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THE GENITIVE WITH VERBS DENOTING 'TO FILL' : PARTITIVE OR ERGATIVE?

It is commonly stated that in the Indo-European languages words denoting 'full' may take a partitive genitive complement, thus Vedic a. *sómasya jaṭháram pṛṇáti* 'he fills his stomach with soma', Lat. b. *aquae plēnus* 'full of water' [Meillet, 1964, 345—346].

According to Schwyzer, 1966, 110, the partitive in Greek is parallel with the instrumental in the meaning of an indefinite but concrete quantity, especially with verbs denoting 'to be full, to abound in (of vegetation), to fill, to make full, etc.' Examples: c. *oínou* (gen.) *enípleion* 'full of wine', d. *plḗsamenos d' oínoio* (gen.) *dépas* 'filling a cup with wine'. Note the vacillation between the instrumental use of the dative and the genitive; e. *dakrúoisi* (dat. pl.) *gàr Hellád' hápasan éplēse* 'filled all Greece with tears' vs. f. *dakrúōn* (gen. pl.) *d'éplēsen emé* 'filled me with tears' [Schwyzer, 1966, 166].

In Latin the ablative and the genitive compete, e. g., g. *deus bonis omnibus* (abl. pl.) *explevit mundum* 'god has filled the world with all good things' vs. h. *convivium vicinorum* (gen. pl.) *cotidie compleo* 'I fill up my company with neighbors every day' [Woodcock, 1959, 55].

Consider the following sentence from the Lithuanian Academy Dictionary [Vol. 9, 977]:

i. Baltramiejaus lytùs pìldo bū̃rams (dat. pl.) arúodus (acc. pl.).
Baltrameus' rain fills for the peasants bins.
'Baltrameus' rain fills the peasants' bins'.

A passive of this would be:

j. Bū̃rams arúodai (nom. pl.) pìldomi (nom. pl. pres. psv. part.) Baltramiejaus lytaũs
'the peasants bins are being filled by Baltrameus' rain'.

The common conception is that the use of the genitive with verbs and adjectives denoting 'full' falls under the heading 'partitive genitive'. I propose, however, that such usage is not partitive but rather reflects the old ergative, which in addition to denoting an animate agent could also be used with an instrumental meaning. Commonly in the Indo-European languages an inanimate thing can function as the agent or at least as the performer of an action. Thus such English sentences as *The*

wind (key) opened the door with instrumental subjects are possible [Fillmore 1968, 24—27].

The categories of agent and instrument are not exclusive dichotomous categories. At one end of the scale an animate being is considered clearly agent, but at the other end of the scale an inanimate object seems to be clearly an instrument. But in such a sentence as *The robot fed the cats* the assignment of agent or instrument category depends upon the amount of free will one is willing to ascribe to the robot, and the matter becomes a complex philosophical issue [Moulton and Robinson, 1981, 86].

I propose that the Indo-European ergative (expressed by the genitive case) denoted agent if used with clearly animate beings, but could denote instrument if used with inanimate objects. Although Slavic, like Lithuanian, originally distinguished the genitive for agent from the instrumental case to denote instrument, the distinction became unclear in Russian which finally adapted the instrumental case both for agent and instrument.

Consider then the following Lithuanian sentences:

k. Žẽmė   primiřko   lietaŭs (gen. sg.).
   The earth   became soaked   with rain.

This intransitive sentence can be understood as a paraphrase of the transitive sentence:

l. Lietùs   prìmerkė   žẽmę (acc. sg.).
   The rain   soaked   the earth.

Thus the genitive *lietaŭs* of sentence k. is not partitive, but instrumental in force. (Stepanov, 1978, 343 and passim shows that the zero grade verb is ordinarily intransitive, whereas the -*e*- grade is ordinarily transitive.)

I analyze then the genitive in the following Lithuanian examples as instrumental rather than partitive:

m. Kiẽmas   pribìro   pelų̃ (gen. pl.).
   The yard   became strewn   with chaff.

This sentence can be understood as meaning 'Chaff covered the yard'.

n. Pridrìbo   rugiaĩ   sniẽgo (gen. sg.).
   Was covered   rye   with snow.

'The rye was covered with snow', but which can also be understood as
'Snow covered the rye' [Acad. Dict., Vol. 2, 702].

My colleague Vytautas Ambrazas objects (letter dated 1983. I. 30) that it would be impossible to paraphrase sentences m. and n. in the same way that I have para-

phrased l. with sentence k. In other words sentences such as o. *pelaĩ prĭbėrė kiẽmą and p. *sniẽgas prĭdrėbė rugiùs are impossible. I suggest that the reason for this is that there is a fundamental difference in meaning (in addition to that of verbal diathesis) between the intransitive verbs prĭbĭrti 'to be strewn with, full of', pridrĭbti 'to become full of (as the result of falling)' on the one hand and the transitive verbs pribeřti 'to strew', pridrẽbti 'to add, to shake into' on the other hand. The English translation of sentence o. would be 'chaff threw about the yard' and the English translation of sentence p. would be 'snow threw about the rye'. Sentences o. and p. (like their English translations) are impossible because the meanings which they express are impossible under ordinary circumstances. The same analysis holds even for the formal passive voice of pribeřti.

Consider the following sentence [Acad. Dict., Vol. 1, 774]:

q. Prĭbertas   pĭlnas   pẽčius   kiaũliabėrio.
Strewn   full   stove   with pig fodder.

'The stove was strewn full with pig fodder'. The apparent active paraphrase r. *kiaũliabėris prĭbėrė pĭlną pẽčių 'pig fodder strewed the stove full' would be impossible.

In sentences q. and r. even the formal active and passive forms cannot be considered paraphrases of each other. As far as meaning is concerned the active paraphrase of sentence m. is s. pelaĩ nuklójo kiẽmą 'The chaff covered the yard' and the active paraphrase of n. is t. sniẽgas nuklójo rugiùs 'The snow covered the rye'.

Note the following sentences:

u. Užsimérk, kad   ãkys   smilčių (gen. pl.)   nepridulkĕtų.
Close   so that   eyes   with sand   do not become full of.

'Close your eyes so that they do not become full of sand'. [Acad. Dict., Vol. 2, 825]. I would understand smilčių 'sand' as the instrument for filling the eyes, not as a part of the total amount of sand.

v. Trobà (nom. sg.)   priẽjo   žmonių (gen. pl.)...
The cottage   filled with   people...

w. Laĩvas (nom. sg.)   priẽjo   vandeñs (gen. sg.).
The ship   filled   with water.

x. Duobẽ   pribẽgo   vandeñs (gen. sg.).
The hole   filled   with water [Jablonskis, 1957, 576−577].

Ordinarily the verb priẽjo denotes 'approached, reached' and pribẽgo denotes 'arrived (running)', but in the preceding examples the prefix pri- alters the meaning to denote the action of filling, so that the meaning is only indirectly connected with the notion of 'approaching, reaching, arriving at'.

In sentence v. the genitive can be considered the agent and could be translated as 'the people filled the cottage'. In sentences w. and x. the genitive can be considered the instrument.

Marvan, 1973, 35, has suggested that such a sentence as the following illustrates the ergative nature of Lithuanian:

y. Šeimininkės (gen. sg.)   gìmė   sūnùs (nom. sg.).
The housewife   bore   a son.

He suggests that the Russian translation *у хозяйки родился сын* shows the syntactic relationships better than the English translation. The Lithuanian sentence implies that the action took place at the housewife's place, house, etc., but perhaps this is the result of the reinterpretation of a sentence the syntax of which had become incomprehensible in view of the prevailing nominative-accusative syntax of Lithuanian.

In addition Marvan, 1973, 32, would interpret the following sentence as reflecting an ergative stage:

z. Kẽliai (nom. pl.)   lū́žta   kareĩvių (gen. pl.).
The roads   are overcrowded   with soldiers.

One might suggest that the *-st-* suffix, which denotes intransitivity, has its origin in the combination of the suffix *-s-* plius the Indo-European 3rd sg. middle aorist ending **-to*. The intransitivity of the suffix is then explained as deriving from the middle meaning and the ergative syntax is similar to that observed in the participles in **-to* [Matthews, 1955, 354].

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MAŽMOŽIŲ MAŽMOŽIS

Toje straipsnio „Lie. žvyras" vietoje (beje, tiksliau ne p. 156, o 157), dėl kurios atsirado V. Vitkausko „Mažmožis I" (žr. čia p. 125), svarstomas vienas vienintelis dalykas — ar la. trm. *žvira* negalėtų kartais būti (sykiu su dar labiau įtariamu la. trm. *zvira*) ne skolinys iš br. *жвір*, o pačių latvių žodis, ir kaip vienas iš argumentų, kurie galėtų bent kiek paremti tokią prielaidą, nurodoma geografija, glaudesnio sąlyčio nebuvimas tarp latvių žodžio ir baltarusių žodžio arealų. Užuot kritikavęs ar palaikęs šią netvirtą prielaidą, kritikas nelauktai teigia, kad autorius, kalbėdamas apie br. *жвір* retumą Baltarusijos šiaurės vakarų kampe „aiškiai kreipia mintį, kad čia esamas latvių kalbos įtakos rezultatas" (!), ir toliau tokį „minties kreipimą", iš tikrųjų priklausantį vien kritikui, pats ginčija, sakydamas, jog tai lituanizmas, tarsi nežinotų, kad kaip tik prie tokios išvados jau prieita kritikuojamame straipsnyje. Skirtumas tik tas, kad straipsnyje kalbama apskritai apie br. *жвір*, o pastaboje — apie vieną kaimą. Spėlioti dėl kiekvieno atskiro kaimo, kaip konkrečiai jame galėtų būti atsiradęs kuris nors skolinys, — ne kalbininko darbas. Net ir dvikalbiuose kaimuose su visai nesena superstratine šnekta jau anksčiau (senesnėse šnektose ar ir bendrinėje kalboje) įsigalėjęs skolinys nebūtinai turi būti dar sykį įsivedamas tiesiai iš originalo kalbos — jį juk jau galima perimti kartu su visais kitais išmokstamos antrosios kalbos žodžiais.

V. U