differentiate more clearly between matter, means, accompaniment, instrument, and agency, than was possible or desirable in the Latin period.

²¹709 A.D., from the reign of Childebert III, the scribe being Blatcharius.

²²716 A.D., from the reign of Chilperic II, the scribe was Actulius.

If first of all we consider the de acting as a link between a passive verb and its complement we find that in nearly every case the only rival to de is par. In his discussion of this category Clairin writes:

"Aujourd'hui nous employons plutôt par avec les compléments des verbes passifs, sans distinguer les noms de personnes des noms de choses. Au moyen âge on ne les distinguait pas davantage, mais on les faisait accompagner de la préposition de, et l'on n'employait que très rarement par dans ce sens."²³ The Serments de Strasbourg and the Cantilène de sainte Eulalie have no example of this category, but on the several occasions when it occurs in the Vie de saint Alexis, de preponderates, although par occurs more frequently than Clairin's "très rarement" would suggest:

de saint batesme l'ont fait regenerer. (29)

d'or e de gemes fut li sarcueus parez. (586)

quer ore est s'aneme de glorie replenide. (613)²⁴

The only examples of par with a past participle in the Alexis are:

por²⁵ nul avoir ne volst estre encombrez. (95)

par cel saint ome sont lour anemes salvedes. (605)

²³Op. cit., p. 191.

²⁴The other examples of de in the Alexis occur on lines, 67, 73, 200, 247, 346, and 618. This list includes the de of instrument and the de linking a complement to a verb.

²⁵Although this use of por must be equated with par in function, it is also clearly connected with the Latin preposition pro, a case of orthographic and phonetic confusion similar to that of the prepositions ad and ab. The Modern Spanish and Portuguese preposition por is another example of a confusion between two Latin prepositions. In Old Spanish and Portuguese per was the equivalent of the modern por.

In addition there are just two examples closely connected with this category, the par of means:

d'icel saint ome par cui il guariront. (330)

par cest saint ome deussoms ralumer. (620)

In the Chanson de Roland, de with a past participle is much more frequent than par, but examples of the latter can be found:

Examples of de²⁶ are:

d'or e d'argent.III. muls chargez. (32)

e dist al rei: "salvez sei de deu". (123)

de guarnemenz se prent a cunreer. (342)

de tel barnage l'ad deux enluminet. (535)

parmi le cors nasfret de.IIII. epiez. (2080)

de chrestiens devrez estre servie. (2350)

Examples of par are:

par Charlemagne n'ert guariz. (354)

par Guenelun serat destruite France. (835)

jamais n'ert vencut pur nul hume carnel. (2153)

par tel glutun n'ert bataille oi vencie. (1337)

As far as this category of de is concerned, the evidence provided by other Old French texts produces little or no change in emphasis.²⁷ It

²⁶Cf. also: lines 130, 185, 408, 416, 428, 439, 462, 463, 652, 966, 2969, 3040, 3150, etc. In all there are 37 examples in the Chanson de Roland of de used to link a complement to a past participle, and only 6 examples of par with this function.

²⁷For a list of quotations from a wider range of texts, cf. Clairin, op. cit., pp. 191-92.

was only in the period after the seventeenth century that par became the dominant method of linking the complement to the passive verb.²⁸ For the other categories being discussed in this chapter, there are more rival prepositions both in Old French and Modern French. In Old French de was the favoured preposition, as these examples and others from the Chanson de Roland and Yvain will demonstrate:

de lur espees cumencent a capler.

(Chanson de Roland, 3910)

fierit l'amirail de l'espee de France.

(Ibid., 3615)

...granz colps s'entredunerent.

de lor espiez.

(Ibid., 3368-9)

jo i ferrai de Durendal m'espee.

(Ibid.,²⁹ 1462)

ja la fist Dex, de sa main nue
por Nature feire muser.

(Yvain, 1502-3)

Amander doit de bele dame
qui l'a a amie ou a fame.

(Ibid., 2491-2)

on ques ne les fina de batre
d'unnes corgiees a sis neuz.

(Ibid., 4100-1)

²⁸Cf. E. Bourciez: "Du reste, au XVII^e siècle on favorisait encore de au lieu de par devant le complément du verbe passif: Le silence n'était interrompu que du bruit de la mer (Voiture); ceux qui étoient gagnés de la Cour (La Rochefoucauld). [E. Bourciez, op. cit., p. 697.]

²⁹Cf. also: 1055, 1225, 1322, 1625, 1925, 2804, 2539, 3051, 3320, 3341, 3351, 3419, 3475, etc. In all there are 40 examples in the Chanson de Roland of de indicating the instrument. There are really no examples of par which quite correspond to the de of instrument. It is for this reason that we have to make a subtle distinction during the French period of our study between instrument and means. An example such as par ses messages mandet ses jugeors (3699), is close to the idea of instrumentality, but must be considered as means. There are more than 20 examples of par indicating means in the Chanson de Roland (e.g., 74, 167, 395, 572, 722, 1726, 3699, 3995).

But other prepositions do occur from time to time with this function in Old French:

ad una spede li roverent tolir le chief.
(Cantilène de sainte Eulalie, 22)

ad ambes mains deromt sa blanche barbe.
(Vie de saint Alexis, 387)

le col li rumpit a ses deus meins.³⁰
(Marie de France, Laustic, 115)

En is rare, but not unknown with this function:³¹

en harpe, en viele, et en gigue
en devroit en certes conter.
(Guiot, Bible, 209)

en langage grejois.
(Gui de Bourg, 1373)

Par was also, of course, used to express instrument and means, as in Modern French:

par sowe clementia.
(Cantilène de saint Eulalie, 29)

par voz saveirs sem püez acorder.
(Chanson de Roland, 76)

pris e lïez serez par poësted.
(Ibid., 434)

³⁰The preposition à still indicates instrument or manner in Modern French in certain idioms: à grands cris, à coeur ouvert, à grande peine etc. Also an exception in seventeenth-century syntax allowed à to follow the verb se laisser; introducing a complement with instrumental force: e.g., elle se laisse éblouir à l'éclat de tant de couronnes (Mme. de La Fayette, La Princesse de Clèves).

³¹For these examples, cf. Godefroy, op. cit., art. en. There are 400 examples of en in the Chanson de Roland but none of these is an example of the en of matter. On the other hand, there are 44 examples of the de of matter (12, 91, 115, 345, 997, 1153, 1245, 1263, 1364, 1314, 1549, 1738, 2032 etc.)

dame cuidiez vos recovrer
 vostre seignor por vostre duel?
 (Yvain, 1604-5)

From the wide realm of concepts being considered in this chapter, there still remains that of the material out of which a thing is made, the category which, as we saw above,³² was the most successful in Classical Latin for the preposition de. In Modern French de is challenged by en with this function. In Old French in spite of the widespread use of en with other functions,³³ de was the favoured method of indicating material with en possible but rare. Most texts illustrate the de of material abundantly:

tutes vos ymagenes ferai d'or fin.
 (Chanson de Roland, 3494)

quatre perruns i ad de marbre faiz.
 (Ibid., 2268)

il trait Almace, s'espee de acer brun.
 (Ibid., 2089)

de deus jornees fera une.
 (Yvain, 1839)

et s'i pant uns bacins de fer
 a une si longue chaaine.
 (Ibid., 386-7)

li perrons ert d'une esmeraude
 perciee ausi com une boz.
 (Ibid., 424-5)

³²Cf. above pp. 57-58.

³³Dans is essentially a seventeenth-century phenomenon.

The prepositions en and a(d) are certainly not unknown with this function:³⁴

et lettra fayr en pargamin.

(Albéric de Pisançon (or Briançon),
Alex., 90)

en rentes et in possessions.

(Fév. 1239, Arch. Vosges, H. Flabémont)

l'escut li freinst ki est a flurs e ad or.

(Chanson de Roland, 1276)

Franceis descendant, si adubent lor cors
d'osbercs e de helmes e d'espees a or.

(Ibid., 1797-8)

en celle chambre estoit un lit doré couvert de
dras de pourpre tissus a or et a jacintes.

(Ystoire Asseneth, Nouv. Fr du XIII^es)

From the complexity of prepositional usage over the whole field of instrument, matter, means and agent, de emerges as by far the most favoured preposition in general, but does not have the degree of success vis-à-vis its competitors that we have seen in previous chapters, for example in the use of the de of separation in space. As the link between a passive verb and its complement, de has to a large extent given way before par, perhaps as a result of a change of conception of the function of the preposition itself in the relationship between the verb and the substantive. "L'ancienne langue," writes Clairin, "semble...plutôt indiquer que l'action exprimée par le verbe a pour origine le complément; et la langue moderne, que le complément est comme l'intermédiaire par lequel l'action atteint le sujet."³⁶ Scholars have suggested that even in Modern French those examples

³⁴For examples of the en and a(d) of matter, cf. Godefroy, op. cit., art. en, art. a(d), from which the examples quoted in this text are taken.

³⁵Ed. Meyer, p. 283.

³⁶Op. cit., p. 191.

of de, which have survived, are extensions of the idea of separation or point of departure. Brunot³⁷ quotes the couplet: effrayé "de" son acte and effrayé "par" l'auto, but considers the theory to be doubtful:

"La théorie est spécieuse, mais doit n'être acceptée qu'avec beaucoup de réserve". It is probably impossible to differentiate clearly in Modern French between de and par used with the same past participle, but as H. V. Velten observes:³⁸ "Two forms of identical meaning do not usually co-exist for any length of time: either one of them will disappear or else they will come to differ semantically." Thus, suggests Velten, some speakers may still distinguish between essayer à and essayer de, and if this is so, a distinction between de indicating origin, and par perhaps pure instrumentality or material acts, cannot be ruled out. In addition, the theory of a separative origin for de with passive verbs illustrates the potent influence of this category of the preposition de on subsequent extensions of usage, an influence which at least covers the three categories of de studied in this work. Even if this separative connection is weaker in Modern French than its supporters claim, it is more certain that in Old French the general concept of the function of the preposition de was that the idea of separation was an inherent constituent of de. This would give

³⁷F. Brunot, La Pensée et la langue, (3rd ed.; Paris, 1953), p. 371.

³⁸Op. cit., p. 452.

us the picture that all the extensions of the preposition de, which can be seen in the table quoted in the introduction,³⁹ can be reduced to an imaginary tree, with the de of separation at its root.

The problem of the connection between all the categories of de and the de of separation becomes less important for the Modern French period, in that de is now no longer used in certain instances as frequently as in Old French. For example, the Old French de of means has been replaced in Modern French by avec in the majority of cases (with such exceptions as frapper d'un bâton, and idioms like jouer de malheur). In the seventeenth century one still finds examples of de, where Modern French would have avec: e.g., Il traita d'un grand mépris la question (Racine), but these examples are not common after this period.

The de of matter is perhaps the strongest in Modern French of all those categories, of which the history has been traced from Latin to French in this chapter, in spite of the widespread use of en with the same function.⁴⁰ All in all, although the preposition de has lost ground since the Old French period, importance for our study, of the category of instrument, matter, means, and agent, is that, as in the case of the de of separation, in space and time, the de of origin and the partitive de, the same type of evolution from Early Latin to Old French took place, the key period being the first centuries A.D. in which de seems in every case

³⁹Cf. pp. 9-11.

⁴⁰"Selon certains puristes" writes Grevisse, "le tour table en marbre est incorrect ou du moins familier. Il n'est pas douteux que ce tour (qui date du XVI^es.) ne soit pleinement passé dans l'usage." [M. Grevisse, Le Bon Usage (7th ed.; Paris, 1959), p. 816].

to have gained a strong foothold on its path to dominance in Old French. In this chapter more space has been devoted to other prepositions by virtue of their important concomitant rôle, but no rival preposition has made the same contribution to the whole range of concepts under discussion as the preposition de, another factor in the general picture of de as the most important preposition at all stages of the French language.

CONCLUSION

If we summarize the results obtained from each of the three studies undertaken, the following picture emerges. In Classical Latin, when the experience the writer wished to communicate involved the notion of separation in space and included the need to express the fixed point from which the separation took place,¹ he had at his command some four possible alternatives, one of them the use of a case ending, which by itself acted as functional, and in addition three prepositions, the choice of which was not governed by any rigid principles. In addition to these four possibilities, others were not unknown, coming into existence by analogical extension or self-permitted licence, over which comprehensibility is the only master (an example of this is the genitive of separation:² desine...querellarum etc.). The later writers of Latin retained all these possibilities, but the distribution of usage swings in this period in favour of the preposition de, in spite of fluctuations observable in the writings of individual authors. In Old French the possible variations are virtually abolished, only one major distinction being observed, the preposition a(d) being used to denote separation from a person with de performing the function of indicating separation from a thing or place.

¹Those examples of separation in which the needs of the speaker did not embrace the starting point of the action and thus not requiring a functional moneme, were not of relevance to our study of the preposition de and its competitors.

²Cf. chapter 1, note 39.

The pattern, when the writer's (or of course, the speaker's) communicative needs involved a functional moneme to express separation in time, is essentially similar to that of separation in space. But certain differences in usage can be observed, for example in the relationship between the ablative case alone in Classical Latin, on the one hand, and the three prepositions, de, ex and ab, on the other. Also, these three prepositions were not interchangeable to the same extent as they were in their use to indicate separation in space; ab, for example was the favoured preposition in expressions of a time of life, or in adverbial compounds. However, these distinctions and reservations are lost in the later Latin authors, and in the period between Classical Latin and Old French we find, as for separation in space, no important differences between one preposition and another. Perhaps the most interesting evidence provided by this period is that we do not witness quite the same rise in the use of the preposition de vis-à-vis its rival prepositions and this is borne out by Old French and Modern French, in which de is weaker than in other fields. Ex has, of course, disappeared by the Old French period, and ab can be noted only when an example of a(d) seems to betray the result of the encroachment of ab on ad in Late Latin. In Old French it is noticeable that the notions of separation in time, duration of time, and time at which are no longer differentiated as they were in Latin. In general in Old French de is the dominant preposition, without being the only method of expressing separation in time.

The examination of the de of origin produced results not substantially at variance with those provided by the concept of separation in space, which

one would perhaps anticipate, in view of the close relationship between these two concepts. For, in the first place, origin is little more than a figurative extension of separation. However, this is only true on the superficial level, when comparing two examples as a whole the one with the other. Thus, by comparing: ist de la nef (Alexis, 211), with ki est de France (Roland, 422), one can say that the latter example is the metaphorical counterpart of the concrete notion of departure contained in the former. But in this study it is the function of the preposition which has been the object of our attention. Professor Martinet defines the word function as: "the linguistic counterpart of the relationship between one element of experience and the whole of the experience."³ Consequently, we must look more closely at the interior structure of the two examples cited.

If we set aside the distinction between a pure functional and a grammatical determinant, which could be drawn for the two monemes de and la of the first example,⁴ each of the autonomous phrases, which represent the "whole of the experience", contains two dependent monemes (ist and nef in the first example, est and France in the second, and two functionals (de and la; ki and de). The importance of the preposition de in each example is to link the two units of experience, the dependent monemes, to the experience as a whole. The way in which the preposition performs this function leads to a distinction between grammatical and lexical

³Op. cit., p. 49.

⁴For a discussion of this question, cf. introduction, p. 13.

categories. For in the first example: ist de la nef, the function of the preposition depends on the lexical meaning of the verb, on the fact that the verb is a verb of separation. No preposition which was not possible in a context of separation could be used. In the second example: ki est de France, there is a possibility of using a preposition which does not occur when the context is one of origin. For example en France could be used and the experience communicated would be valid and meaningful. To take a further example of this distinction between grammatical and lexical categories, it is evident that in the autonomous segment of experience: de tigrade natus, de has its particular function and the autonomous unit its particular meaning only as a result of the lexical meaning of natus. In this second example, the category of the de of origin is a lexical category: in the former example of the de of origin, it was a grammatical category. All uses of de when the context is separation in space are lexical uses because de can only perform its function as indicator of the fixed point, from which the separation takes place, by virtue of the lexical meaning of the verb, which must be a verb of separation. On the other hand the de of separation in time is not subject to the same restriction. The phrase de nocte has its meaning without reference to another element in the utterance, as the two monemes make up in this case an autonomous unit of experience.⁶

⁵The la of the first example was not indispensable at this period of the French language, as the phrase issent de mer (Roland, 2640) illustrates.

⁶For a more detailed discussion of this problem and its importance for structural descriptions of a language, cf. De Groot, op. cit., pp. 10-21.

This discussion provides a good illustration of the synchronic importance of the historical facts resulting from our investigation. Similar linguistic criteria could be applied to each of the uses of de embraced by this study, and a division into grammatical and lexical categories, autonomous, dependent and functional monemes, and other descriptivist units or segments could be made. This is true of the partitive construction in Old French, but this construction involves an interesting new element, which makes its history a little different from that of the other categories of de. The historical facts point to an ostensibly abrupt change from the Classical Latin use of the accusative case (da mihi aquam) to the Old French perdre del sanc type of construction. In fact, two historical features of the development of the Romance languages from Late Latin have merged in the case of the partitive construction. The breakdown of the Latin case system entailed the introduction of a preposition to replace the accusative case, at least in certain instances, in Late Latin. Secondly, the decline in deictic force of the Latin demonstrative pronoun ille opened the way for the appearance of a definite article to specify something previously mentioned in the utterance. If we add to this the probability that the key to the use of de as the preposition replacing the accusative case of Latin or the oblique case of Old French lies in an extension of the idea of separation, the following pattern emerges for the partitive article of Old French. The autonomous phrase perdre del sanc contains two dependent monemes and two

functionals.⁷ The function of the preposition de is here the same as the accusative function in a Classical Latin example.⁸ But the new element, the grammatical determinant, shows the linguistic needs of Old French to be different from those of Latin. Classical Latin, like Modern Russian, felt no need to distinguish between the definite and the indefinite, between that which has been specifically mentioned in the text and that which is new.⁹ In Old French, as in English, a new element of experience is introduced in the form of a restrictive moneme, which actualizes the substantive, making it part of the reality of the utterance.

These remarks, while relevant to the development of the partitive construction of Old French, transcend this particular construction and are of interest for the French language in general. Such is the case with all the linguistic conclusions we have drawn from the historical facts. Similar conclusions could be drawn from the study of the de of instrument, matter, means and agent, but a discussion of these categories of de in linguistic terminology can be dispensed with at this point. One final word may be said about the synchronic importance of the historical evidence. The fact that by the Old French period the Latin case system, but for a few vestiges such as the genitive function in li fiz le roi and an implied dative in

⁷A peripheral problem is the analysis into two successive segments of the two indisputably different monemes contained in del. The same problem arises with the Modern French au or du, and the Latin nouns with their plural or singular morpheme, root, and case indicator, all fused into one form, e.g., homini, with three distinct elements of experience, "man", "dative", and "singular".

⁸Cf. below, pp. 79-80.

⁹Modern French, with its swing from expressing an indefinite part of an indefinite whole to an indefinite part of a definite whole, represents yet another change in linguistic needs, but this cannot be discussed fully without an explanation of other Romance partitive constructions.

fut presentede Maximilien (Cantilène de sainte Eulalie, 11), was extinct, represents a movement from synthesis to analysis in language i.e. the replacement of morphological distinctions by prepositional phrases. But **synchronically** little or nothing revolutionary has taken place. From a structural point of view a case-ending and a preposition perform the same function. It is essential to recognize this fact, although many linguists have been reluctant to do so. At least four reasons can be distinguished for this. Firstly, significance is seen in the fact that the preposition is independent of and syntactically anterior to the substantive, whereas the case-ending is one with the substantive and follows it. Secondly, it is possible to separate the preposition from the substantive by such interpolated monemes as adjectives or substantives in another case. Thirdly, the preposition need not be repeated to perform its function within a phrase embracing several substantives, whereas the case-ending needs to be repeated to continue its function. Fourthly, and quoting Martinet: "In the case of prepositions, the functional usually forms a clear-cut segment of the utterance, in constradistinction to what we find, for instance, in Latin case endings where the indication of case, i.e. function, is formally confused with that of a totally different type of moneme, namely number, and where it is not always clear what belongs to the substantive moneme and what is the ending: is the nominative ending of puppis, "poop", -is or just -s as in urbs?"¹⁰ The upshot of this is that in a case such as the methods used in Classical Latin to express the notion of separation in space, the four freely productive possibilities, the

¹⁰A. Martinet, op. cit., p. 46.

ablative case and the three prepositions are all identical from a synchronic and functional standpoint. Only the functionals vary, not the function.

It follows from this that one cannot speak of the meaning of a preposition. The occurrence of prepositions alongside verbs and substantives in a dictionary obscures this, as it ostensibly grants to a functional the status of an autonomous or dependent moneme. It is perhaps possible to consider a preposition as indicating. But to speak of a preposition as a word which denotes, to use a term frequently employed by Lewis and Short,¹¹ is again misleading.

It is by means of such careful terminological distinctions as that between meaning and function, lexical and grammatical, and others, that historical facts can contribute to a discussion of language as such, no matter what the object of the historical survey has been. But the terminology necessary for synchronic discussion of syntax must still be developed before the facts will yield up all their potential. Syntax is wont to follow in the rear of phonology as a branch of linguistic studies, whether the studies be historical or structural. The essence of the present study has been philological, an attempt to explain historically the importance of the preposition de in Late Latin and Old French, the process by which one preposition among many in the early stages of the Latin language became the dominant preposition of a major Romance language.

¹¹Op. cit., art. de, et passim.

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TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

<u>A.</u>	<u>Aeneid</u>
<u>Ac.</u>	<u>Academicae Quaestiones</u>
<u>Act.</u>	Acts (Actus Apostolorum)
<u>Ad.</u>	<u>Adelphi</u>
<u>Agr.</u>	<u>Orationes de Lege Agraria</u>
<u>Alex.</u>	<u>Le Roman d'Alexandre</u>
<u>Am.</u>	<u>Amphitruo</u>
<u>Ambr.</u>	Ambrosius, bishop of Milan (339-397)
<u>And.</u>	<u>Andria</u>
<u>Ann.</u>	<u>Annales</u>
<u>Arch.</u>	Archevêque
<u>Asin.</u>	<u>Asinaria</u>
<u>Athan.</u>	<u>De sancto Athanasio libri duo</u>
<u>Att.</u>	<u>Epistulae ad Atticum</u>
<u>Aug.</u>	Aurelius Augustinus (354-430)
<u>Aul.</u>	<u>Aulularia</u>
<u>Bacc.</u>	<u>Bacchides</u>
<u>B. C.</u>	<u>Bellum civile</u>
<u>C. or Carm.</u>	<u>Carmina</u>
<u>Caecin.</u>	<u>Oratio pro Caecina</u>
<u>Caes.</u>	Caius Julius Caesar
<u>Calig.</u>	<u>Caius Caligula</u> (i. e. Suetonius, <u>De Vita Caesarum</u> , liber IIII)
<u>Capt.</u>	<u>Captivi</u>

<u>Cas.</u>	<u>Casina</u>
<u>Cat.</u>	<u>Orationes in Catilinam</u> or C. Valerius Catullus
Chr.	Chronicles
Cic.	M. Tullius Cicero
<u>C. I. L.</u>	<u>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</u> (Berlin 1863, etc.)
<u>Civ.</u>	<u>De Civitate Dei</u>
<u>Cl(u).</u>	<u>Oratio pro Cluentio</u>
<u>Cod. Just.</u>	<u>Codex Justinianus</u>
<u>Curc.</u>	<u>Curcilio</u>
Cypr.	Thascius Caecilius Cyprianus, bishop of Carthage (c. 200-58)
<u>Dig.</u>	<u>Digesta, i. e. Libri Pandectarum</u>
<u>E.</u>	<u>Eclogae</u>
Eccli.	Ecclesiasticus
Enn.	Q. Ennius
<u>Ep.</u>	<u>Epistula(e)</u>
Esdr. or Ez.	Esdras, Ezra
<u>Eun.</u>	<u>Eunuchus</u>
Ex. or Exod.	Exodus
<u>F.</u>	<u>Fasti</u>
<u>Fam.</u>	<u>Epistulae ad Familiares</u>
Fév.	Février
Filastr.	Filastrius (died before 397)
<u>Fin.</u>	<u>De Finibus</u>
<u>Fl.</u>	<u>Oratio pro L. Flacco</u>
Fragm.	Fragmenta

Gen.	Genesis, general, genitive
<u>Georg.</u>	<u>Georgica</u>
Greg.	Gregorius Turonensis (Gregory of Tours, 538-594)
<u>Hadr.</u>	<u>Hadrianus</u>
<u>Heaut.</u>	<u>Heautontimorumenos</u>
<u>H. F.</u>	<u>Historia Francorum</u>
Hier.	Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, St. Jerome (c. 340-420)
<u>Hist.</u>	<u>Historiarum adversus paganos libri VII</u> (Orosius)
Hor.	Q. Horatius Flaccus
Ital.	Itala
Iren.	Irenaei <u>interpres</u> (translation into Latin of <u>Adversus Haereses</u> , by St. Irenaeus)
<u>J.</u>	<u>Bellum Jugurthinum</u>
<u>Jul.</u>	<u>Liber de passione et virtutibus S. Juliani martyris</u>
Lit.	Literal, in a literal sense
Lucif.	Lucifer Calaritanus (c. 300-371)
<u>M.</u>	<u>Metamorphoses</u>
Mach.	Maccabees (Machabaeorum)
<u>Mart.</u>	<u>Liber de virtutibus S. Martini</u>
Mat(t).	St. Mathew (Evangelium Matthaei)
<u>Most.</u>	<u>Mostellaria</u>
<u>Mul. Chir.</u>	<u>Mulomedicina Chironis</u>
<u>Nat. Deor.</u>	<u>De Deorum Natura</u>
Non. Marc.	Nonius Marcellus
Nouv. Fr.	Nouvelle française
Oros.	Paulus Orosius, Spanish priest (5th cent.)

Partit.	Partitive
<u>Pass. Perp.</u>	<u>Passio S. S. Perpetuae et Felicitatis</u>
<u>Pereg.</u>	<u>Peregrinatio Aetheriae ad loca sancta</u>
<u>Pers.</u>	<u>Persa</u>
<u>Ph(il).</u>	<u>Orationes Philippicae in M. Antonium</u>
Pl.	T. Maccius Plautus
<u>Pont.</u>	<u>Epistulae ex Ponto</u>
<u>Poen.</u>	<u>Poenulus</u>
<u>Ps.</u>	<u>Pseudolus</u>
Ps(a).	Psalms
Ps.-Vigil. Taps.	Pseudo-Vigilius Tapsensis
<u>Q. Fr.</u>	<u>Epistulae ad Q. Fratrem</u>
<u>Rep.</u>	<u>De Re Republica</u>
<u>Rosc. Am.</u>	<u>Oratio pro Quinto Roscio Amerino</u>
<u>R. Li. R.</u>	<u>Revue de linguistique romane</u>
<u>R. R.</u>	<u>De Re Rustica</u>
<u>Rud.</u>	<u>Rudens</u>
Sam.	Samuel
Sall.	C. Sallustius Crispus
Sap.	Sapientia (Vulgate)
<u>Sat.</u>	<u>Satirae</u>
<u>Sen.</u>	<u>De Senectute</u>
<u>Sest.</u>	<u>Oratio pro Sestio</u>
Sid.	Sidonius Apollinaris (c. 430-c. 482)
Spart.	Aelius Spartianus (historian, 4th cent.)

<u>S. S. Reg.</u>	<u>Sacrae Scripturae Codex Regiensis</u>
<u>St.</u>	<u>Stichus</u>
Ter.	P. Terentius Afer
Trans.	Transferred
<u>Tri.</u>	<u>Trinummus</u>
<u>Trin.</u>	<u>De Trinitate</u>
Trop.	In a tropical or figurative sense
<u>Tusc.</u>	<u>Tusculanae Disputationes</u>
<u>Ux.</u>	<u>Ad Uxorem</u>
<u>Vat.</u>	<u>Oratio in Vatium</u>
<u>Verr.</u>	<u>Oratio in Verrem</u>
V(e)g.	Renatus Flavius Vegetius (4th cent. military writer)
Virg.	P. Virgilius Maro
Vulg.	Vulgate (Biblia Vulgatae Editionis)