ROMAIN GARNIER

ON THE ORIGIN OF GERUND AND GERUNDIVE IN LATIN: A NEW REASSESSMENT

Summary: This short paper addresses a very vexed issue, to which a huge literature has been dedicated so far: the origin of the so-called gerunds and gerundives in Latin. Any previous attempt has proved unconclusive, mainly because of the proliferation of *ad hoc* rules assumed to account for the *nd*-forms and even more because of the plethora of solutions. Instead of assuming another etymon for the sake of antagonism, this paper intends to reassess the whole issue within Latin itself: as shown by non-standard syntactical features of Plautinian and Late Latin, there is a morphological relationship between the present participle and the *ndō*-gerund, used to express simultaneity. Whereas the previous scholarship has taken for granted the assumption that thematic verbs used to have a *-odno*- suffix (cf. OLat. *-und*-), which led to tautological reconstructions totally unparalleled outside Italic, I would tentatively explain the unexpected *o*-grade of such forms by a crossing with the old *o*-grade participles (cf. OLat. *uoluns* 'willing' reflected by *uoluntās*). Such an approach vindicates the ancient theory according to which *-andus* reflects *-ātan-ó-* (< PIE *-eh₂-tn̥-ó-*), provided one assumes that a reana-lysis of *-ātan-ó-* was made as a "suffix" *-tanos* following the thematic vowel of the first conjugation, which produced *fer-e-tnó-* 'ferendus' from thematic *fer-e-* 'to bear'.

Key-words: Late Latin, Republican Latin, gerund, gerundive, reanalysis

1. INTRODUCTION: GERUND AS AN "ABSOLUTIVE"

It is well known that Late Latin uses the gerund as a substitute for the present participle, for example in *Peregr.* 15. 5, *redirent mature … dicendo psalmos*, where the ablative *dicendo* stands for **dicentes* or in Ammian. 24. 3. 7, *moriar stando*. According to V. Väänänen,[1] this non-classical use of "absolutive" gerund is attested in Plautus (*Truc.* 916, *ita hīc exspectandō obdūruit* = **exspectans*). In my opinion, this could be the explanation for the odd Republican Latin gerundive forms such as *legundīs*,

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scrībundī, *dēferundō*, *quærundai* (*Lex. Repet.*). We may assume here a Vulgar feature such as OLat. **dīcundō* 'speaking' standing for an archaic present participle Lat. **dīcuns* [nom.sg.] 'speaking' (< proto-It. **déik-ont-s*), whose inherited *o*-vocalism would be reflected by the *-und-*doublets of the gerund(ive)s. This vulgar feature may account for the inexplicable vocalism of Lat. *-und-* better than the vague assumption of something like proto-It. ***-o-tnó-* or ***-o-dʰnó-* which is nothing else but a reconstruction without basis made by E. Risch in his famous monography dedicated to the topic.[2]

In Classical Latin, there is a clear morphological parallel between the gerund *eundō* and the stem of the present participle *eunt-* 'going' (< proto-It. **éy-ont-*). We may tentatively add other candidates, such as OLat. **aguns* 'leading, doing' (< proto-It. **ag-ont-s*), reflected by the archaic gerundive *in rēbus agundīs* # (Lucr.), OLat. **oriuns* 'coming to birth', which may have triggered the *o*-vocalism of *oriundus* [adj.] 'originary from'. Possibly also OLat. **scrībuns* 'writing' (< proto-It. **skréiß-ont-s*), reflected by OLat. *scrībundō* [dat.] and OLat. **fer-uns* 'carrying, bearing' (< proto-It. **fer-ont-s*), reflected by OLat. *dē-ferundō*. Besides, this interaction between gerunds and present participles is not unknown lto modern Romance languages, as is clear by MoFr. *Il travaille en chantant* 'He works singing' which refers to simultaneity and serves as a kind of absolutive (note the spelling *-nt* which stands for **-nd*);[3] *Il est mort en dormant* 'He died while he was sleeping'. To sum up, Non-Standard Latin is likely to have developed a kind of absolutive (OLat. **deicundō*, Late Latin *dicendo* 'saying' which is reflected by the modern Romance languages (cf. Span. *diciendo*, ModFr. *en disant*). In the spoken language, this was a strategy to avoid the flexion: Late Latin *stando* was a convenient substitute for *stans*/*stantes*. Besides, at all times of its long history, Latin was never prone to φιλομετοχία.

2. STATE OF THE ART

This being said, we may reassess the whole issue with a fresh look at the complex evidence. As aforementioned, many different explanations have been provided, the majority of which deal with a protoform **-ondo-*.

According to K. Brugmann,[4] the starting point of the gerund was an "allative" with an abstract noun in **-om* + **dō* 'ad' (with *dō* < PIE **doh₁* 'towards', cf. MoE. *to*, MoG. *zu*). The objection is quite obvious: such a sketch could work only for Classical Latin, whose thematic dative of purpose in *-ō* could be homophonous with the postposition *=dō*. But this was not the case in Sabellic, because the ending of the

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[2] RISCH, E.: *Gerundivum und Gerundium. Gebrauch im klassischen und älteren Latein. Entstehung und Vorgeschichte*. Berlin – New York 1984, 172.

[3] Note that MoFr. ***Il travaille chantant* is totally precluded, excepted when used as a circumstantial apposition: *Il travaille dur, chantant tout le jour* 'He works hard (while) singing all day' [adversative].

[4] BRUGMANN, K.: *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der indogermanischen Sprachen. Zweiter Band: Wortbildungslehre. Zweite Hälfte, Zweite (Schluss-) Lieferung: Verbale Stammbildung und Flexion*. Strasbourg 1892, 1425.

thematic dative was not prone to such a reanalysis, cf. Oscan **-úí** and Umbr. *-e*. Besides, O.-U. **-om* [acc.sg.] is a Sabellic substitute for PIE **-m̥* in root-nouns (this does not work for Latin). Latin ignores the pattern of infinitives of Oscan **deíkum** 'dīcere', Umbr. **a-fer-um** 'to perform the lustration (around the people).'

J. E. Rasmussen[5] derives Lat. **-ndo-* from PIE **-mh₁no-* (cf. Gr. -μενος), assuming an *ad hoc* treatment: PIE **-mh₁no-* > **-mno-* > pre-Lat. **-mdo-* > Lat. **-ndo-*. Unfortunately, the PIE **-mh₁no*-stem is not a deontic; besides, such a phonetic assumption is flatly contradicted by the facts, the cluster *-mn-* being very stable (cf. Lat. *alumnus*, *columna* and so on).

J. H. Jasanoff[6] tries to reconstruct a complex suffix **-ont-i-nó-*. From PIE **sék^u-ont-* 'following' was built an *i*-stem abstract noun **sek^u-ont-í-* [f.] 'the act of following', which was the origin of an adjective **sek^u-ont-i-nó-* 'following-related, disposed to follow'. In fact, such secondary derivatives show consistently zero grade (cf. Ved. *vas-at-í-* [f.] 'dwelling-place, residence, home' < PIE **ues-n̥t-í-* [f.] 'wrapping'),[7] as is clear by Lat. *nūntius* [m.] < OLat. NOUNTIOS 'messenger' < PIE **neuH-n̥t-ʲi-ó-* < **neuH-n̥t-í-* [f.] 'announcement, news' ultimately built on PIE **néuH-ont-* 'shouting'.[8] Last but not least, such secondary derivatives never show any deontic meaning, which makes the objection quite insuperable.

M. de Vaan[9] holds that the gerundive arose from the univerbation of a verbal noun in **-om* with an adjectival derivative **-dʰh₁-ó-* from PIE **√dʰeh₁-* 'to put'. In fact, the Sabellic languages do not fit with such a reconstruction, which would ironically require a morpheme **-om* attested in Sabellic only for the expression of the present active infinitive.

Moreover, the explanations dealing with a protoform such as proto-It. **-ondo-* stumble upon a major obstacle: Sabellic languages do not share this innovation, as is shown by Umbr. *anferener* (Iguvian Tables, VI a 19) '*circumferendi*' (meaning: *lustrandi* 'of lustration'), which reflects Sabellic **ambi-fer-enn-eys* [gerundive gen.sg.]. This very form is attested with the same kind of construction as Latin *Vrbis uidendæ cupidus* 'eager to see Rome':

(1) *popler anferener et ocrer pihaner perca arsmatia habitu*
    'populi lustrandi et urbis piandæ perticam ritualem habeto!'

[5] RASMUSSEN, J. E.: The Origin of the Latin Gerund and Gerundive. *Copenhagen Working Papers in Linguistics* 4 (1996) 149–159.

[6] JASANOFF, J. H.: The Origin of the Latin Gerund and Gerundive: A New Proposal. In GOLDBLATT, H. – SHIELDS KOLLMAN, N. (eds): *Rus' Writ Large: Languages, Histories, Cultures. Essays Presented in Honor of Michael S. Flier on his Sixty-Fifth Birthday. Harvard Ukrainian Studies* 28.1–4 (2006 [2010]) 195–208.

[7] More data apud PINAULT, G. J.: Vedic Reflexes of the Hitt. *tukkanzi*-Type. In MELCHERT, C. – RIEKEN, E. – STEER, TH. (eds): *Munus amicitiae Norbert Oettinger a collegis et amicis dicatum*. Ann Arbor – New York 2014, 262–275.

[8] HACKSTEIN, O.: Lat. *nūntius*. *MSS* 65 (2011) 105–121.

[9] DE VAAN, M.: The Latin and Sabellic Gerundive: An Old Etymology Reinstated (forthcoming).

GLOSSES: *popler*: gen.sg. of **puplu-**/*poplo-* [m.] 'people, army'; *anferener*: gerundive [gen.sg.] of **aferum** 'to perform the lustration *around*' [applicative verb basically followed by the accusative]; *et* 'and' *ocrer*: gen.sg. of **ukar**/*ocar* [m.] 'city'; *pihaner*: gerundive [gen.sg.] of √*piha-* 'to purify'; *perca* [f.] 'stick, staff' [acc.sg.]; *arsmatia* [adj. acc.f.sg.] 'of the ritual'; *habitu* [imp.3sg.prs.] 'let him hold!'

Accordingly, we may give up for good with the putative etyma **-*o-tnó-*, **-*o-dʰnó-*, **-*om=doh₁*, *-*o-mh₁no-*, **-*ont-i-nó-* and **-*om=dʰh₁ó-* accounting for OLat. -*undus*.

    Very differently, G. Meiser[10] analyses the -*endo*-gerundive as an adjective based on a PIE action-noun *$bʰer$-*ed-ốⁿ* [f.] 'carrying', source of a thematic derivative of appurtenance *$bʰer$-*ed-n-ó-* 'concerned by the action of carrying' (cf. Lat. *ferendus*), surfacing as proto-It. **feredno-*, which was the origin of Sabellic **feredno-*[11]/**ferenno-* and of Lat. **ferendo-*, with the metathesis observed in the name for 'water' (Lat. *unda* < proto-It. *ud-n-ā). The often adduced comparison with Gr. μακεδνός [adj.] 'long' shows that a putative PIE derivative in *-*dn-ó-* is not a good candidate for a deontic. Such a sketch may however account for Lat. *horrendus* [adj.] 'dreadful, horrible' which points to a thematic derivative OLat. *horrḗdĭn-us (subject to syncope), ultimately from an action-noun **horr-ḗdō, -ĭnĭs* [f.] 'horror'.[12]

3. A NEW PROPOSAL FROM AN OLD IDEA

E. Sturtevant[13] had compared the verbal noun Hitt. -*ātar*, assuming PIE *-*tn-* > Lat. -*nd-*. Rasmussen and Jasanoff have dismissed Sturtevant's explanation because of the unwelcome correspondance between Lat. *annus* [m.] 'year', Sabellic **akno-* and Gothic *aþns 'season', from PIE *$h_2ét$-*no-* and Latin *penna*/*pinna* [f.] 'feather' (< proto-It. *pet-nā). This strong objection must be addressed. The starting-point was PIE *$péth_2$-*mṇ* [n.] 'flight', on which was built **peth₂-(m)n-ó-* 'flying, winged', surfacing as proto-It. *pétănā [f.] 'feather, wing' > OLat. **pĕtĭna, pennắrum* with syncope (Vulgar **pĭtĭna, pĭnnắrum* with raising). Different reflex than from an old cluster *-*tn-*. Should the PIE root *h_2et- 'to wander' have ended with a final laryngeal, we may assume proto-It. **átăno-* [m.] 'year' source of Sabellic *atans, loc.sg. *aknei (Oscan **akneí**). Cf. Lat. *pătĭna*, Vulg. *panna* (MoG. *Pfanne*). The same explanation may be adduced for Oscan **patensíns** 'panderent' (< proto-It. **pătă-nă-sē-*), with

    [10] MEISER, G.: Das Gerundivum im Spiegel der italischen Onomastik. In HEIDERMANNS, F. – RIX, H. – SEEBOLD, E. (eds): *Sprachen und Schriften des antiken Mittelmeerraums. Festschrift für Jürgen Untermann zum 65. Geburtstag.* Innsbruck 1993, 255–268.
    [11] On the basis on the Oscan PN ***perkedn[eís** vs. the Latinised gentilicium *Percennius*.
    [12] Unrelated also with the gerundive is Lat. *blandus* [adj.] 'caressing', from *blắnĭdus 'provided with smoothness' (from proto-It. **mlāni-* [f.] 'smoothness' < PIE **mḹh₂-n-í-*).
    [13] STURTEVANT, E.: Hittite Verbal Nouns in -*tar* and the Latin Gerund *Language* 20 (1944) 206–211.

a different syncope than in Lat. *panděrě* (< **pătī́t-něrě*), Plautininan *dispennite*. Nothing prevents us from assuming that a new cluster **-tn-* may have had different reflexes than a prehistoric one (cf. Lat. *mattus* 'drunk' < **maditus* vs. Lat. *-ssus* < PIE **-d-ˢtó-*). We may account for the facts by reconstructing a proto-It. Verbal noun in **-ātor* [n.] (< PIE **-éh₂-t̥r*), in all likelihood secondarily assigned to the *ā*-verbs (Hitt. *appātar* [apā́dar] 'act of seizing' [n.] is from √*epp-*), whose dative may have been used for denoting purpose: proto-It. **opesā́tor* [n.] 'action of building', final dative **opesā́tan-ei* 'to be built', source of a thematic adjective **opesātan-ó-* 'to be built' (cf. Oscan **úpsannam dede** 'faciendam dedit'). The *ferendus*-class was then analogically built in proto-Italic: **-ā-tanó-* : **-ā-* vs. X : **fer-e-* :: X = **fer-e-tnó-*). The third conjugation forms (only!) did not trigger the Sievers-Edgerton variant. In my opinion, the regular reflex of proto-It. **-ā-tan-ó-* would be Lat. ***-ātinus*/ *-ānus* as is clear by the fossile doublet *prōtinus* [adv.] 'forward'/*prōnus* [adj.] 'leaning forward, bending down, inclined' ultimately from proto-It. **prṓ=tenos*. Strictly speaking, the gerunds of the first conjugation verbs should surface as ***sacr-ātinus/-ānus* or ***nec-ātinus/-ānus* vs. *ferendus* (< proto-It. **fer-e-tn-ó-* 'to be carried'). Accordingly, the classical forms such as *sacrandus* et *necandus* must be accounted for as an analogical leveling between the different conjugation stems. Besides, the forms in *-andus* are not in accordance with the historical phonology of Latin: the expected outcome would be rather Lat. ***-endus* with vocalic reduction, as appears from the lexicalised gerund *Kalendæ* or the ancient loanword *talentum* (< Gr. τάλαντον).

According to Hettrich,[14] the primitive constuction antedating the so-called gerundive with "horizontal" agreement was a verbal noun inflected with a dative of purpose, followed by an accusative of object: OLat. **hædōs cædundō habeō* 'I have to kill the lambs' realigned in **hædōs cædundōs habeō* with secondary agreement.

4. TYPOLOGICAL PARALLELS: DEONTIC FROM DATIVE. OR FROM GENITIVE IN INDO-IRANIAN AND ANATOLIAN

From a typological point of view, we may observe that the deontic adjectives attested in the various IE languages show a strong tendency to derive gerundives from an oblique case of a verbal noun – producing either an indeclinable word or a thematic derivative of appurtenance, being a decasuative formation from the oblique stem. There are mainly two subgroups: the dative of purpose (Celtic, Indo-Iranian) and the genitive of destination (Anatolian).

In Old Irish, the well known *participium necessitatis* is indeclinable, being a frozen dative of a **-tu*-stem: OIr. *bi-thi* 'to be striked, hit' (< proto-Celt. **bi-tow-ey*). This gerundive is also attested in W. *-dwy*, Co. *-dow*, OBret. *-toe*. Indo-Iranian exhibits a different strategy: decasuative formations in **-iió-* such as AVed. *jani-tav-*

ⁱyá- 'to be born or produced,' of the same pattern as Hesiodic Gr. οὔ τι φάτειον 'unspeakable (horror)' or thematic derivatives such as Ved. *hántʰva-*, OAv. *jə̄ϑβa-* 'to be hit or killed' (from I.-Ir. **j̊ʰán-tu-* [m.] 'action of killing' < PIE **gʷʰén-tu-*, **gʷʰn̥-téu̯-*,). Recently, G.-J. Pinault[15] has proposed a derivational sketch for the genesis of this formation.

As aforementioned, Anatolian uses in this respect a genitive of destination:

(2) Hitt. *memii̯aš ii̯āu̯aš* 'res *faciendi (est)' (i.e., 'the thing is to be done')

The basic construction in Hittite is the appositional genitive of the verbal noun: here Hitt. *ii̯āu̯ar* [n.] 'action of doing.'[16] According to Hoffner & Melchert, "the verbal substantive occurs frequently as a free-standing genitive without expressed head noun: in this usage it often has a potential or deontic sense ('…-able' or 'to be …-ed'), especially when negated."[17]

(3) KBo 4.10 i 10 *mān=aš ḫarkannaš* 'if he is *one of perishing*'
     (i.e., 'one deserving the death penalty')

(4) Ḫatt. iv 55, *nāḫūwaš* 'one of fearing' (i.e., 'respectful')

(5) KUB 13.20 i *kuiš arḫa tarnummaš*
     'he who is to be released (from military duty)'

This use of the verbal substantive has a parallel in the use of the action nouns in *-ātar* as free-standing genitives. Those action nouns are genetically related to Lat. *-andus*, being the reflexe of a PIE heteroclitic stem **-éh₂-tr̥* [n.], gen. **-éh₂-tn-os*. For instance, Hitt. *ḫarkannaš* 'of perishing' (i.e., 'to be killed') is merely the genitive of the action noun *ḫarkātar* [n.] 'action of perishing' (< PIE **h₃r̥g-éh₂-tr̥*, **-éh₂-tn-os*).

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

As is clear from the comparative evidence, Italic matches with Anatolian for the suffix (PIE heteroclitic **-éh₂-tr̥*, **-éh₂-tn-os*) – which was not grammaticalised elsewhere – whereas the very source of the Italic deontic points to an old construction with a dative of purpose, which was originally indeclinable, like the Celtic *participium necessitatis*

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[15] PINAULT, G.-J.: Genesis of the PIE Gerundival Suffix **-etó-*. In PETIT, D. – PINAULT, G.-J. (eds): *Verbal Adjectives and Participles in Indo-European Languages/Adjectifs verbaux et participes dans les langues indo-européennes. Proceedings of the Conference of the Society for Indo-European Studies (Indogermanische Gesellschaft), Paris, 24th to 26th September 2014.* Bremen 2017, 343–375, here 347.
[16] Data apud KRONASSER, H.: *Vergleichende Laut- und Formenlehre des hethitischen.* Heidelberg 1955, 211.
[17] Following examples from HOFFNER, H. A. – MELCHERT, C. H.: *Hittite Language. Part 1 Reference Grammar.* Winona Lake, IN 2008, 331.

exemplified by OIr. *bi-thi* 'to be striked, hit' (< proto-Celt. **bi-tow-ey*). We may assume that a final dative of a verbal substantive **opesā́tan-ei* 'to be built' developed in a deontic adjective **opesātan-ó-* 'to be built.' Osc. **trííbúm** … **úpsannam dede** lit. *'he gave this house to build' – that is to say 'he made build this house' – still captures the presence of a former dative, matching with constructions like Lat. *pōtuī dare* 'to give to drink.'[18] The underlying construction would be Osc. **trííbúm** … **úpsanneí dede*. On the other hand, the Umbr. gerundive *popler anf</br>erener* … *perca* (VIa19) 'percam populi lustrandi' comes from **poplom anferene* [dat.], ultimately from a proto-It. verbal noun **ambi-ferednei* [dat.] 'in order to go around.' As Umbr. **aferum** is clearly an applicative verb, governing the accusative, we may assume that (virtual) Umbr. **perca … poplom anferene* 'stick (or wand) for going around the people' was reshaped as an adnominal genitive: 'stick of purification' (Umbr. **poplom anferener*), whence the gerundive with "horizontal" agreement (*popler anferener* 'of purifying the people').

Unlike Anatolian, proto-Italic reassigned the verbal noun **-ātor* to the verbal stem **-ā-* (< PIE **-eh₂-i̯é/ó-*), which triggered a resegmentation of the dat. **sakrātanei* 'to be sacrificed' as **sakrā-tanei* (synchronically derived from the proto-It. present stem **sakrā-* 'to sacrifice'). Thereafter, a thematic variant **fere-tanei* 'to carry' (or 'to be carried') was built. The resulting **fere-tanei* was prone to syncope: **feret.nei* whence **fered.nei* (with lenition). The proto-It. cluster **-dn-* surfaces as Lat. *-nd-* (cf. *unda* < proto-It. **ud-n-ā́*), Sab. *-nn-* (cf. Umbr. **une** [abl.] /unne/ < proto-It. **ud-n-ed*). A "new" cluster **-t.n-* surfaces as Lat. *-nn-* (cf. *patina*, *panna*), Osc. *-kn-* (cf. **akeneí** loc. 'in the year' < **aknei* < **at.nei* < proto-It. **atVno-*, Lat. *annus*). The only option is to assume a reshaping of **sakrā-tanei* as **sakrandei* already in proto-Italic.

The thematisation of the gerund in Latin must be addressed: the indeclinable **ferendei* may have been morphologically reanalysed as a thematic locative **-ei* (cf. Umbr. **uze** 'on the shoulder' < proto-It. **omVs-ei*, Osc. **húrtín** 'in the garden' < proto-It. **χort-ei=en*, Lat. *humī* 'on the ground' < proto-It. **χom-ei*). In the prehistory of Latin, **ferend-ei* was a "locative" expressing purpose, remade into **ad=ferend-om* [acc.] 'to carry' or **ferend-ōi* [dat.].

From this stage onwards, the innovative ablative expressing instrument (OLat. **standō^d* 'standing') was possibly used as a kind of absolute equating to the inflected present participle (*stans*, pl. *stantēs*). Such a syntactic structure is surely attested in Late Latin, but may have occured early, in Early Vulgar Latin – as is clear from Plautinian evidence. In my opinion, the archaic gerund OLat. *scrībundō* [dat.] vs. Stand. Lat. *scrībendō* may be accounted for by a "vulgar" syntactic feature such as OLat. **scrībundō* [ger. abl.] = **scrībuns* [prtcp.] 'writing' (expressing either *simultaneity*: 'while writing' or *instrument*: 'by the action of writing').

Romain Garnier
garromain@gmail.com

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[18] With all due respect, the objection made by one of my anonymous reviewers concerning the scarcity of dative of purpose in Latin is totally pointless.