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Is it Really the Accusative?
A Century-Old Controversy Revisited

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The stages involved in the disintegration of the classical Latin system of declensions and its evolution during the centuries that preceded the "birth" of the Romance languages have been adequately outlined by leading Romanists of both past and present. The undisputed master of Romance linguistics in our century, Wilhelm Meyer-Lübke, summed up the opinion of his generation when he insisted on the Latin accusative as being the Romance "Normalkasus," with due allowances for the Latin nominative as reflected, for instance, in the *cas sujet* of Old French and Old Provençal and the plurals of Italian and Rumanian nouns.[1] Anchored in the Diezian theory of the Latin accusative as the progenitor of the Old French and Old Provençal oblique case and the single case forms of the other Romance languages, Meyer-Lübke's view that, except for sporadic instances of nominative derivation, the Romance noun is, in essence, a survival of classical Latin accusative forms both in the singular and the plural has generally prevailed, despite an occasional voice offering convincing arguments to the contrary.

The first scholars on record to challenge this "accusative theory" were the Italians D'Ovidio and Ascoli. The former, the catalyst for the subsequent declensional combat waged by Ascoli and Meyer-Lübke, set out to show in his *Sull'origine dell'unica flessione del nome* (1872), that the post-classical form *servo* comprised not a single case but the classical nominative *servus,* dative/ablative *servo,* and accusative *servum,* in the singular, and that the plural *servi* represented classical nominative *servi* and the dative/ablative *servis.* As to the genitive singular *servi* and

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the accusative plural *servos,* these forms were simply dropped, under pressure of the surviving cases.[2] What the Italian scholar claimed, in other words, was that the single case of Italian forms like *servo, buono, morte,* (or Spanish *siervo, bueno, muerte* for that matter) does not represent a particular case of the classical Latin declension that prevailed because of some logical or intentional reason ("per una ragione logica o intenzionale"), but is rather a phonological outcome of the fusion of two oblique cases (accusative and ablative) which prevailed in the spoken language of the Empire (e.g. *morte(m), de morte*); joined by the nominative in the case of the first declension singular (e.g. *ala, ad ala(m), de ala*), and that a similar process occurred in the plural, except that where phonetic equivalence was not possible the choice of the surviving form was aided by analogical pressure, as when *servos* was suppressed in Italian by a coalition of *servi* and *servis.*

Despite Ascoli's vigorous defense and support of D'Ovidio's *dottrina,*[3] based primarily upon the development of imparisyllabic third declension neuter nouns in the Romance languages, Romance linguists have continued to toe the traditional Diezian line, basing themselves mainly on deductive retracements from the Romance languages to a hypothetical Vulgar Latin or to attested classical forms (or merely repeating what their predecessors had said), with little or no reference to the written documents of the period involved.[4]

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[2] Reported also in Meyer-Lübke, *ibid.,* p. 27.

[3] Review of F. D'Ovidio's study in *Archivio Glottologico Italiano,* 2 (1876), pp. 416-38. Ascoli dealt with this problem also in subsequent studies: cf. *Archivio* 3 (1878), pp. 466-67; 4 (1878), pp. 398-402; and 10 (1888), pp. 262-69.

[4] Most standard manuals on Romance linguistics have continued to adhere to the Meyer-Lübkian view. Typical in this connection is the statement by W. Elcock: "If, in giving Latin etyma, it is usual to quote the accusative, this is because the accusative case alone was normally the source of the modern Romance substantive" (*The Romance Languages,* [2nd ed., London 1975], p. 73). In the same vein E. Bourciez states, in his classic *Eléments de linguistique romane* (4th ed., Paris 1956), that the accusative is "le cas des mots latins conservé d'ordinaire en roman" (p. 746 and *passim*). He traces the absorption of the other cases by the accusative as far back as the first century of our era and illustrates this phenomenon with the single example *Saturninus cum discentes* (p. 87), an example that, to my mind, has been overworked to show the alleged early use of the accusative with all prepositions and its generalized use in all oblique functions. Cf. G. Alessio (*Le origini del francese,* Firenze 1946) who, with reference to the construction *de tempulo* for the expected *templi* found on a fifth century Christian inscription makes the rather startling comment "che mostra il genitivo latino sostituito de *de* con l'accusativo" (p. 93); cf. also Maria Iliescu, "Gibt es einen 'casus generalis'?" *Revue roumaine de linguistique,* 16: 4 (1971), pp. 327-331, who argues in favor of the accusative as the sole *casus praepositionalis* in Late Latin. — Meyer-Lübke's imprint is also quite pronounced with C. H. Grandgent (*An Introduction to Vulgar Latin,* repr. New York 1962), who concludes that in Gaul and Spain the forms preserved were the accusative singular and the

The persistence of the belief that the Romance noun derives primarily from the Latin accusative is all the more surprising since, in the intervening years (certainly since the publication of Meyer-Lübke's *Grammatik*) a number of works have appeared concerned with a direct study of Latin documents, casting serious doubts on the "accusative theory" in favor of what we might call an "oblique case theory," what Ascoli had already referred to as the "teoria dell'unico obliquo"; Haag's *Die Latinität Fredegars* (1898), Schramm's *Sprachliches zur Lex Salica* (1911), Taylor's *The Latinity of the Liber Francorum* (1924), Pei's *Language of the Eighth-Century Documents of Northern France* (1932), and Sas' *The Noun Declension System in Merovingian Latin* (1937) come readily to mind. Indeed, the evidence that these researchers cull from their respective documents seems to point rather clearly to the fact that *one* case with a form ending in either *-a, -o,* or *-e* has developed in the singular as a substitute for all classical Latin cases, except the nominative (in a ratio of nearly 200 forms in *-a, -o,* and *-e,* as against 15 forms in *-am, -um,* and *-em* in the *Historia Francorum*), and with *-as, -os, -es,* or *-is* in the plural.[5]

In an article entitled "Accusative or Oblique" which, to my mind, has not received from Romance scholars the attention and credit which it deserves, and has been generally neglected in the discussions of the derivation of the Romance noun, Mario Pei[6] addresses himself to what he calls "a time-honored controversy in the field of Romance philology, to wit, whether the oblique case of Old French and Old Provençal, as well as the single case of other Romance languages, is the direct descendant of the Classical Latin accusative, with the other oblique cases of Classical Latin thrown into the discard; or the result of a merger of Classical Latin accusative, ablative, and dative, brought about by the phonetic equivalence of the singular ending in two of the three major declensions, and then gradually extended, by a syntactical process of analogy, to cover the dative singular of the first declension, the genitive singular of the three declensions, and those plural forms which could not phonetically coalesce" (p. 242). Pei reviews and critically comments upon each of the four major arguments advanced by supporters of the "accusative theory:"

1) Monosyllabic words with final *-m* (Fr. *rien, mon, ton, son;* Sp. *quien;* It. *speme*) indicate the accusative form. Pei cites examples in which this final

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accusative plural, while in Italy and Rumania the surviving cases are the accusative singular and the nominative plural (p. 156).

[5] Cf. Mario Pei, *The Language of the Eighth-Century Texts in Northern France* (New York 1932), pp. 212-13.

[6] *Romanic Review,* 28 (1937), pp. 241-67.

consonant is not retained, as in Italian dialectical forms *mo, ma, to, ta* or French *ma, ta, sa,* and wonders whether retention of final *-m* in monosyllabic words, rather than providing the survival of the accusative pure and simple, would not merely point to the survival of *certain* accusative forms, and nothing more.

2) Logudorese, which keeps final *-o* and *-u* distinct (*otto, amo* versus *chentu, cantamus*) has a form ending in *-u* for second declension nouns and adjectives (*oru, chelu, duru, plenu*). Pei thinks that the phonetic conflict between final *-o* and *-u* outcomes for second declension nouns and adjectives seems to have been a long one, judging from reports by Wagner and Meyer-Lübke himself,[7] as well as the earliest Sardinian documents, until the *-o* endings succumbed to *-u* endings, proving at best that in the sole instance where phonetic merger of the oblique cases was not possible, the accusative prevailed. "And this," Pei adds, "in a single region of Romance territory, very limited in extent and almost severed from communication with the rest of the Latin-speaking world at the very time when the all-important process of declensional change was beginning" (p. 245).

3) Various Italian dialects which admit umlaut indicate that the final vowel that causes umlaut in the singular is *-u,* not *-o,* e.g., southern Italian BŎNŬ > buonə, which distinguishes masculine singular from feminine bonə < BŎNA. Without rejecting Meyer-Lübke's attempt to prove that where umlaut appears in certain south and central Italian dialects the final vowel causing the umlaut is *-u,* not *-o,*[8] Pei points out that examples in which the umlaut appears to have been produced by a final *-o* to the exclusion of *-u* are not wanting.[9]

4) Imparisyllabic neuter third-declension nouns develop into the Romance languages from the accusative, not from the ablative form. Pei devotes the bulk of his article to this, what he calls "the crux of the question," to wit the survival of accusative and ablative forms of these nouns where accusative and ablative could not phonetically merge and the conflict had to be solved along lines of individual choice. We are presented with a complete study of the Romance descendants of 135 third declension imparisyllabic neuter nouns given in Meyer-Lübke's *Romanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* and Körting's *Lateinisch-romanisches Wörterbuch,* including both attested and hypothetical forms, which purports to evaluate the opposing views of Ascoli, the champion of the oblique case theory, and Meyer-Lübke, the defender of the accusative case doctrine. Let us recall, parenthetically, that Ascoli had presented in various studies devoted to this very question a large number of ablative survivals,

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[7]Pei cites M.-L. Wagner, *Lautlehre der südsardischen Mundarten* (Halle a.S 1907), p. 17, and W. Meyer-Lübke, *Zur Kenntnis des Altlogudoresischen* (Wien 1902), p. 13.

[8]Cf. W. Meyer-Lübke, *Grammatik,* 1, pp. 99 and 132.

[9]Cf. also G. Ascoli, *Archivio,* 10 (1888), pp. 260-71, specifically his statement "Nell'Italia meridionale l'*-o* riagisce sulle tonica al modo dell'*-i*" (p. 264).

setting them off against an approximately equal number of accusative survivals, and concluded that this indecision of the Romance languages in the case where phonetic fusion was impossible furnished proof of his "oblique case theory."[10] Meyer-Lübke, in his refutation, undertook to destroy Ascoli's ablative examples by claiming, in some cases, transfer from the neuter to the masculine gender, in others that the forms alleged by Ascoli were learned, in others that the forms adduced were reconstructed from the plural or from verbs, and still in others that a Vulgar Latin form coexisted side by side with the attested form; and when here and there an ablative form presented itself for which no explanation was possible, the form was labeled as exceptional and unaccounted for.[11]

For his analysis, Pei classifies third declension imparisyllabic neuter nouns into three general types, each of which presents peculiar possibilities of development. These are: (1) nouns that are monosyllabic in the nominative-accusative and disyllabic in the other oblique case, e.g., *far, farre* 'grain, spelt'; (2) polysyllabic nouns that shift the stress from nominative/accusative to the other oblique cases, the *ánimal, animále* type; and (3) polysyllabic nouns in which the position of the stress is retained throughout, the *cáput, cápite* type, which includes the numerous *-men, -mine* group of neuters of the *aerámen, aerámine* type also. After examining corresponding Romance developments of nouns in each of these categories, Pei draws the following conclusions, based on his observations:

1) Developments in the small monosyllabic group suggest an approximately equal number of apparent accusative and ablative survivals. Pei considers the double development of Lat. FEL in It. *fele* (acc.) and *felle* (abl.) to be significant in this connection.

2) Nouns of the stress-shifting type tend toward the ablative derivation, but there is a sufficient number of accusative survivals: OFr. *erre, oirre,* and It. *erre* from Lat. ITER, which indicate that a conflict existed here also.

3) By reason of its numbers and its variety, Pei breaks up the third class of nouns (polysyllabic with no shift of stress) into sub-types: (a) nouns of the *nomen* type indicate a preference for the accusative in Rumanian, Italian, Rhetian, French, and Provençal and for the ablative in Spanish (*pos nomine* in a mid-7th century inscription), and, possibly, Portuguese,[12] with double development in Sardinian (derivation from *-men* and *-mene* or *-mine*) and enough forms running counter to the general trend to give definite evidence of conflict; (b) nouns of the *-or, -ur* type (e.g., *marmor, fulgur*) indicate at least as many ablative as accusative derivations, in addition to showing double developments

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[10]See the references in note 3, above.

[11]*Grammatik* II, pp. 12-16, 19-20.

[12]Cf. M. Pei, "Accusative versus Oblique in Portuguese," *Romanic Review,* 30 (1939), pp. 189-91.

in the same language, as in It. *marmo* and *marmore* or *zolfo* and *solforo;* (c) both ablative and accusative derivations for *-us, -ere* type nouns as in It. *genere,* Fr. *genre* (Sp. and Port. *genero* being learned forms) versus OFr. *giens,* Prov. *gens* or Fr. *oeuvre* versus It. *uopo,* OProv./Cat. *ops,*[13] while for nouns in *-us* of the *corpus, pectus, tempus* type Pei finds a majority of accusative derivations which he explains as due, in part, to a natural tendency of such nouns to become confused with second-declension masculines. He points out that there are numerous ablative survivals in this group of nouns also.

Pei's evidence rather clearly suggests that where accusative and ablative forms could not coincide, a conflict occurred in each of the three general types of neuter imparisyllabics, a conflict which persists to this day. This fact, rather than weakening, actually strengthens the stance taken by proponents of the "oblique case theory" since they can freely concede any number of accusative survivals, provided they can show at the same time a considerable body of ablative survivals to counterbalance derivations from the accusative, while defenders of the "accusative theory," in order to establish their point, find themselves compelled to disprove all, or nearly all, ablative survivals. In summary, then, the "oblique theorist" holds that accusative and ablative (and in some cases dative too) merged in the singular where phonetically possible, but that where such phonetic fusion was not possible, a conflict arose between the two forms, one or the other being forced to yield. This conflict, as Pei remarks, "arising at a time when the bonds that held the Empire together were loosened, could perfectly well have a different solution in different portions of the Romance area, Italian, for instance, preferring the accusative form of a given word while Spanish chose the ablative" (p. 244).[14]

As stated earlier, Pei and his contemporaries find ample confirmation of the oblique case thesis in late Vulgar Latin texts, thus presenting a serious challenge to the traditional point of view that the accusative case alone was normally the source of the Romance noun. There is little doubt in my mind that the researches of these scholars have been instrumental in modifying some Romanists' earlier position

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[13]Meyer-Lübke (*Grammatik* II, p. 14) claimed that ablative forms in this noun category were learned forms.

[14]In his study entitled "Neuters, Mass-Nouns and the Ablative in Romance" (*Language* 44 [1968], pp. 480-86), Robert Hall, Jr. makes a convincing case for the ablative derivation of mass-nouns in Ibero- and Italo-Romance dialects, thereby not only recognizing the ablative as a viable case form in Proto-Romance but, to my mind, also furnishing additional ammunition to those who oppose the accusative theory.

on this issue.[15]

For the balance of this paper, I should like to summarize briefly my own findings based on an analysis of inscriptional material and what it reveals in terms of the accusative versus oblique controversy. The corpus chosen for my demonstration is made up of Latin Christian inscriptions published in Ernst Diehl's *Inscriptiones Latinae Veteres*,[16] about 5,000 in number from all areas of the Western Roman Empire, covering the period from about the end of the third century to the early seventh century. The data are taken from my recent study of nominal inflection in Latin inscriptions.[17] For reasons that, I hope, will become obvious I will treat singular and plural separately. Here, then, is the evidence:

1) The *-a* spelling of first declension nouns and adjectives in direct object (accusative) function and with prepositions which, in accordance with traditional grammar, would require the accusative case, outweighs the expected *-am* spelling. This suggests that Latin accusative and ablative have completely merged in speech to a single /a/ phoneme as a sort of "Universalkasus" serving several syntactic oblique functions, represented in writing by either *-a* or *am,* depending on the writer's training in formal grammar or school reminiscences, his *Bildungserlebnis.* Thus, he may attach an occasional *-m* to his spoken language form in /a/ because of its constant occurrence in readings that he may have done. This blurring of case consciousness is particularly evident in the indeterminate use of forms in *-a* and *-am* after prepositions (with a definite trend towards a universal *-a,* however, e.g. *ad mesa* [2128 a. 409], *ad vita* [1454B], with many hypercorrections like *cum virginiam suam* [4251], *cum uxorem suam* [2883 a. 360], as well as hybrid constructions of the *ad veram vita*[4827], or *cum compare suam* [374] kind).

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[15]Thus, for instance, Veikko Väänänen who in his *Le latin vulgaire des inscriptions pompéiennes* (originally published in 1937 [Helsinki], now in its third edition [Berlin 1966]) still concludes that "Le système casuel est en train de se réduire...l'accusatif est en voie de devenir le cas oblique par excellence, qui supplante de plus en plus l'ablatif comme régime des prépositions ab et cum..." (p. 129). In his classic manual *Introduction au latin vulgaire* (first published in 1963 [Paris], now in its third edition [Paris 1981]) the Finnish scholar is less rigorous in his approach to this problem when he concludes that "L'accusatif comme origine du régime roman ne fait pas de doute pour le pluriel" (p. 116), while in the singular the common denominator of oblique forms where old Latin case endings were lost "est un cas oblique syncrétique," the point of departure being the accusative in competition with the ablative where these case endings do not coincide (p. 117).

[16]In three volumes (2nd ed., Berlin 1961) with a supplement edited by J. Moreau and H. I. Marrou (Berlin 1967).

[17]Paul A. Gaeng, *A Study of Nominal Inflection in Latin Inscriptions; a Morpho-Syntactic Analysis* (Chapel Hill 1977).

2) The situation in the singular of second declension nouns and adjectives is complicated by the fact that many forms in both classical accusative and ablative functions are spelled with -*u*, although apparent accusative forms in -*o* both after verbs and prepositions (traditionally requiring a form in -*um*) are amply attested, as in *voto suo fecet* (1927 a. 470), *titulo posuerunt* (4160), *contra voto* (338a a. 546), and such hybrids as *contra votum suo* (756). As I have attempted to show elsewhere,[18] it is futile to try to determine whether orthographic -*u* represents a classical accusative form with final -*m* omitted or an ablative, since with the disappearance of -*m,* forms like *votu* and *voto* fell together in pronunciation as /voto/,[19] bringing about a collapse of accusative/ablative distinction, even though a formal distinction may still have been observed on the orthographic level. The orthographic uncertainty in the use of correct case endings after prepositions and the consequent hypercorrections of the *cum maritum* (4219B a. 392) and *in hoc tumulum* (3550 a. 511) kind, hybrid constructions like *contra votum suo* (756), or the concurrent use of the constructions *cum virginium suum* and *cum virginio suo* on the same stone (1263 a/b), would further seem to strengthen my conclusion that in the singular of this declension also there had emerged in the spoken language a single *oblique* case form on the level of content, in which semantic relationship was no longer bound to morphological distinction, neither accusative nor ablative, but a "Universalkasus" which fulfilled the functions of dative, accusative, ablative, and, in some instances, also genitive.

3) The state of affairs found in the singular of first declension nouns and adjectives is paralleled in the third declension. In fact, the ratio of clearly predominating forms in -*e* in classical accusative functions, with respect to the expected forms in -*em,* is even more pronounced than in the first declension. In addition to the plethora of forms in -*e* to signal direct object function, as in *ut urbe videret* (4812A), *maledictione avea* (= *habeat*) (3852), *queius fidelitatem et castitate et bonitate experti sunt* (2157), showing forms in -*e* and -*em* used in the same function, constructions like *post morte* (846 ca. 6th cent.), *propter caritate* (554), *ad fratre et sorore* (3748), orthographic hypercorrections like *pro caritatem* (1374, 2252, 4161) and *cum coniugem* (passim), as well as hybrids like *cum parem suo* (4238) lead to the legitimate conclusion that here too a generalized oblique case form in /e/ had emerged which, in various syntactic functions, on the plane of expression, was represented by written forms in -*e* or -*em.*

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[18]Paul A. Gaeng, "Interpreting Second Declension Forms in -*u,*" *Illinois Classical Studies* IV (1979), pp. 214-19.

[19]Cf. Gaeng, *Nominal Inflection,* pp. 99-101.

4) The evidence culled from the study of first, second, and third declension plurals presents a picture that is different from the singular, in that in all three declensions it is the classical accusative form (or what appears to be the classical accusative) that tends to supplant other oblique cases: *cum filias suas* (4559 a. 518), *ad duus fratres* (150), *cum filios* (2366A), *cum tuos omnes* (2192D), *cum sororis* (= *sorores*) *suas* (808), *con parentes* (3829), *pro fratres et sodales tuos* (2343), etc. This finding seems to be in accord with generally accepted theory.[20] But, just because the oblique "Universalkasus" in the plural happens to coincide with the accusative form, is it legitimate to apply the "accusative theory" to the singular also? My inscriptional evidence clearly suggests that the "Universalkasus" in the singular represents rather a merger of Latin accusative/ablative into a single spoken form, namely /a/, /o/, and /e/ in the respective declensional classes (with a possible allophonic /u/ in the second declension) represented in writing by forms in *-a, -o, (-u),* and *-e,* as well as residual *-am, -um,* and *-em,* used in a variety of syntactic functions. The conclusions drawn from my own and other similar evidence mentioned earlier in this paper which argues against a universal accusative derivation of the Romance noun in the *singular,* in no way precludes individual survivals of the classical accusative case, as, for instance, the form *rem* used invariably in both direct and all prepositional functions (*de rem sua* [521, ca. 4th/5th cent.]), or the imparisyllabics of the *corpus* and *nomen* types, just as there are sporadic survivals of the classical nominative, genitive and ablative/locative, e.g. *Florentiae.*[21]

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[20]See Väänänen's conclusions on this point in note 15 above. Cf. also Theodoro Maurer (*Gramática do latim vulgar,* Rio de Janeiro 1959): "De fato, a documentação epigrafica...nos da o acusativo no plural quase sem exceção" (p. 89).

[21]Despite persistent voices to the contrary, e.g., Thomas A. Lathrop, *The Evolution of Spanish,* Newark, Del. 1980 ("...of the five main cases of Classical Latin only two [the nominative and the accusative] were used in Vulgar Latin" [p. 21]), the conclusion that the Romance noun, at least in the *singular,* represents a merger of various *casus obliqui,* rather than a universal survival of the Latin accusative in all syntactic functions, is echoed in some recent articles and manuals that either directly deal with or touch upon this problem. Most note-worthy are an essay by Robert Hall, Jr., "The Gradual Decline of Case in Romance Substantives," in Frans van Coetsem and Linda R. Waugh, edd., *Contributions to Historical Linguistics,* Leiden 1980, pp. 261-69 (where the theory of accusative derivation of the Romance noun is referred to as an "oversimplified view" of the facts), a brief study by Ralph Penny, "Do Romance Nouns Descend from the Accusative? Preliminaries to a Reassessment of the Noun-Morphology of Romance," *Romance Philology,* 34:4 (1980), pp. 501-09 (in which the author terms "inadequate" the notion that Romance nouns descend from the Latin accusative), and the excellent three-volume *Grammatica storia dell'italiano,* Bologna 1980, by Pavao Tekavčić, who also resolutely concludes: "Derivare i sostantivi romanzi da un solo caso latino non ci pare possibile nè metodologicamente esatto: finchè i casi esistono e funzionano, è inconcepibile che un ac-

In connection with the plural oblique forms in *-as, -os,* and *-es* continued in those Romance dialects where plurality is marked by *-s,* Ascoli suggested that forms like *barbas, bonos,* and *torres* survived through natural selection of that form in which the singular "Universalkasus" was reflected and that there was no intentional preference of logic involved in the choice. In other words, according to the Italian scholar, the plural oblique (coinciding in form with the accusative case) would simply reflect a popular tendency to add the plural *-s* marker to the oblique singular form, thus establishing a symmetry between singular and plural.[22] And why not? May we assume, for the sake of argument, that an expression like *cum discentes* is but the plural equivalent of a singular *cum discente,* that is, an oblique singular form provided with an *-s* marker and, hence, call it a *plural* oblique, rather than an accusative? We could thus establish a symmetry in terminology also by using the term *oblique* for *both* singular and plural.

Rohlfs once said that the collapse of the Latin inflectional system was due to the multiplicity of flexional types and the inability of the unschooled speaker to handle correct case endings.[23] Assuming then, with Rohlfs, that the bulk of grammatically ignorant speakers of the Empire could not be supposed to have been able to handle the sophisticated morphological mechanism of Latin, the "oblique theory" makes all the more sense since it postulates a "Universalkasus" in both singular and plural that could be easily handled by the untutored speaker in all syntactic functions. The mass of inductive evidence in favor of this theory is impressive and should not be swept under the rug by those who prefer to follow views deductively arrived at in disregard of all the available data.

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cusativo possa sostituire un nominativo e viceversa; quando le forme casuali sono sparite, quando le funzioni si esprimono con le perifrasi preposizionali, non si può nemmeno parlare più nei termini dei singoli casi latini" (Vol. II, p. 38). — For an entirely different point of view that rejects both the accusative and the oblique theory and argues in favor of a generalized nominative case as the progenitor of the Romance noun, cf. Maria Iliescu, "Stammen die romanischen Substantive lateinischen Ursprungs von der Akkusativform ab?," *Revue roumaine de linguistique,* 14 (1969), pp. 477-79. For the view that the noun-forms of Romance, both singular and plural, are the result of an amalgamation of the nominative and oblique forms of Vulgar Latin, cf. R. Penny's article referred to above.

[22] Cf. *Archivio,* 2 (1876), p. 421.

[23] Gerhard Rohlfs, *Historische Grammatik der italienischen Sprache,* Vol. II (Bern 1949), p. 433.