

Ambrasas, Vytautas. *Sravnitel'nyj sintaksis pričastij baltijskix jazykov* (The comparative syntax of participles in the Baltic languages). Vilnius, Mokslas. 1990.

In the foreword the author writes that the Baltic languages have retained many patterns of syntactic constructions which have been inherited from Indo-European and that especially ancient characteristics are encountered in the use of the participles. The author has chosen this topic because of the crucial role of the participial syntax in the reconstruction of the structure of the Proto-Baltic and the Indo-European sentence. He is well-known for his outstanding and really path-breaking previous book, *Lietuvių kalbos dalyvių istorinė sintaksė* 'The historical syntax of Lithuanian participles,' Vilnius, 1979, Mokslas. In his new book he expands and studies in detail all of the Baltic languages, rather than just Lithuanian (although many examples from other Baltic languages are also encountered in the first book). In addition the book is made available in Russian, so it is accessible at least to American Slavists, although one might prefer to have the book in English which would reach an even broader international audience. Much of Ambrasas' work, however, is quoted almost verbatim in my own book, *A Lithuanian historical syntax* (Columbus, Ohio, 1987, Slavica Publishers).

Entitled 'Principles of syntactic reconstruction' the first chapter discusses methodological problems of deciding on earlier etymological norms and (p. 17) quotes the statement attributed to Givón: 'Today's morphology is yesterday's syntax.' The author writes (p. 19) that in reconstructing Indo-European morphology one can pick out various time depths, but that for comparative syntax it is best to orient oneself on the very latest level, corresponding with the last stage of the existence of the Indo-European community, immediately preceding the separation of the dialects of Asia Minor, a stage which he terms 'Late Indo-European' (LIE). Internal reconstruction of syntax is quite different from, for example, phonological reconstruction where a change in one element is regularly implemented throughout the entire system (except for the effects of analogy and the influence of foreign languages; p. 23). In syntax older constructions may co-exist with more modern constructions, although the older forms are frequently retained in special phrases and idioms. In general peripheral position in the system, stylistic connotation, modal reinterpretation and idioms can be considered survivals of an earlier syntactic state. Such peripheral constructions as Lith. *daryk ką tinkamas* 'do what you want' and Latv. *dējat kā tīkamas* 'dance as you wish' can be explained only by means of diachronic analysis (p. 24). The reliquary character of syntactic phenomena can also be checked against folklore, dialects, earlier written texts (p. 28).

A more consistent and simpler system is almost always established by the method of internal reconstruction. The simplification arises not only as a result of the unavoidable lack of data, the necessary loss of elements of the grammatical structure of earlier epochs, but it is also a result of the very technique of restoring regular paradigms on the basis of separate reliquary elements (p. 31). The apparent simplicity of the fragments of grammatical structure of the past is an illusion of reconstruction.

The author writes (p. 39) that among all the contemporary Indo-European languages the Baltic languages have more completely retained not only the ancient shape of many grammatical forms, but also the ancient features of their use. Many syntactic constructions of the contemporary Baltic languages have direct correspondences in Old Indic, Greek, Latin and Anatolian historical documents, but differently from the latter in the Baltic languages they are accessible to direct observation in the living language of the people, something which is particularly important in the study of syntactic structure.

In Lithuanian there are six kinds of attributive participles, viz. past, present and future participles of the active and passive voices. In the Baltic languages, active and passive participles are formed both from transitive and intransitive verbs, but obvious voice contrasts are encountered only in the transitive verbs. Active participles from intransitive verbs either do not have corresponding passive correlates or are distinguished from them by other features or even in some cases are completely synonymous, e.g. Lith. *tiñkantis* (act.) *tinkamas drabužis* = Latv. *tīkošas drēbes* 'appropriate clothing, 'tīkama meita' 'pleasant girl.' Predicative participles with auxiliary verbs form periphrastic verbal tenses and without the auxiliary verb they make up the modus relativus. Half predicative participles have dual syntactic bonds; they are subordinate to the main verb but they are mutually dependent on a noun or pronoun. They express a secondary action in the sentence, e.g., *vaikinas su(s)prato apsirikęš* literally: 'the child understood (himself) having made a mistake' = *vaikinas su(s)prato kad*

apsiriko 'the child understood that he had made a mistake.' In traditional classical philology the half predicative participle is called the nominative with the participle (Lat. *nominativus cum participio*; p. 67).

Preceding the verb the appositive participle enters into a close syntactic bond with the subject of the sentence (p. 109). In Lithuanian and Latvian dialect speech there is generally no pause and from the point of view of intonation the sentence is divided up in the following way: *tėvas parėjęs namo/atsigulė ilsėt* 'father having arrived home/lay down to rest.' But the appositive participle can also be independent as can be seen from the example from a Lithuanian folk tale: *Išgirdę broli ė liai ir atjoja* 'the brothers having heard and come riding up' with a rather unexpected *ir* 'and' between the participle and the finite verb. The results of an analysis of Lithuanian constructions with the conjunction between the participle and the main verb lead one to the conclusion that the conjunction *ir* here not only connects these forms, but also lends the expression an expressive nuance. The antiquity of the participial constructions with the conjunction is confirmed by parallels in related languages, thus Old Church Slavic *i prizvav oba na desęte, i načet s latī* 'and having called the twelve, and he began to send them,' Gothic *athaitands siponjans gapuh du im* 'having called his disciples and he said unto them' (pp. 112-113).

Participles which are placed after the main verb and which have a second subordinate function are well retained in constructions with linking words. Here they have the same syntactic position as conjugated verbs in subordinate clauses with the same subject as the main verb, cf., e.g., Lith. pats *nežinojo, ką daręs* 'he himself didn't know, what he was doing' (literally: 'he himself didn't know what doing'). One can compare the Old Church Slavic sentence with similar meaning: *ne vedętu bo čto tvoręšte* 'for they don't know what they are doing (literally 'what doing'; p. 121). In contemporary Lithuanian and Latvian such constructions are encountered only in partially fossilized, stylistically marked and unmotivated constructions (p. 114). After conjugated forms of the verb *būti* 'to be' (usually with the negative) the pronoun *kas* 'who, what' with a present active participle Lithuanian forms a specific construction which corresponds in sense to the Russian dative with the infinitive, e.g., Russ. *ne bylo komu rabotat* = Lith. *nebuvo kas bedirbas* = 'there was nobody to work' (literally: 'there was not who working.' With the same meaning one encounters Lith. *nér jau kas dirba/kam dirbti*.

The origin of the nominative with the participle (mentioned above) is explained by the author (p. 130-132) in the following manner. Stative verbs with a nominative complement are known in all the Indo-European languages, e.g., Lith. *sėdi' piktas* (nom.) 'he sits (there) angry,' *gimė ligonis* (nom.) 'He was born sick,' Latv. *atnaca pirmais* (nom. 'he arrived first,' Gothic *ligib usliba* (nom.) 'he lies (there) sick,' Latin *felix* (nom.) *vivas* 'may you live happy,' Old Indic *sthad ūrdhvah* (nom.) = Greek *ste d'orthos* (nom.) 'stood up straight.' Such nominatives as complements of stative verbs were correlated in Baltic with accusatives with transitive verbs, e.g., Lith. *jis virto nelaimingas* (nom.) 'he became unlucky' vs. *(pa)vertė jį* (acc.) *nelaimingą* (acc.) 'made him unlucky.' The reflexive verb which was also intransitive fell under the influence of the old intransitive verbs, so that beside sentences such as *daro jį* (acc.) *turtingą* (acc.) 'made him rich' there came to be sentences of the type *darosi* (reflexive) = *virsta* (intransitive) *turtingas* (nom.) 'becomes rich.' On the model of such sentences the nominative with the participle was created. With verbs denoting the imparting and the receiving of information the nominative with the participle came to be widely used both with and without the reflexive particle (p. 136), e.g., *brolis sakė(si) toli nuėjęs* 'brother said that he went a long way' (literally 'brother said himself far having gone).'

Correspondences in related languages show that the nominatives with participles were combined with verbs of transmitting and receiving information long before the appearance of the reflexive forms, cf. Old Indic *somam manyate papivan* 'he thinks that he has drunk soma.'

The accusative with the participle is just a special case of the construction of the double accusative, cf. Latv. *sak(a) ozolu* (acc.) *cietu koku* (acc.) 'they say (that) the oak (is) hard wood.' This kind of construction is known in other Indo-European languages, e.g., Hittite *Amuandan ŠEŠ-IA irman ištamaššir* 'they heard (that) my brother Amuandas (is) sick' (p. 148). A minor slip mistranslates *ištamaššir* as singular (Russ. *uslyšall* whereas it should be plural; thus Friedrich, *Hethitisches Elementarbuch* (Heidelberg, 1960), p. 164, translates it as *hörten*.

To me one of the most interesting syntactic constructions of Lithuanian is that which has a genitive of agent and a nominative of patient. Ambrazas (p. 210) gives the example *jų* (gen. pl.) *laikoma* (neut. sg.) *arklys* (nom. sg.) 'they hold the horse' and notes that already such constructions had been considered ergative or ergative-like by Matthews in 1955. In various publications I have considered such constructions to be relics of an Indo-European ergative construction. Ambrazas (p. 213) objects to this explanation on several grounds. According to the first of these the mediopassive is only formally connected with the participles in *-to, but similar syntactic constructions are recorded with etymological participles in *-mo in Lithuanian and «-no in Slavic and these would have to be considered analogical to the constructions in *-to. If Ambrazas means by this the use of the genitive of agent in other constructions in other Indo-European languages I do not see this as having much force. In Slavic the genitive (with the preposition *otu*) is attested with reflexive verbs with passive meaning. And in Slavic the suffix *-no has adopted the meaning of past passive participle *-to, so why shouldn't it adopt the same syntactic constructions? As far as Baltic is concerned the suffix *-mo seems to be merely the imperfective counterpart of the perfective *-to, so there wouldn't seem to be much of a problem there.

On several points I seem to have failed to make my own notions clear. I do not believe that contemporary Lithuanian is indeed an ergative language. I have merely suggested that the contemporary language may show syntactic constructions which point to an earlier ergativity in Indo-European, although now I am modifying my views again and probably would

merely suggest that some syntactic constructions of Indo-European were ergative-like. In any case Ambrazas (p. 211) writes that one could only consider such constructions as *tėvo* (gen. sg.) *rugiai* (nom. pl.) *sėjama/sėta* (neut. sg.) 'rye is being sown/was sown by father' ergative if there also existed constructions of the type **tėvas* (nom. sg.) *dirbama/dirbta* 'father works/worked' and **tėvas* (nom. sg.) *gulima/gulėta* 'father is lying down/lay down.' Now one would expect sentences of the type **tėvas* (nom. sg.) *gulima/gulėta* 'father is lying down/lay down/ but if there were sentences of the type **tėvas* (nom. sg.) *dirbama/dirbta* one would not expect them to mean 'father works/worked,' but something like 'father is worked on/was worked on.' In other words in ergative constructions the action of the verb goes back on the noun in the nominative or absolutive case; the nominative case does not express the agent in ergative as it does in nominative-accusative constructions. Thus the meaning of this construction would be somewhat similar to the meaning of the construction in modern Lithuanian. But, as Ambrazas writes, one would indeed expect sentences of the type **tėvas* (nom. sg.) *gulima/gulėta* 'father is lying down/lay down.' Ambrazas notes that Kazlauskas, 1968, 333, had indeed proposed that constructions with the participle in *-to could have indeed existed in Proto-Baltic and could have served as the basis for the present with the formant *-sta*, which was separated out as a result of the reintegration of the participle in the system, thus **virt-ta* > **virt-sta* > *virsta* 'becomes.'

However, in contemporary Lithuanian the absence of sentences of the type **tėvas* (nom. sg.) *gulima/gulėta* 'father is lying down/lay down' and the existence of sentences of the type *tėvo* (gen. sg.) *gulima/gulėta* 'father is lying down/lay down' could indeed be considered a hindrance to the theory and I must admit, as Ambrazas points out, that I also originally considered such sentences ancient (Schmalstieg, 1976), although I would now agree with my critic, Guido Michelini, who wrote (1981, 54 (fn. 16)) that constructions of that type are most likely due to analogy with corresponding passive verbs derived from active constructions with the transitive.

I would like to point out, however, that even Ambrazas concedes that similar constructions are known in Vedic and I quote here an example: *púnas tṣ́n yajṛiyā devā́ nayantu yáta ś́gataṛ* 'again them divine gods may lead from where they came' 'die hehren Gotter mogen sie wieder dorthin fuhren, von wo sie gekommen sind, may the divine gods lead them again to the place they came from.' (Delbruck, 1888, 382). I would compare the syntax of the Vedic sentence given above with the syntax of Lith. *sniegas baltas (šaltas)* 'the snow is white (cold).' Although the adjectives seem now to have no direct connection with the verbs *balti* 'to be white' and *šalti* 'to become cold; to cool' it is easily possible to imagine that such originally existed. Compare also: *Jos žodžiais tariant, Jonas jai nei šilta, nei šalta* 'According to her words, John is neither warm nor cold towards her' (*Lietuvių kalbos gramatika*, Vol. III, p. 372) where *-ta* corresponds to the neuter singular participial ending or the old 3rd singular middle aorist ending *-to. Although the derivational bond seems to exist no longer, it seems to me that etymologically the adjectives *šiltas* 'warm' and *šaltas* 'cold' could easily have been derived with the *-to suffix from the verbs *šilti* 'to become warm' and *šalti* 'to become cold; to cool.' It seems likely that the analogical creation of the type *tėvo* (gen. sg.) *gulima/gulėta* 'father is lying down/lay down' was one of the reasons for the loss of the productivity of the type *Jonas... nei šilta, nei šalta* with the meaning 'John became neither warm nor cold.'

I must again apologize for not having made my thought sufficiently clear on another issue. Ambrazas (p. 213) writes that if an ergative paradigm with forms in *-to were transformed into a mediopassive by analogy with an antipassive (in *-om, *-es, *-et) that one would expect a replacement of the genitive by the nominative in transitive constructions of the type *tėvo* (gen. sg.) *rugiai* (nom. pl.) *sėjama/sėta* (neut. sg.) 'rye is being sown/was sown by father.' But my notion was that the old ergative became passive by contrast with the new active which in turn derived from the old antipassive. Analogy was not involved here. The appearance of the new active (deriving from the old antipassive) called forth (or was simultaneous with) the reinterpretation of the old ergative as a passive. And it is certainly not necessary that the agent be expressed by the same case in all tenses. Georgian may be a good example of a language with split ergativity where the agent is expressed by the nominative case in the present group of tenses and the ergative case in the aorist group of tenses.

On the other hand it is possible that the old ergative case (> genitive of agent) did indeed sometimes appear in the nominative case. The sigmatic nominative has always seemed out of place in the Indo-European paradigm where many of the nominatives have zero-endings (in my view the sigmatic nominative was originally only encountered in the *o-stem nouns). I point to the coincidence of the nominative and genitive case in the Hittite *o-stem nouns, thus nom.-gen. sg. *an-tu-uh-ša-aš* 'man,' cf. also Gothic nom.-gen. sg. *hairdeis*, 'shepherd/ *harjis* 'army.' I propose that the Indo-European '-stem noun with the sigmatic nominative may reflect the old ergative (see Schmalstieg, 1987). Other stems (e.g. ā-stems) are endingless in the nominative case and reflect the old absolutive case. The double origin of the nominative case has partial parallels elsewhere. Thus, according to Klimov, 1962, 154, in Chan the nominative with intransitive verbs can either have a zero ending (the old absolutive case) or the ending *-k* (the old ergative case), e.g., *bere imtu* 'the boy ran away' *ir berek ibgaru* 'the boy began to cry.' Trask, 1979, 387-8, writes: '...once the two subject cases are available, the language is free to take advantage of them to render some appropriate distinction.' Compare the examples from the Bats language: *As wož ę* 'I (erg.) fell (and it was my own fault) vs. *So wož ę* 'I (abs.) fell (and it was through no fault of my own).

Ambrazas concludes (p. 237) that the results of a comparative analysis of syntactic constructions with the participles allows one to reconstruct for Proto-Baltic (I suggest here that Russ. *pribaltiiskogo* is a misprint for *prabaltiiskogo*) a group of deverbal nouns with process meaning inherited from Indo-European. Differently from conjugated verbs these deverbal nouns were used primarily in subordinate constructions playing the role which was later played by subordinate clauses. These deverbal nouns became participles in the contemporary sense when they became correlated by tense and diathesis with conjugated forms, but their process meaning and verbal valence are an inheritance from more ancient times. The

impossibility of reconstructing for Indo-European subordinate sentences with conjugated forms of the verb is explained by the fact that this role was played by constructions with deverbal nouns (i.e., subordination was expressed by nominal sentences). The use of reflexes of these deverbal nouns as predicates of subordinated constructions has been particularly well retained in the Baltic languages — even better than in Old Indic and Old Greek texts, which have long been famous for their particular inclination to use participles. This is the primary significance of the Baltic testimony for the understanding of the Indo-European sentence.

One can only be grateful to Ambrasas for making his profound knowledge of Lithuanian, general Baltic and Indo-European syntax available to linguists. This book along with his earlier book on the history of the Lithuanian participles and many important articles are the results of years of hard work and deep study of the issues involved in the syntax of his native language. Ambrasas is without doubt the leading world expert on Baltic historical syntax and his book is indispensable for anyone who proposes to study Indo-European syntax seriously.

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