

**Patrick MCFADDEN**

**Discontinuous Word Order in Latin as a Marker of Episodic Organization**

This study seeks to demonstrate that discontinuous word order in Latin is not a device for highlighting information locally, but rather a global device that functions on the discourse level to mark clauses which begin new thematic units, sometimes called "episodes." The sort of discontinuity under examination is exemplified by Livy 1.4.4 and 1.40.4 below in (1) and (2), respectively:

(1) *forte quadam diuinitus super ripas Tiberis effusus lenibus stagnis nec adiri usquam ad IUSTI CURSUM poterat AMNIS . . .*

(2) *ferro igitur [filii Anci] EAM arcere CONTUMELIAM statuunt.*

The sentences above end with a common, marked Latin word-order pattern in which a verb separates a noun from its attributive modifiers. A corpus of over two hundred examples of discontinuous NP's taken from Livy 1.1-40 and Velleius 2.1-65 shows that they occur regularly in clauses which begin (or infrequently in those which end) thematic units as defined by Kroon (*Discourse Particles in Latin* [Amsterdam 1995]).

Discontinuous NP's seem to serve the same function as *autem*, and the word order has a significant rate of cooccurrence with the particle.

The value of word order patterns as discourse marking devices may be suggested by Bolkestein's observations on Verb-Subject ordering in initiative, discontinuative, and similar clauses ("Free but not arbitrary: 'emotive' word in Latin?" *On Latin*, edd. Risselada *et al.* [Amsterdam 1996], 7-24).

Discontinuous NP's mark clauses that begin new referential and non-referential thematic units. In referential thematic units discontinuity accompanies the introduction of New Discourse Topics or the elevation of Given Discourse Topics to Topic function (as defined in S. Dik, *The Theory of Functional Grammar*,<sup>2</sup> ed. Hengeveld [Berlin/New York 1997]). In non-referential thematic units it accompanies changes in setting for the series of actions in the narrative, e.g., changes in time, place, perspective, etc. Finally, discontinuity occasionally marks the related local structure of parallel Focus, as demonstrated below:

(3) Romulus SEPTEM ET TRIGINTA regnavit ANNOS, Numa tres et quadraginta. (Liv. 1.21.6)

In conclusion, it is asserted that discontinuity should be considered a cue for readers of Latin. It functions much like typographical indentation or bold faced type highlighting the topic sentence, so to speak, of a new discourse unit.