

LATIN – ROMANIC – ROMANIAN: THE CASE OF “PROBLEMATIC PARTICIPLES”

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Abstract:

The relationship between genetic inheritance and recent innovation, and between parallel evolutions and specific particularizations of related languages, is difficult to reduce to an acceptable analytical scheme. No matter how efficient the research methods, specialists cannot firmly decide whether a certain phenomenon can be framed within a relatively linear historical evolution, with visible marks of expected filiations, or is the result of general language laws, acting through specific mechanisms on the phonetic, lexicosemantic, grammatical and pragmatic-stylistic manifestations of languages.

Among the strange, difficult phenomena, hard to fit into the morphological systems of languages, at least through some particularities, is, alongside interjections and onomatopoeias, for example, the “perfect passive participle,” as it has been codified in grammars over time. With ambiguous belonging and manifestations – verb and adjective, with possibilities of substantivization, adverbialization etc., with a permanent predisposition to evade the rigour of morphological, syntactic and semantic paradigms, the passive participle seems to carry with it its entire versatility, protean, creative and expressive character – from Indo-European to Ancient Greek and Latin, and from there, into the Romance languages, including Romanian. But we are not very sure that it did not reinvent each time, with small particularities in each language, in accordance with certain springs of human thought and speech, difficult to penetrate at this stage of the development of sciences. In fact, the “oddities” of the participle manifest themselves in other languages as well – not only in Latin and Romance ones and not only in Indo-European languages...

Keywords:

Latin language, Romance languages, Romanian language, participle, verbal system, nominal system, grammatical categories.

1. Diachrony and Synchrony

The personality of a language is also given by its ability to take from the mother language and develop in its own forms certain detail elements from the structure that evolves over time, beyond the fundamental elements that ensure its place among the great families and groups of languages.

One of these details is the subcategory of the passive participle, problematic¹ through its “participation,” to use the *figura etymologica* from which its name derives, in the inflectional manifestations specific to two lexico-grammatical classes profoundly different structurally – the verb and the adjective –, and, somewhat consequently, through the flagrant violation of the categorial oppositional rigours typical of these classes: gender, number and case, in the adjectival instance, respectively voice, tense and aspect, in the verbal instance. Regardless of the class, the participle stands out through a semantic development as complex as it is expressive, in both instances. It should be added that, between these, the participle sometimes also appears as a noun, thus involving the conditions of a third lexico-grammatical class, not to mention adverbial uses.

2. The Latin Participle

2.1. The passive perfect participle in Latin had a late and controversial history. The path from Indo-European must have initially gone from the active voice to the middle voice, then to mediopassive forms (Ernout-Thomas, 1967, pp. 276-277; Stati, 1965, pp. 166-197; Timotin, 2002: 98 etc.). The latter did not last long, due to formal complications (synthetic paradigm in *infectum* and analytic in *perfectum*) and semantic ambiguities (*lavor* “I wash myself,” but also “I am washed”)². The use of *esse* (which many

¹ The term appears in Bentley-Ledgeway, 2014: 65 (“cette sous-classe n’est qu’apparemment problématique”) and 67, n. 3 (“les participes problématiques comme *manciati* en (1) seraient des formes héritées du latin, en tant qu’adjectifs.”) The two researchers reject this hypothesis.

² Consequently, the path somehow returns to the initial point, in the sense that the use of active forms instead of deponent ones re-emerges, cf. *horto* instead of *hortor*, as early as Plautus (É. Bourciez, 1930, pp. 74-75), a process accentuated in Late Latin (V. Väänänen, 1959, p. 129). Cf. also L. Wald, 2016, p. 75: “Regarding the evolutionary form of

languages usually dispense with, cf. Latin, among the old ones, or Slavic, among the modern ones), from a formal perspective, as well as the multiplication of meanings, favoured the next step, the appearance of the *passive voice*.

2.2. This was not without difficulties either, as it formally inherits the use of the copula *esse*, involving an agent, and at the deep structure level represents nothing more than a reversal of the perspective from which the action is viewed. Practically, as is known, the passive is an active in which a swap has occurred between Agent and Patient, that is, between Subject and Object. When we encounter the passive reflexive, things seem more complicated, but the uses occur later in Vulgar Latin and Romance languages.

The substage in which the participle sheds the copulative verb *esse*, as well as its substitutes – *habere*, *stare*, *venire*, seems to have been revolutionary: it begins to have independent behaviour, from a morpho-lexical and morphosyntactic perspective, on the one hand, and continues its semantic creativity, on the other. Of the entire passive voice subsystem, the *passive perfect participle* fits best into this type of non-canonical behaviour relative to the verbal system grid.

Ernout-Thomas, 1964: 276, considers that the *-to* participle does not have a very strict connection with the passive voice, because one of its meanings targets “the acquired state, manifested in the present,” such as *captus* “captive.” It evolved “as a verbal adjective still outside conjugation.”³ A modern researcher says about the passive, in general, that it is a *lusso della lingua*, a “luxury of the language,” an inspired expression, probably calqued after the Latin *lapsus linguae*, cf. Roncani, 1959: 34.

Initially, the evolution seems to have been common for both the active and passive participles, both manifesting the same “propensity for additional expressive values.” Following Schmalz and Landgraf (*Reisig's Vorles*, III, p.

grammatical categories, it seems that, in some cases, there is a circular movement, a return to the initial forms.”

³ In fact, the list of researchers who believe that in the Indo-European phase the participle was not integrated into the verbal system is much longer, cf. Herzog, 1910: 127; Kühner-Stegmann, 1912-1914: 756; Stolz-Smalz, 1928: 544; Ernout, 1953: 345; Meillet-Vendryes, 1960: 337, *apud* Stati, 1965: 192 and n. 108.

740), J. Marouzeau shows that a participle integrated into a nominal construction with the auxiliary *to be* can replace various subordinate clauses, the logical-semantic value being more prominently highlighted than that usually rendered by a conjunction + predicate verb in the subjunctive etc. In the same old author, Plautus, there appear types of nominal constructions of the “adverbial of purpose” type:

renuntio futurum ut tu sis sciens (Ter., *Andr.* 508)

“I warn you that this will be, so that you know”

ut tu sis sciens (Ter., *Andr.* 775) – instead of: *ut tu scias*.

The nominal structure with *esse* + participle (active or passive) appeared so expressive that later writers, especially those who cultivated folk oral styles, used it in stylistic formulas of the type *figura etymologica*:

vitamus ac sumus vitantes (Lact. 13,22)

tenuerunt ac sunt tenentes (Lact. 212,7)

Subsequently, the verb *esse* began to disappear from such constructions. With exceptions found in Sallustius, *Jug.*, 97,3: *quia locorum scientes erant* (“because they knew the places”) (a hybrid between conjunction structures and *those* with participle) and in comedy authors, the copulative verb is ignored.

Applying the principle of speech economy in this way favoured the participle (present – in these examples) being loaded with adjectival values, which, in any case, it had already begun to acquire even alongside the respective copulative verb.

sapis “to know” > *sapiens es* “to be warned”; “to take into account” > *sapiens* “wise”

Therefore, from a predicative or even from an element of a compound verbal form, it becomes a periphrasis (which substitutes verbal forms), then an attribute: first a verbal attribute (next to copulative verbs – the successor of the old predicative), then a simple qualifying attribute, in form, but connotatively loaded, in semantics.

A similar path is followed by its younger sibling, the passive perfect participle. “Younger”, but bolder in morphosyntactic and logico-semantic manifestations! This is understandable, as the passive participle did not go

through the stage of being an element of a periphrasis but effectively constituted a component of the past tense paradigm of conjugation. In this regard, J. Marouzeau, 1910:112, contradicts the language historians who argued for the *primordial* isolation of the passive participle from the verb conjugation system:

libuit = libitum est

feci = factum sum

The independent behaviour towards the inflection system, originality and complexity of grammatical-semantic valences were favoured by the application of the principle of analogy. More precisely, the participle in *-tus* was compared and, ultimately, homologated with the adjective in *-us*:

factus est/est factus vs bonus est/est bonus

Part. + *esse* vs Adj. + *esse*

The double forms selected by Jules Marouzeau are meant to suggest another favouring factor in the passive participle's path towards an exceptional status: the freedom of position of the construction with *esse*. This was no small matter, as it was not always so and not everywhere so. The word order (addressed, for Romanian, by Alexandru Nicolae, 2015; Dragomirescu-Nicolae, 2009, 2017 etc.) could confer different meanings to the phrase, in the verbal instance:

factus est "made" – defines the action;

est factus "was made" – affirms/confirmes the reality of the action.

The same J. Marouzeau notes that there are certain verbs that impose "reverse order," that is, *esse* + participle: these are those that express common, universal, evident facts, such as *be born*. Logically, there is no need to state that we were born, unless we need to specify some circumstance, such as social status, paternity, place, time etc.:

libera ego sum nata (Plaut, *Curc.*, 607)

quasi serva forem nata (Plaut, *Rud.*, 218)

Ephesi sum natus, non enim Apulis (Plaut, *Mil.*, 648)

qui **bono sunt genere nati**.⁴ (Plaut, *Mer.*, 969)

Otherwise, if the fact itself is stated (possibly, the age), the copulative verb is in postposition:

natus est nobis nepos (Ter., *Hec.*, 639)

“A grandson was born to us.”

annos nata est sedecim (Ter., *Eun.*, 526)

“She is sixteen years old.”

Of course, residues and complications still appear, either in the active voice or in the passive voice, in the case of verbs with special forms and meanings.

a) certain present participles acquire adjectival values when retaining *esse*:
esse audiens “to be obedient, docile” (Plaut, *Amph.*, 929)

esse oboediens “to be submissive” (Plaut, *Mil.*, 806) etc.

b) certain perfect participles may acquire two different values masked by a single form:

- b_1 *perfectus est*, where *perfectus* is a passive participle of *perficio*, thus: “(he) completed,” “(he) fulfilled, accomplished a task”

- b_2 *perfectus est*, where *perfectus* is an adjective near the verb of attribution *est*, thus: “(he) is perfect,” cf. the maxim *Nemo perfectus est* “No one is perfect.”

According to Marouzeau, from whom we have taken all these examples and explanations, the position of the copulative auxiliary is much freer, but even in the first case discussed here, it is neither forbidden nor devoid of meanings.

Thus, a departure from the rigours of a verbal paradigm was also possible through the loosening of word order rigours. However, the passive participle took with it all the additional meanings with which it had been endowed until then by the relationships with the copulative verb, namely “general action vs specially contextualized action,” among others.

On the other hand, it also took, in this liberating journey, the marks of another very important grammatical category typical of the verb: temporality. If it had manifested from the beginning as a nominal (adjective or noun), the

⁴ Cf. also analogous constructions, such as the one in Terentius, *Adelph.*, 797: *ex te adeo est ortum*, with *esse* or even with other verbs, to highlight an opposition, an adverbial etc.

circumstantiality of temporality would not have had a chance of expression except in the case of lexemes that carried temporal semantics within themselves:

P_{pz} *adulescens* (and, more certainly, in the Ablative absolute, *adulescente*)

P_{pf} *senectus* (and, more certainly, in the Ablative absolute, *senectute*)

Otherwise, temporality is conferred by the forms of the verb alongside which the respective participle stands:

dilecta sum “I **am** loved” – by someone else; “I **am** liked”

dilecta fui “I **was** loved”

According to the canons of cultured, classical Latin, *dilecta sum* had to be interpreted as a past: “I was loved.”

It is evident, therefore, that interferences occur between periphrases with participle-adjective and compound forms with auxiliary + perfect participle, which are strictly verbal:

est captus in Alide (Plaut, *Capt.*, 94)

a) “he was caught”;

b) “he is a prisoner”

The comedy playwrights deliberately use these ambiguities, but they are also the ones who attest to the importance of temporal values in folk speech:

semper sum arbitratus et nunc arbitror (Plaut, *Aul.*, 216)

“I **have always been judged** and *now* I **judge**.”

quae est dicta mater esse ei adhuc, non fuit. (Ter., *Ht.*, 270)

“She who **was said** to be his mother until now, **was not**.”

Marouzeau (1910:113) draws attention to the previously discussed issue of the prepositioning of the verb *to be* in situations of explicit circumstantialization, as well as to the “evident” temporal values in such formulations. It has been noted that temporality is doubly highlighted here:

- by adverbs of time *semper, nunc, adhuc* etc.

- by the succession of verbs.

If we were to take the phrase *sum arbitratus* separately, we could interpret it in three ways:

- a) “I am judged” – present passive
- b) “I have judged” – perfect active
- c) “I have been judged” – perfect passive.

The ambiguity arises from the (semi-)deponent nature of the verb *arbitrari*. However, the opposition marked once adverbially (*semper/nunc*) and once verbally (*arbitratus/arbitror*) clarifies things to a large extent. Of course, the discussion remains about “I judge / I am judged” = *arbitror* etc. Even clearer is the sequence of tenses between *est dicta* and *non fuit*. There, the first phrase cannot be interpreted as present (although the present form *est* is used), because both the adverb *adhuc* and the verb *fuit* express the past, from the related clause.

Let us note, for now, that the passive participle is always involved in such interpretable constructions, in which the temporal value has great enunciative importance.

The participle in *-tus* is a component element of periphrastic conjugation forms, not only with the verb *esse* (*amatus sum, amatus eram* – see also the evolution in Romance languages and in Romanian), but also with other verbs.

- *dare* and *reddere* (especially in archaic Latin), with the meanings “to do,” “to transform,” “to render”:

- *dare negotium* (Plaut, *Cist.*, 595) “to manage”
- *reddere impetratum* (Plaut, *Bacch.*, 197) “to do everything,” “to strive”

- *facere* and *fieri*, in common expressions:

- *missum (aliquem) facere* (Ter., *Andr.*, 703) “to send (someone)” / to lament me”
- *legiones missas fieri* (Cic., *Ph*, 5, 53) “the legions to be discharged”
- *missos faciant honores* (Cic., *Sest.*, 138) “to renounce honours”

In support of his ideas regarding the position of the copulative verb, determined by circumstantial values, J. Marouzeau cites Hale and Buck, who show in their grammar how in the same archaic-popular style of Plautus or Terence, the copula precedes the passive participle, as a proper verb, when the context has a pronounced discursive tone⁵. Thus, the expression *datum est* “it is given,” with the known meaning “Thus fate willed,” has the copulative verb normally placed after the participle. But, in the bombastic speech of the braggart soldier in the comedy *Eunuchus*, the position of *est* is reversed, because the speaker wants to emphasize his status as a favourite of Fate; after all, Fate had always acted/decided in the past, ever since the birth of the fortunate beneficiary of its generosity. Thus, the verses in Terence’s comedy sound accordingly:

Est istuc datum

Profecto, ut grata mihi sint quae facio omnia. (Ter., *Eun.*, 395-6)

Another example illustrating the special position of the auxiliary-participle structure was not necessary for our study, but we have retained it because it suggests an additional nuance of implicit temporality – that of a past (and impersonal, lawful, almost magical) action affecting the present state of the Agent, contained in the form of the respective perfect passive. The soldier emphatically underlines:

“It **is** truly a gift what I have received...”

◆ Before continuing the attempt to reconstruct this progressive loading with the values of the time category (which will bring with them a new layer of load – that of the verbal aspect category), it is necessary to review other nuances of the manifestations of the passive participle.

⁵ Carl Darling Buck, William Gardner Hale, 1903/1966/2012, *A Latin Grammar*, Ginn and Co./University Press, Boston, USA /London/Cambridge.

• Firstly, it is noteworthy that the P_{pf} can express other circumstances, not only the temporal one. Ernout-Thomas (1964: 276) cites participles with attributive value from the realm of the possible – and this, in writers who use cultured Latin:

contemptus “despised,” but also “to be despised,” “méprisable,” “which can be/deserves to be despised”

invictus “unconquered,” but also “invincible,” “which cannot be conquered” (cf. Latin *invincibilis*)

Example:

o quam contempta res est homo! (Sen., *NQ.*, pr. 5)

“Oh, what a pitiful thing is man!”

In the imperial era, against the backdrop of increasingly complex thinking, verbal circumstantial values, on the one hand, and nominal values, on the other hand, develop at the expense of the active, but especially passive participle, cf. Ernout-Thomas, *loc. cit.*

- completive constructions

• with *verba voluntatis*, taking the place of an infinitive:

Te volo monitum (Plaut, *Cist.*, 299)

“I want you warned” = “I want you to be warned/I want to warn you”

• with *verba sentiendi, dicendi*, then with an action verb (*facere, inducere*):

parasitum tuum // video currentem (Plaut, *Curc.*, 2777)

“I see your parasite running/run.”

- conditional, of the type *datum est* “given that,” often with a typical syntactic connector or comparative conditional:

non... nisi admonito, venisset in mentem (Cic., *De orat.*, 2, 180)

“If I had not been warned, I would not have thought.”

- adverbial clause of reason (apparent) or concession, with appropriate, prototypical connectors:

velut posito bello (TL, I, 53,5)

“as if he had renounced war”

quippe tot interfectis (Tacit., *Hist.*, I, 72)

“because he had made so many others perish”

(*Caesar*) *quamquam obsidione Massiliae... retardante, brevi tamen omnia subegit.* (Suet., *Div. Jul.*, 34,4)

“Although delayed by the siege of Massilia, Caesar quickly subdued everything.”

me tueor, ut oppressis omnibus, non demisse (Cic., *At.*, 2,18,3)

“Given the general constraint, I consider myself without cowardice...”

Substantivization of the Passive Perfect Participle

The adjectival component of the P_{pf} largely justifies its morphological extension and its occasional placement in the position of a *noun*. Of course, almost any adjective can be substantivized by its nature. Here, this refers to what we call a “verbal noun” (or “analogue,” as Ernout and Meillet, 1964: 280, put it), that is, a post-verbal formation that abstractly expresses an action. The typical example is the phrase used as the title for the official history of the Roman people written by Livy, *Ab Urbe condita*⁶. The usual expression retains the idea of time in its participial component: “*Starting from the founded city.*”

Here, *condita* “founded, established” is an adjectival participle, used as an attribute alongside *urbe*, with which it agrees in gender, number and case. But its verbal origin preserves the category of time, so the process of its use as an abstract noun, which nominally expresses an action carried out over time, seems very natural: *from the founding of Rome.*

The phenomenon of nominalization occurred over time, like all other extensions of the morphosemantic and logico-semantic values of the

⁶ Written between 27 and 9 B.C., it must have originally had the title *Annales*.

Participle. In ancient times, such examples of conversion are attested quite rarely, exclusively in contexts that also contain other markers for the idea of temporality and, consequently, in forms of adverbials, that is, in the Ablative or Accusative case and, almost obligatorily, with appropriate prepositions:

ab ineunte aetate (Plaut, *Trin.*, 305)

“from **the beginning** of life”

ante solem occasum (Plaut, *Epid.*, 144)

“before **sunset**”

The cited grammarians note it alongside verbs or verbal phrases of necessity, with *opus est*, *usus est* etc., instead of the infinitive with nominal value:

Celeriter mi hoc homine convento est opus (Plaut, *Curc.*, 302)

“I need to meet this man quickly.”⁷

Only in the classical era does it come to be used in the Nominative case, which definitively consecrates its nominal status⁸:

Ea res saepe temptata... tardabat... (Caes., *BG.*, 1, 26,2)

“This **repeated attempt**... delayed” = “**The repetition**... delayed.”

- Unexpectedly, such transfers become frequent in the imperial era, also involving the future participle in *-turus* and the adjectival participle in *-ndus*, which indicates obligation.

In the same era, forms with the Genitive etc., are attested:

monumentum deletae rei publicae (Cic., *Dom.*, 137)

“A memory of the ruined State” = A memory of the **ruination** of the State.

⁷ Similar examples, with the same explanations, appear in Hofmann-Szantyr, 1965: 393.

⁸ Ernout-Thomas also provides an example of an active participle used substantively in the nominative: *fugiens denique Pompeius mirabiliter homines movet* (Cic., *At.*, 7,11,44) “Pompeius **fleeing** / The **flight** of Pompeius miraculously moved the people.”

According to the cited grammarians, the development of these nominal instances began from the first stage of attestation of written Latin, favoured by *impersonal neutral constructions*, typical of folk speech. Written attestations range from Plautus to Cicero, Caesar, Sallustius, Cato, first in still explainable forms, of the Ablative, then even in the nominative:

- *opus/usus est cauto, dicto, facto, parato, properato, scito* etc., common in the folk register

“It is necessary/usual to be careful, to say, to do, to defend, to hurry, to know.”

- *obvigilatast opus* (Pl., *Bacch.*, 398)

“It is necessary to be vigilant.” [Vigilance is necessary]

- *praperato opus est* (Cic., *Pro Mil.*, 49)

“We need to rush things.” [Rushing is necessary]

- *opus est consulato et facto* (Sall., *C.*, 1,6)

“Consultation and action are necessary.”

- *quae opus sint locato, locentur* (Cato, *Agr.*, 2,6)

“Those that need to be leased should be allocated.”

The last example illustrates the forms of the neuter pronoun (singular here, but also used in the plural), which was initially a Relation Accusative. This is used as the subject of the impersonal verbal phrase, often attested also in the Nominative, as the actual subject. *Opus est* is here a modal auxiliary, used with a complement expressed by a past participle nominalized in the

neuter gender, as frequently appeared in Plautus and Terence. Researchers⁹ provide attestations from the texts of these two archaizing and popular comedy playwrights, but also from the most scrupulous users of cultured Latin, such as Caesar, Cicero, Velleius Paterculus, Livy and others. Considering the usual forms of the Ablative absolute like *auspicato*, *sortito* “after the auspices were taken”; “after the lot was cast,”¹⁰ originating, of course, from the earliest times of orality, Ernout-Thomas, *op. cit.*, p. 181, states that participles in *-tus* always tended to be equated with a verbal noun: the phrase *Ab Urbe condita*, exemplified above, “was nothing but a personal form extension.”

Grammars provide numerous examples where the participle comes to be used almost exclusively as a noun. It is true that this happens more frequently with the active Participle (*adulescens*, *sapiens* etc.), but the P_{pf} also has many such uses.

- Initially, it seems that neutral forms were used, related to impersonal verbs (of necessity etc.), as seen above:

sg. *dictum/dicta, factum, responsum, pactum*;

pl. *male parta, praecepta, peccata*

Then personal forms were also used, especially in the masculine:

damnatus, legatus, mortuus, praefectus, sponsus etc.

Two contexts of these nominal developments of the P_{pf} are noteworthy for now – the adjectival and the nominal. The first explanatory context would

⁹ Cf. Claude Moussy, „Quelques emplois parallèles de *opus* et de *necesse*”, in: Claude Brunet (sous la direction de), 2008, *Des Formes et des Mots chez les Anciens*, Besançon: Institut des Sciences et Techniques de l’Antiquité, pp. 143-152. See the discussion regarding participles that appear in such contexts in Ernout-Thomas, *loc. cit.*

¹⁰ Ablative absolutes of this type are later found even in texts written in the most carefully crafted classical Latin and in forms with other cases, cf. *auspicata comitia* “assemblies opened after the auspices were taken” (T. Livius, 4,35), cf. also *urbem auspicato inauguratoque conditam habemus; nullus locus in ea non religionum deorumque est plenus*, T. Livius, 5,52. Significant examples, such as *sortitus* etc., also appear in Cicero, Propertius and others.

be the oral, folk origin of such constructions. They later appeared in the texts of cultured and purist writers, cultivators of scholarly forms.

The second explanatory context is Greek influence. All grammar authors cite similar forms from Greek – for the nominalization of the passive perfect participle, in *-tus*, present in *-nt*, future in *-turus*, and of necessity in *-ndus*, with or without prepositions. The model was very effective, as the Greek language had long used corresponding forms, alongside prepositional infinitives, cf. Ernout-Thomas, 1964: 181. Shortly before this passage, the same two French linguists stated that the continuous development of the participle's valences has two causes: a) the continuous development of human thought – which needs complex forms of expression; b) “en partie, sous l'influence du grec où elles abondent” (p. 280). Hofmann-Szantyr, 1965: 319, also invokes the Greek model of *ὁμώμοκα* for the standardized Latin *juratus sum* “I have sworn,” “I have testified.”

The already striking peculiarity of the P_{pf} 's evolution is, therefore, that propensity towards the freest nominal instances (adjective predicative without copulative verb, verbal adjective agreed in gender, number and case with the nominal head, almost natural conversion into the typical nominal, that is, into a noun – first in fixed forms, like the Ablative absolute, then in various cases of adverbials – especially in the Accusative; later, it is attested in any case of the nominal paradigm, including in the Nominative, with the syntactic function of subject. To go from a simple determiner, from an attribute, to the position of subject is no small feat!

◆ *From Temporal Values to Aspectual Values*

But more striking than this transition to other lexico-grammatical classes and their most specific and inappropriate categories for an exponent of the powerful class of the verb is the fact that the P_{pf} carries with it its intrinsic verbal features, the most defining ones, such as voice, tense and aspect. And, moreover, all these are synthesized into a single form, as in the following example:

paratus (sum) =

- I am prepared – present active
 - I have been prepared – perfect passive
 - I am prepared (by someone else) – present passive / medio-active
 - I am being prepared now – momentary
 - I am prepared anytime – durative
 - I am prepared now, as a result of a long past period of preparation – resultative
- preparing (used as a deponent) – durative
- and so on.

Certainly, the syntactic context clarifies many of these nuances: adverbs, modalizers may appear, different tenses may be used for the verbs in the connected clauses, the copulative verb (expressed, implied; in a present, past tense etc.) may matter, the word order may matter etc. But if all these external determinations can be absent, one is mandatory: either the verbal copula or the nominal determiner (noun or pronoun). All these confer it the status of a “problematic participle.”

Hofmann-Szantyr, *loc. cit.*, gives us the example of Petronius, in whose picaresque novel *Satyricon*, we find the term *mortuus* “dead,” a passive adjectival participle used with the values of *moriens*, present active participle, but also with those of *moribundus*, gerundival adjective.

Therefore, we can already make a partial synthesis of the evolution of the Latin participle.

1. Regarding voices, the value incorporated in a single form is triple – active, passive, deponent:

potus =

- a) that drank
- b) that was drunk
- c) drinking (ayant buvé)

For c) cf. also *imitatus* “imitating” (“ayant imité”) – indicating the state of the one who has drunk/imitated, *apud* Ernout-Thomas, 1964: 276.

2. Regarding tense, we observe that the present and past are expressed through the same form:

speratus =

- a) that hopes
- b) that is hoped
- c) that was hoped

d) The play of tenses goes so far that sometimes *P_{pf}* is used to express the future:

laetorque cum praesenti, tum etiam sperata tua dignitate (Cic., Fam., 2,9,1)

“I rejoice not only in your present honour but also in the one you hope for.”

3. Regarding aspect, *P_{pf}* expresses several nuances of the *perfectum/infectum* opposition, namely: completed/uncompleted; momentary/durative; past in the present etc. This particularity deserves more detailed examination.

• ***The Category of Aspect and Its Implications in the Behaviour of the P_{pf}***

Loaded with all these valences, the Passive Perfect Participle engages in one of the most complicated and subtle forms of manifestation of the verb class, codified in grammars under the name “aspect.” As vague as the name of the category is, so comprehensive, profound and dynamic is the area designated within verbal inflection and the construction of various verbal groups. In principle, aspect is nothing more than a nuance of the temporal perspectives from which the action or state expressed by verbs is enunciated. More precisely, aspectual coding reflects the *perfectum/infectum* opposition (Romanian “perfective/imperfective”), which means that it follows the processuality or state contained in the verbal form selected by the speaker. Once this investigation begins, however, it leads to the inventory of a large number of additional nuances of the idea of “completed/uncompleted,” such as *inchoative vs terminative/resultative; progressive vs linear; momentary (punctual) vs durative; momentary (semelfactive) vs iterative*. Furthermore, some verbs or only forms or contexts of verbs can be viewed from the perspective of the final point of the expressed action, which means revealing other values of the category in question, namely the *telic/atelic* values. These,

in turn, like other values of the aspect category, involve the appeal to another semantic-syntactic feature of verbs, *transitivity* (cf. DTL, s.v. *atelic*, *telic*, *transitivity*). And when dealing with intransitives, *unaccusatives* (*telic*) and *unergatives* (*atelic*) are distinguished, see significant examples in DTL, s.v.

Only by considering these last subdivisions of verb analysis could we discern a “universal feature” of the verb class, as this is responsible for the semantic and syntactic cohesion of the entire utterance, involving, in turn, the verb’s position, lexico-grammatical structures, such as prefixations, etc. The theoretical enumeration of the expressive complexity of aspect can still be continued, as each subdivision inventoried in the significant and structural richness of a verbal form opens new positions, i.e., new parameters of analysis. Some of these will even be mentioned in the analysis of the P_{pf}.

Already loaded with the verbal and nominal valences enumerated here, the P_{pf} is also marked by all the attributes of the grammatical category of aspect, and not only in the usual, expected forms but also in atypical forms and semantics that violate the expected logic of the category and its known subcategories. These attributes, added to those already noted, confirm from the most diverse perspectives the status of “problematic verbal form” attributed to the Passive Perfect Participle – Latin, Romanic, Slavic etc.

We have seen so far that the same participle can mark/express different voices and tenses:

- potus* = “that drank” – active past, *perfectum*
 - “that was drunk” – passive past, *perfectum*
 - “drinking” – active present semideponent, *infectum*
- debitus* = “that owed” – active past, *perfectum*
 - “that was owed” – passive past, *perfectum*
 - “that is owed” – passive present, *infectum*
 - “that owes” – active present, *infectum*
 - “owing” – active present, *infectum*

In other words, the Passive Perfect Participle (P_{pf}) can activate a very wide, practically unlimited, range of categorial nuances.

On the other hand, these forms represent new evidence favouring the nominal, respectively adjectival and substantival, use of passive participles.

But the application of the aspect analysis grid shows us that the temporal axis is by no means reduced to the succession of past-present-future. The three stages are modalized, i.e., nuanced by the logical-ontological values of processuality, finality and the logical-syntactic values of enunciative coherence, i.e., the relationships with the nominal or adverbial determiners of the verb-centre.

- acquired state:

filius meus illic apud vos servit captus (Plaut, *Capt.*, 330)

“My son serves here with you, (*as a*) captive.”

Cf. also:

Obsecro, quid istis ad istunc usust conscriptis modum, ut tibi ne quid credat atque ut vinctum te adservet domi? (Plaut, *Bacch.*, 749-750)

“I beg you, what is the purpose of these writings: so that he does not trust you and keeps you *bound* at home?”

- past action, prior to the predicate verb:

Caesar, questus quod... bellum sine causa intulissent, ignoscere imprudentiae dixit obsidesque improvit. (Caes., *BG*, 6, 27, 5)

“Caesar, *after complaining* that..., declared that he forgave their ignorance.”

We will return to these participles, which show the present state as a result of a process begun in the past.

- *adultus* “adult”, “mature” = *qui adolevit* “who has matured”; but for “young” the present participle is used: *adulescens*, from the same verb.

- (*tempus*) *praeteritus* “the past (time)” = *quod praeterit* “that passed”

- *cenatus* “that dined”; *pransus* „that launched”, cf. Rom. *māncat*, It.

dial. *manciato*

An additional nuance of these forms of P_{pf}, which still retains the idea of the past, more precisely, of an action completed in the present but as a result of a past evolution (thus *perfectum*, according to processuality), is that of *possibility*, of *potentiality* – prototypically expressed by gerundive participles, cf. *supra*:

- *comptentus* “despised”, but also “worthy of being despised”:

o quam comptenta res est homo! (Sen., NQ, pr. 5)

“Oh, what a thing worthy of contempt is man!”

This form reminds of the expression *slugi crezute* from Dosoftei, a participle meaning “which deserve to be believed,” “credible,” “which can be believed.”

- *invictus* “unconquered”, but also “invincible”!

The descriptive grammars cited here insist on some verbs, mostly semi-deponent, especially those formed by composition, which have telic aspects, as we would say today, i.e., those that show an action “adjusted to its term,” such as *utor, -i* “to use, to make use of”; *colligo, -ere* “to gather, to recruit”; *diffido, -ere* “to distrust, to suspect”; *efficio, -ere* “to form” etc. The participles in *-tus* of such verbs can designate “the present state resulting from the previous act”:

complexus “who embraced” and, therefore, “who holds embraced”

iisdem ducibus usus, Numidas... subsidio mittit (Caes., BG, 2,7,1)

“Having used the same guides...” = “using...”

fatebor... me quoque in adolescentia diffisum ingenio meo...(Cic., *Mur.*, 63)

“I confess that... *being distrustful of/distrusting* my own talent...”

(Rhenus) in plures defluit partes, multis ingentibusque insulis effectis... (Caes., BG, 1.11)

“The Rhine flows into several parts, *having formed/forming* many large islands.”

The Expressive Values of the Grammatical and Semantic Evolutions of the P_{pf}

Sometimes, the conversion into a nominal form also involves the intervention of the expressive factor, namely a metaphorization of the term in question:

potus can acquire the meaning of *ebrius* “drunk”, i.e., “intoxicated”,
debitus – “debtor”, possibly “eternally indebted”.

scitus “who knew”, “who knows”, acquires the meaning “skilful”,
nupta “who married”, becomes a present with a substantive value,
“married woman”, “wife”¹¹.

In the comedies of the 3rd – 2nd centuries BC, we find folk-oral type participles that metaphorically express the *present state* induced by the accumulation of *past actions*, with *effects in the future*, more than probable:

Occisi sumus. (Plaut, *Bacch.*, 4,4, 41; cf. also *Mil.*, 164)

“We are dead/killed” [We are in a very difficult situation – as a result of past mistakes and with effects in the present and future].

In the same type of contexts, Plautus uses predicative verbal forms, such as “you kill me,” “I have perished” etc.:

Chrysale, occidi. (Plaut, *Bacch.*, 4,4,31)

occidi. (Plaut, *Bacch.*, 4,4,38)

Perii. (Plaut, *Bacch.*, 4,4,40)

We will also find these types of expressive use of participles in the Romance languages and, as variants, the personal equivalents of the verbs in question.

¹¹ Ernout-Thomas, 1964: 276.

Thus, in Latin, besides the cumulative values from its nominal use (as an adjective and, from there, as a noun), which enhance its semantic content of qualification, agentivity etc., the Latin passive perfect participle carries with it the entire wealth of meanings conferred by the grammatical categories of the verb – *voice*, *mood* and *tense*, primarily – with their successors in the realm of discursiveness and coherence of the utterance: transitivity, sequence of tenses, association with copulative or analogous verbs. In fact, the participle acquired these characteristics by flagrantly violating all the rules of consistent classification within the paradigmatic subsystems in which it was placed, at some point, quite naturally. However, the complexity of its logical-semantic values and the freedom to activate them in the most diverse situations is due to a fourth grammatical category, characterized itself by a structural heterogeneity generating limitless expressive nuances, that of *aspect*.

When we say “passive perfect participle,” we refer to the category of mood, tense and voice, explicitly stating the main feature of aspect – perfectivity. When analysing the countless contexts in which the P_{pf} can appear, we find that mood is not “mood,” but a “non-finite form,” the passive is very often active, in fact, and temporality manifests modally, that is, under the attributes of aspect. It shows actions or states that are finite or non-finite, ongoing or begun, or recently completed, or before another past action, as they can be progressive, accumulative, linear or iterative, intentional or necessary, on the verge of being triggered or as possible future manifestations, probable etc.

3. The Passive Participle in the Romance Languages

With this rich heritage, with a difficult/problematic “personal file,” if we are to personify it, as we are talking about a highly versatile logical-grammatical entity, comparable to that of a rebellious, adventurous person, an “outlaw,” the passive perfect participle seems to have passed from Latin into the Neo-Latin languages.

If it indeed “passed,” that is, “was inherited,” it would not be a problem, as “passing” and “adoption” have been its entire evolution, from Old and Vulgar Latin to Classical and Cultured Latin, then to Late Latin, from

one style to another, from one register to another etc. In fact, it seems that the strange evolution started even from Indo-European, since we find it in other language groups (Slavic, Anglo-Saxon, Arabic), with the same attributes – of behavioural freedom and heterogeneity.

The question is: *was it really inherited along with the entire Popular Latin base?* It is the same question that grammarians ask regarding the *supine*, its sibling from the subclass of non-personal verbal moods, i.e., from “non-finite verbal forms.” As we all know, the Romanian *supine* is not quite the same as the *supine* from the mother Latin, and in the rest of the Romance languages, it has disappeared altogether. There are also discontinuities regarding interjections and onomatopoeias, for example, or various other classes, subclasses and categories of the language system.

Applying the provisions of the “monotonicity hypothesis,” invoked by D. Bentley and A. Ledgeway, 2014, after P. Kiparski, 1982, developed by Andrew Koontz-Garboden, 2012, logical-semantic values can be preserved even if grammatical structures change quite visibly, in the lineage and chronology of natural languages.

In our case, Bentley and Ledgeway state that a model like Latin *cenatus (est)* “(is) dined,” meaning “dined” (in the past) and “is no longer hungry” (in the present), i.e., a resultative-stative participle, aspectually speaking, can be placed at the base of forms in Southern Italian, more precisely, in *manciati siti?* “are you eaten?” attested in Calabrian, Neapolitan, Sicilian¹². It seems the same as “*sunteți mâncați?*” in Romanian (literally ‘are you eaten’), exemplified in the study by Nicolae-Dragomirescu, 2009, in forms like *un om băut* “a drunk man,” *un om umblat* “a well-travelled man,” which the two British researchers cite, cf. Bentley–Ledgeway, 2014, p. 74, also adopting, in another context, the example of replacing the copula *to be* with that of the type [*to come* + part.].

Romanists consider that there was first a period of diminishing the use of participles of all kinds in the history of the new languages based on Latin¹³.

¹² D. Bentley-A. Ledgeway, 2014; 63-80, as well as p. 67, n. 3, in which they reject the idea that these words were inherited only as *adjectives*, not as verbs, too.

¹³ Alexandra Cuniță, 1989, s.v. *Participiul*.

The future participle in *-turus* was the first to give way, which was, anyway, an artificial creation derived from the P_{pp} in *-tus*. Having a special, modal-pragmatic semantics, expressing imminence, an action about to begin, it was assimilated with the corresponding adjective: *homo profecturus* “a man ready to set off,” then it was substantivized, cf. Latin (*ad*)*ventura* “events to come” > Spanish, Portuguese *ventura*, French *aventure* “adventure.” The process is more complicated, as seen, since the neuter plural was grammaticalized as feminine singular etc.

Then, the *present participle* forms in *-nt-*, which render an ongoing action, but also state, quality, having therefore verbal and adjectival values equally, cf. Latin *anno currente* (a.c.) “the year that is ongoing,” “the year that unfolds now,” “the current year,” disintegrated. The fact that in absolute participial constructions (Abl. abs.) the present participle took on a different ending, depending on its use as an adjective or as a verb, in the speaker’s intention (*constanti anima* vs. *nullo rogante*), facilitated its classification into a minimal integral case paradigm – meaning it was used in other cases as well. Then it transitioned to the noun class, the *-ns-* theme integrating it into the third imparisyllabic declension. The Neo-Latin languages each valorised it in their own way, preserving the nuance of *infectum*, of state, of quality. French and Occitan continue to use it verbally as well, having lost the gerund, but they have significant agreement and orthography issues with compound forms like *ayant aimé*. Catalan and Spanish have conserved it exclusively with adjectival value, as has Italian – with the difference that Italian still retains some verbal traces. In Romanian, the present participle in *-nt* has completely disappeared because the gerund has been conserved and even developed. Everywhere, forms in *-ant*, *-ente*, *-ante* have usually been substantivized: French *fleurissant*, *savant*; Italian *comandante*, *tenente*, a phenomenon considered a “dilution” of the Latin heritage, cf. Cuniță, *loc. cit.*

The passive perfect participle also “seemed destined to perish,” according to the same specialists in the historical grammar of Romance languages, because, as shown above, it had exited the verbal paradigms since early Latin. It formally separated from the structure of the four types of Latin perfect, and aspectually – from the frames of *perfectum*, rendering *infectum*

values. It became independent even from the copulative *esse*, instead adopting nominal endings, which conferred other paradigmatic and syntagmatic frames, more precisely, agreement in gender, number and case with the determined noun, which was initially the subject of the utterance (cf. Cuniță: 1989, s.v.).

The transition from the mediopassive voice in Latin to the passive voice in the Romance languages has also been dealt with by W. D. Glock (who places it in the 5th century) and Kr. Nyrop (who places it in the 6th – 7th centuries), cf. also Bentley-Ledgeway, 2014.

The generalization of the verb *to be* as the marker of the passive voice led to the reduction of the opposition between the verbal predicate and the nominal predicate:

laudatus sum = I praised

laudatus sum = I am praised.

We already know that formal ambiguities of the present, such as *lavor* “I wash/I am washed,” had arisen long before.

The nuanced semantics also contributed to the temporary weakening of the utterance structures with the passive participle. The new languages sought simplicity in grammatical forms and clarity in logical-syntactic relationships. However, the passive participle had sacrificed the expression of the opposition between Agent and Patient in favour of the opposition between Process and Event. Practically, as the cited researcher states, the Patient becomes the centre of the process application, being “the participant affected by the consequences of the process.” In fact, as is known, the entire passive voice does nothing but render the same action from another perspective, as the roles of Agent and Patient are switched. But when this perspective opposition is also lost, as the participle can render both active and passive through the same form, it no longer appears necessary in speech usage, becoming a “luxury,” as A. Roncani labelled it.

This sinuous, dynamic path of rise and fall was also influenced by external, objective causes of a formal-logical nature, among which the law of

analogy is essential. This favoured the tendency to link with the perfect stem, the tendency to reduce the number of verbal stems, to clarify conjugation types by eliminating irregular ones as much as possible etc.

Particularities in the Diachrony of Romance Structures

However, it is known that two opposing phenomena act in diachrony – simplification and clarification, on the one hand, but also reorganizations that generate new dysfunctions, on the other hand.

In the Latin-Romance history of the P_{pp}, the following phenomena mainly occur:

a) Six ending forms stabilize, divided into two thematic subgroups:

a₁) Weak participle, inheriting the long vowel from conjugations I, III, IV, of the type *-ātus* (rendered through Acc. *-ātum*):

-ātus, -ētus, -ūtus, with the stress on the long vowel of the ending;

a₂) Strong participle, from the second conjugation, of the type *-ēre*, with the stress on the vowel in the verb root:

-ītus, -tus, -sus (including the sigmatic ones)

b) Some verbal forms are regularized, such as the reduplicated perfect: *cecidi* > *cadui*, from which Latin *cadutus* would result, the starting point for the Romance languages, cf. Romanian *cădzut* > *căzut*; Italian *caduto*.

c) Participles in *-ūtu-* develop, resuming an archaic Latin of the type *battutus*; inherited Romanic elements are recognized in Romanian *vândut, căzut* (cf. also *supra*), in French *vendu, perdu* and so on.

d) Transitions from one subcategory to another occur:

d₁) Some strong participles transition to weak, popular ones: *perdēre* > *perditus*; *fidēre* > *fishus*.

d₂) Some weak participles transition to strong ones: *sentīre* > *sentitus* > *sensus*.

e) Some complex forms and meanings are completely abandoned, such as those in *-etus*.

f) In general, strong participles have prevailed in the Romance languages, in 2-4 forms::

-at (1st conjugation): Rom. *lucrat, mâncat*; It. *travato*; Sp. *cantado*; Ptg. *cantado*

-ut (2nd, 3rd conjugations): Rom. *tăcut, pierdut, băut*; It. *creduto*

-it, -ît (4th conjugation): Rom. *povestit, hotărât*; It. *finito*; Sp. *comido, bebido*; Ptg. *bebido*

g) The Latin forms have been preserved and then regularized in the diachrony of each Romance language:

- Romanian archaic *fapt* > modern Romanian *făcut* (the strong form from Latin > the weak form in Romanian)

- cf. It. *fatto*; Fr. *fait*; Sp. *hecho*; Ptg. *feito*

“Most strong participles have been preserved in Italian,” and the most productive type, preserved in all Romance languages, is the one in *-ātus*. (Al. Cuniță, *loc. cit.*). We all know the explanation: the first conjugation, in *-are*, is the clearest, the most simply organized and, consequently, the most productive, because almost any new acquisition (internal, through derivation or composition, or external, through borrowing and phonological adaptation) is integrated into this inflectional paradigm.

Then, gradually, the old mechanisms of semantic and functional loading of the so-called “passive” and “past” participles are resumed.

a) First of all, we find the temporal-aspectual ambivalence, generated by the loss of oppositional rigour in the past/present, *perfectum/infectum*:

carte citită – passive (‘read book’)

om citit – active (‘read man’)

b) The passive predominates, of course, but it is loaded with logical-pragmatic nuances partially inherited from the former belonging to the middle conjugation, partially conferred by the category of aspect.

c) Adjectival values bring complex grammatical structures back into discussion:

c₁) It can agree in gender, number and case with the determined noun when used as a deverbal attribute or even as an element of a past compound form, such as:

Rom. *El este (cel mai) căutat x Ea este cea mai căutată x Ei sunt (cei mai) căuțați.*

Fr.: *Il est (le plus) recherché x Elle est (la plus) recherchée x Ils sont (les plus) recherchés.*

It.: *Lui è (il più) ricercato x Lei è (la più) ricercata x Loro sono (i più) ricercati.*

Sp.: *Él es (más) buscado x Ella es (más) buscada x Ellos son (más) buscados.*

Ptg.: *Ele é (mais) desejado x Ela é (mais) desejada x Eles são (mais) desejados.*

(i.e., ‘He is (the most) wanted x She is (the most) wanted x They are (the most) wanted’).

c₂) It also agrees with the grammatical Subject (the Agent) when it is a constituent of the passive voice, cf. *supra*.

c₃) It remains invariable when it is an element of compound tenses; these can be constructed with the auxiliary *a fi* (to be), but also with *a avea* (to have); *avere*; *avoir*, *haber*; *ter* etc.

c₄) When the new Romance idioms develop their literary variant, the agreement issue becomes more complicated, in the sense that the participle can agree, in the literary variants of the central Romance languages, with the direct object placed before the auxiliary (*La lettre que j’ai écrite.*) or with the grammatical subject in constructions of the type “Intransitive verb + descendants of *esse*”:

French *Marie est partie*

Italian *Maria se n’è andata.*

d) The values and nuances from popular and archaic Latin, as well as atypical morphosyntactic structural schemes, return to the topicality of the new idioms:

d₁) The Romanian copulative *a fi* (‘to be’), Italian *essere* can be replaced with the analogous verb *a veni* (‘to come’), respectively *venire*,

andare, etc. + participle, when the speaker wants to suggest values of the imperfective, durative, such as “necessity,” “imminence,” with the idea of an imminent future or an unfinished past:

Rom. *vine umplut* (‘it comes filled’); *vine cusut pe margini* (‘it comes sewn on the edges’); It. *il libro andò perduto*; Sp. *cuya vida non andaba envuelta en fabulas*

d₂) The use of alternative verbs, such as *estar/ser*, both meaning “to be” in Spanish and Portuguese, with different temporal-aspectual values:

- *estar* + part., as resultative, as a consequence of an action:

- *ser* + part., when it concerns the participle proper:

Sp. *el muchacho fue alabado por el maestro*

Ptg. *a porta é fechada pelo porteiro.*

d₃) In fixed expressions, with compound aspectual values, verbs of the type *a da, a face* + participle can be used, especially in Romanian, sometimes in the (former) reflexive voice. We recognize here the pattern discussed in the presentation of the situation in Latin, cf. *supra*, Section 2.

se dă lovît (‘feign illness’); *se face înțeleș* (‘make oneself understood’); *se preface mort* (‘feign death’).

Other Features of the Participle in Romance Languages

• The reflexive passive spread quite extensively in the Neo-Latin languages, violating classical Latin rigour, as it suggested “an added processual dynamism” (M. Manoliu-Manea, p. 205, *apud* E. Timotin, 2002, p. 99). This is because it allowed the omission of the Agent and could facilitate “the predominance of event topicalization” (Timotin, 2002, p. 98). In Romanian, it seems that the reflexive-passive also developed under the influence of Slavic languages (cf. Al. Rosetti, primarily, *apud* Timotin, p. 99). However, the cited researchers observe that the active voice was more frequent than the reflexive-passive, and the latter was more frequent than the passive.

• The full passive constructed with motion verbs (*a merge, a veni, aller, andare, venire* ‘to go, to come’ etc.) is used to convey the idea of

process, dynamism and, on the other hand, durativity in most Romance languages – French, Italian, Spanish, Romanian, Engadine, Sursilvan; E. Timotin, *op. cit.*, p. 100, states that in Swiss Romansh it is even a “common” construction.

- Periphrases with *a venit* for *a fi* do not represent, in our opinion, a Muntenian regionalism (restricted to Buzău, Olt), but a general popular Romanian usage. We have heard it in Banat, Dâmbovița, Dobruja etc. Neither does the idea that it originated from Italian, since it appears in *Foletul novel* or in I. Văcărescu’s *Gramatica românească* (modelled after Italian, as is known), seem acceptable to us, since the pattern existed in popular and late Latin.

The strong resurgence of the passive perfect participle in the Romance languages is due, therefore, to its formal simplicity, on the one hand, suitable for diverse verbal and nominal uses, and to its aspectual complexity, on the other hand.

- The linguist J. Feuillet, 1989: 6-9, states that in the very special evolution of the participle, it is not necessarily about tenses (past, present), nor about voices (active, middle, passive), but about pragmatic modalizations of the type “fulfilled”/“unfulfilled,” that is, about the grammatical category of aspect.

4. The Passive Perfect Participle in Romanian

Since in presenting the past participle in the Romance languages (cf. *supra*, Section 3) we have used ideas and examples from Romanian as well, in this section we will synthesize the description of the concept under discussion here.

The first forms of the Latin-Wallachian passive participle can be identified in Danubian Latin, more precisely, in the late Latin inscriptions on Romanian territories, up to the 6th century, edited and commented on by Haralamb Mihăescu, 1960; Emilian Popescu, 1976; Sorin Stati, 1961, and others, with information later synthesized by I. Fischer, 1985; M. Manoliu Manea, 1971, then again by S. Stati, 1965, and E. Timotin, 2002. Evidently, the inscriptions render popular forms and, especially, standardized forms. But we still find some participle forms with *esse* used classically and loaded with the temporal values given by the copula (Timotin, 2002: 96-97):

est positus Terentius (inscription found in Constanța)

condida erat (inscription found in Apulum)

dilecta fui (inscription found at Sarmizegetusa, cf. CIL III 1537).

Researchers consider the imposition of the analytic passive from these examples, to the detriment of the synthetic one, from the mediopassive paradigm, a characteristic of the entire Romanized area, as these formulas also appear in Pannonia, Moesia etc. (H. Mihăescu, 1960: 146-147, cf. also Timotin, 2002: 98).

Diachronically, from Indo-European, the evolution was as mentioned above: from the active voice to the middle voice, and from this to the passive voice, cf. L. Wald, 2016: 75, G. Creția, 1999: 23. But the formal asymmetries and semantic ambiguities of the mediopassive favoured the development of the standalone passive, in analytic forms. E. Bourciez, 1930: 74-75, is one of those who reject this thesis, otherwise almost universally accepted.

Anyway, after the advent of writing, this is the form that quickly generalized in the Romance space, cf. *Istoria Limbii Române*, 1965: 170.

In the early period of Romanian written culture, in the first documents and writings from the 15th century, both types of passive, the reflexive and the full passive, were used correctly and frequently, says Gh. Chivu in the introductory study to 1979, *Documente și însemnări...*. In later documents, from the 1521-1640 period, the same linguist notes a certain diastratic specialization:

a) In occasional documents (folk texts), the full passive is more frequent;

b) In legal texts, in laws, the reflexive passive predominates, cf. Gh.

Chivu, 2000: 53-54.

Therefore, the selection is conscious and motivated,: the full passive, from everyday speech, is more prominent; then the Subject and Predicate are independent. The tendency towards the independence of the passive participle in structures with *a fi* would continue, as in ancient Latin, manifesting itself in relation to the copulative verb, to a nominal determiner, to temporal-aspectual rigour etc. For now, let us note that in the full passive, the predicate

expresses “the essential, permanence, generality,” while in the reflexive passive, uniqueness is expressed, as “the Predicate characterizes the subject only once” (Timotin, 2000: 106).

Anyway, for the full passive, we encounter forms such as *eastе credzut*, and for the reflexive, the structures are those from the legal-administrative style still valid today: *se face* [meaning “it is required”; “they will be deprived of” etc.].

The subsequent development resumes, on the one hand, the path taken by Latin, and on the other hand, runs parallel to the other Romance languages. It is what we have stated above, namely, that Latin paradigms are neither adopted en bloc nor radically innovated.

The innovations are now of the same type everywhere:

- Paradigm reorganizations occur, with formal simplifications being compensated by semantic loading.

- Common, classical forms intersect with new, popular, rare forms.

- Influences within the Romance languages and from other languages with which Romanian had prolonged contact are “possible, but not certain.” Opinions are still divided in this regard: Sextil Pușcariu, 1929: 277; Al. Densusianu, 1961; Al. Rosetti, 1976, support the Slavic influence, especially in maintaining the reflexive passive. Neither H. Tiktin nor E. Bourciez were convinced that the participle had its own passive forms (just as Darmsetter considered that French did not have it at all), cf. E. Timotin, 2002: 108.

But the resumption of the forms¹⁴ manifested by Latin throughout its history proves an undeniable filiation, supported by the majority of Romanian language historians:

¹⁴ We mentioned above Lucia Wald’s vision, 2016, p. 75, regarding the “return” of certain forms and meanings within the structure of grammatical classes and categories of natural languages, a process that seems to unfold “in a circle.” We add here the quote that nuances this idea: “*It has also been observed that, in the history of language, the category of aspect precedes the category of tense. In the course of the history of Indo-European languages, the aspectual opposition became secondary, with the primary place being taken by the temporal opposition. However, some languages (Russian, Modern Greek) returned to dominant aspectual oppositions in their conjugation systems. Considering the evolution of content and the way forms are organized, such examples should be understood not as representing a circular evolution, but a spiral one, a kind of negation of the negation* (our emphasis, P. Gh. B.). *The aspectual forms in modern languages have a new content, they are organically linked to temporal oppositions.*”

- Mobility in verbal and nominal manifestations (adjective, noun);
- Inconsistent relationships (+/-; mobile word order etc.) with the copulative *a fi*;
- Association with analogous verbs – *a veni*, but also *a merge*, *a da*, *a face*, in fixed expressions;
- Fluctuating temporality – past/present, with future nuances sometimes;
- Violations of voice rigour: passive with active value and vice versa, through the nominal activation of the desinence:

judecata înfricoșată = ~ înfricoșătoare, care înfricoșează
(‘frightening judgement’)

vacă mulgătoare = de mulș, care poate fi / este mulșă (‘milking cow / cow which can be/is milked’).

- Violations of the transitivity subcategory:

zburat din funcție (‘ousted from office’)

- Enrichment of modal values through the strong influence of the aspect category (durative/momentary; completed/in progress; incipient/future; progressive/static; imminent/possible/necessary; resultative/stative).

- As in all other Romance languages, the contextualization of the perfect participle produces semantic modifications of the original verb, enhancing expressiveness, especially through pronounced metaphorization:

citit ‘learned’

mâncat și băut ‘no longer needs food and drink, is fine’

but also:

băut ‘drunk’, cf. It. *bevuto* (Bentley-Ledgeway, 2014: 76)

mâncat ‘betrayed’

curățat ‘killed’, ‘made to disappear’

prăjit ‘tricked, deceived’, and more recently, ‘very high (on drugs)’.

It is interesting that the same words are prone to metaphorization, that is, the same terms, in their perfect (passive) participle form:

Rom. *a (se) duce* ('to go'), in the participial form *dus, -ă* ('gone'), which acquires adjectival attributes (agreement in gender, number and case, adverbial complements, intensity category) can also mean "who has lost their mind":

Este dusă rău. ('She's lost it')

Pare complet dus. ('He seems completely insane').

Bentley-Ledgeway, 2014: 85, give the example of *andato, -a* from Italian, where *andare* can also have the meaning of French *aller* "perdre la boule." They also cite Calabrian Italian *partire*, in the form *partito, -a*:

Maria e proprio partita 'Maria is completely gone (crazy)'.

Romanian *a (se) ajunge* ('to arrive'), in the participial form *ajuns, -ă* ('arrived'), has exactly the same formal-semantic and pragmatic-expressive behavioural traits, but with the meaning of "accomplished," "(someone) successful socio-professionally":

Ionescu s-a ajuns ('Ionescu has succeeded'),

Te-ai ajuns! ('You've made it!')

We may decipher here subliminal nuances ("without having great qualities, through dishonest means; you have become proud, inaccessible"). The two English researchers cited above give the example of Italian *arrivare*, in the form *arrivato, -a* "arrived," with the meaning "fulfilled, socio-professionally accomplished." In Romanian, the participial form with the reflexive can be noted.

These types of resultative-statives are not considered "problematic," despite their semantic and aspectual load, because they represent "motion verbs with mono-argumental completions." They express the *perfectum*

situation, in the variant of “active fulfilment.” All these seemingly problematic participles denote, in fact, “activities that reflect back on the agent,” according to Bentley and Ledgeway, *loc. cit.*, referring to Van Valin, 2005: 47.

*

Thus, practically, Romanian, like all other Romance languages, applies the Latin principle *multum in parvo* “much in little”: a simple participle in *-to-*, originally, collects and expresses an immense variety of forms and meanings.

It renders all voices – active, passive, reflexive, impersonal passive, with all their Agent-Predicate-Patient relational values; it renders the fundamental tenses – past, present, future, with all their internal gradations (recent past, near future etc.); it renders moods and aspects, with all their plethora of logical-semantic and logical-syntactic nuances. And, in addition, it substitutes the adjective and the noun, fulfilling all the syntactic functions of nominals, traversing all paradigms of gender, number and case, and expressing qualities and states, movements, in all their instances. Sometimes, it even crosses into non-nominal classes: in *mort de frică* (‘scared to death’), the P_p has an adverbial value.

Evidently, such a linguistic phenomenon is difficult to codify in a descriptive system. It remains a “problem” for linguists – captivating, challenging and still open.

*

Latin, the Romance languages and among them, Romanian, meet and part ways as unexpectedly and spectacularly as the grammatical subcategory they contain in the deep structure of their grammatical, lexico-semantic, phonetic and pragmatic-stylistic subsystems.

Abbreviations

Ppf = perfect participle

Ppp = perfect passive participle

Ppz = present participle

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