

Mikulová, Jana

A case of habere + participle in late Latin

Graeco-Latina Brunensia. 2013, vol. 18, iss. 2, pp. [77]-87

ISSN 1803-7402 (print); ISSN 2336-4424 (online)

Stable URL (handle): <https://hdl.handle.net/11222.digilib/128934>

Access Date: 27. 11. 2024

Version: 20220831

Terms of use: Digital Library of the Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University provides access to digitized documents strictly for personal use, unless otherwise specified.

JANA MIKULOVÁ
(FACULTY OF ARTS, MASARYK UNIVERSITY, BRNO)

A CASE OF *HABERE* + PARTICIPLE IN LATE LATIN

The paper examines the characteristics of habere transgressa, a case of habere + past participle, as found in Passio Desiderii. In comparison to other texts under examination, habere transgressa shows a high degree of grammaticalization, as a construction with an inanimate subject and participle of an intransitive verb. It is suggested that the use of the auxiliary habere may have been influenced by the development of the impersonal habet as well as the expanding meaning of habere. Habere + past participle occurred only twice in Passio Desiderii, while the auxiliary esse with past participle was found frequently in the text. Habere transgressa thus seems an important, although an isolated, example of habere + past participle, a study of which can contribute to a better understanding of the development of habere + past participle from Latin to Romance languages.

Keywords: Late Latin, Past Participle, *habere*, Grammaticalization

Introduction¹

The present paper examines the use of *habere transgressa*, a case of a *habere* + past participle construction² which has reached a more advanced stage of grammaticalization than other instances of *habere* + past participle in the period concerned. Specifically, it analyses and compares the contexts in which *habere* + past participle occurs in texts from the 6th to the 8th centuries, included in the database *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (MGH), *Scriptores* series.

¹ I would like to express my sincere thanks to anonymous reviewers for providing useful comments on the earlier version of the paper.

² The term “*habere* + past participle construction” is used for sequences of the verb *habere* and past participle which reached at least the first stage of grammaticalization, as defined by HEINE and KUTEVA (2006: 143–146).

Passio Desiderii

Habere transgressa appears in *Passio sancti Desiderii episcopi et martyris*, which is an anonymous work from Merovingian Gaul written in the 7th or 8th century. MARTÍN IGLESIAS (1995: 166 and 184f.) argues for the 7th century in this connection.

When composing the work, the anonymous author drew upon *Vita vel passio sancti Desiderii a Sisebuto rege composita* by the Visigothic king Sisebut. MARTÍN IGLESIAS (1995: 166f. and 169), maintains, however, that the author did attempt at an independent language use as well as content, since similarities within the texts occur only infrequently and are limited to the domain of lexicon. The example examined here is thus unlikely to stem from the Sisebut's work, given that the potential source does not contain any piece of information referred to with *habere transgressa*.

In fact, both language and style are different in the two texts. For instance, DÍAZ Y DÍAZ (1993: 219 and 221) claims that Sisebut used a relatively "correct" Latin while the author of the Merovingian *Passio Desiderii* did not seem to master the language to a high degree. The meaning of the latter text is rather difficult to understand at times, and the structure of sentences appears corrupted.

Habere with passive perfect participle

Much research attention has been paid to the development of the periphrastic construction *habere* + perfect participle.³ The analyses of Late Latin and early Romance texts have demonstrated that the grammaticalization of the periphrasis lasted for a long time and that the process was completed neither in Latin nor in early Romance languages (see FRUYT 2011: 790–792; RAMOS GUERREIRA 1998: 685). In some dialects of today's Romance languages, the process has not been finished until to date (see JACOB 1995: 368).

The development of auxiliaries and the process of their grammaticalization were described by HEINE (1993) and treated in more detail in his later

³ The terms "periphrastic construction" and "periphrasis" are used in the way suggested by HASPELMATH (2000: 661), who argues for a link between periphrasis and grammaticalization, stating that that "the more grammaticalized a construction is, the more it can claim to have a periphrastic status." He (2000: 663) maintains that the notion of periphrasis can be used for the "semantic categories (...) which show a sufficiently high degree of grammaticalization to be described as part of the verbal paradigm rather than only in the syntax."

works. HEINE and KUTEVA (2006: 143–146) distinguished three stages of the grammaticalization of *have* + participle (note that sequence of *have* with possessive meaning + past participle is considered Stage 0):

Stage 1: The participle is formed only from transitive verbs, and agrees with the direct object in case, number and gender. It tends to be interpreted as the main verb, and the subject of the verb *have* is seen as the agent of the participle. The participle is often telic, and *have* + past participle usually carries a resultative meaning.

Stage 2: A possessive interpretation is ruled out, the main verb can be intransitive, the agreement between the object and the participle is gradually disappearing, and the subject of *have* is always an agent of the perfect participle.

Stage 3: Periphrasis is fully developed, it can have inanimate subjects, and the participle of almost all verbs can be used.

As far as Latin is concerned, HEINE and KUTEVA (2006: 145) claim that the process of grammaticalization in Latin did not go beyond the second stage. FRUYT (2011: 796–797) further points out that an instance of *habere* with an “aoristic” meaning (i. e. expressing a past action) does not occur in Late Latin and that even the most grammaticalized constructions are ambiguous in meaning.

In addition, PINKSTER (1987: 201) emphasises the reference identity between the subject of *habere* and the agent of participle as a necessary condition for a construction to be considered a periphrastic perfect form. In this regard, NUTI (2005: 401–403) highlights the importance of the participles of verbs *mittere* and *relinquere*, found in sequences of *habere* + past participle in Archaic Latin. He maintains that the reference identity between the agent of the participle and the subject of *habere* is necessary for pragmatic reasons. According to NUTI (2005: 402), it is the resultative meaning of the *habere* with past participle which played a decisive role in the development of the periphrasis. Taking a different perspective, BOYE and HARDER (2012) focus on the process of understanding information in communicative situations, and suggest that “some parts of the information are more highly prioritized – more prominent – than others,”⁴ which leads them to an introduction of the term *discourse prominence*. They distinguish lexical expressions, which convey the main information (they are *discursively primary*), and grammatical expressions, which do not convey the main idea and are thus secondary in terms of communication (they are

⁴ BOYE and HARDER (2012: 7).

discursively secondary). The *discourse prominence* (p. 7) is of a scalar nature; an expression is more or less lexical or grammatical in relation to another syntagmatically related expression occurring in the same utterance. The same expression can thus be primary in a sentence or in one respect, and secondary in another case. Grammaticalization is then defined as “the diachronic change that gives rise to linguistic expressions that are by convention ancillary and as such discursively secondary.”⁵ During the process of grammaticalization, the possibility of an expression to be discursively primary is gradually decreasing. As an example, the authors mention the grammaticalization of *going to* + infinitive in English, during which *going to* lost its primary status and the infinitive developed into the element carrying the main information. This is also the case of *habere* with participle, in which the verb *habere* becomes discursively secondary, while the participle is discursively primary. Arguably, different meanings associated with the verb *habere* will be related to different degrees of discourse prominence. All the approaches discussed above thus seem to follow the same direction, but use a different perspective. Combining these approaches can provide a more complete picture of the process of grammaticalization in the development of language systems.

Habere transgressa

Habere transgressa occurs in a nominative with an infinitive present in a subordinate *cum* clause. Such a sentence contains several *cum* clauses in which circumstances of the main clause are adduced, and the *cum* clauses have different subjects coordinated by conjunctions *et*, *atque* and *nec*. There are no specific connectors, such as causal ones, which express the relationship between the clauses explicitly.

- (1) *Cum a Deo timentibus in poculo fuisset baccos oblatus, hac vas ille ferme quatuor urnas vix potuisset accipere, et exinde longo tempore univervis venientibus fuisset convivus praeparatus, atque **dierum spatia longa** viderentur **habere transgressa**, nec se existimarent unius exinde refecturi refectionem iam posse post tantam unitatem excipere, unus ex vernaculis, ymbre lacrimarum ora perfusus, ad refectorium properat, suam valde dolentem iniuriam, ipsi pontifici dicens, **summam se cognosceret de vino sustinere deceptam.** (Pass. Desid. 5)*

⁵ BOYE and HARDER (2012: 21).

In general, *habere transgressa* shows the following properties:

- the subject *spatia longa* is inanimate
- the verb *transgredior* has an intransitive meaning (in other texts it can be transitive, though)
- the subjects of *habere* and the participle are identical (any difference of subjects is excluded because of the meaning)
- *habere* is semantically empty.

According to these properties, listed by HEINE and KUTEVA (2006: 143–146), *habere transgressa* reached the second stage of grammaticalization in the text under analysis. The only missing criterion is then the agreement between the subject and the participle. This lack of agreement, however, is not a necessary condition for a construction to be classified as reaching the second stage. *Habere transgressa* actually cannot have an ambiguous meaning and the verb *habere* is discursively secondary.

Since the significance of the grammatical case under examination can be better evaluated if compared to other instances of *habere* + past participle, another instance found in the work *Passio Desiderii* and additional texts of the period has also been analysed, and is discussed in the following section.

Habere* + past participle in *Passio Desiderii

In the next section, the role of *habere transgressa* in the work *Passio Desiderii* is evaluated, with a specific focus on the following questions:

Are there other instances of *habere* with a participle? And if so, do *habere* and the participle have the same subject?

Habere + past participle occurs only once more in the text, in the form of a finite form of the verb *habere* and the participle *auditum*:

- (2) *Nam ut breviter disseram, et **auditum habemus** et ex parte **assidue cernimus**, conportante peccato, nequiciante diabolo, multos duo luminaria capitis fuisse dampnatos.* (*Pass. Desid.* 13)

This example of *auditum habemus* shows some characteristics typical of the grammaticalization process. For example, the subject of *habere* must be identical to the agent of *auditum*, because other interpretation is ruled

out by the meaning of *auditum*. It is thus an example of the same type as *habeo cognitum/compertum*, found in Classical Latin. According to NUTI (2005: 402), these constructions may have contributed to the grammaticalization of *habere* with participle, but did not trigger the process itself. *Auditum habemus* is linked to *cernimus*, which emphasizes the semantic feature of “current relevance” and a “result of a previous action” conveyed by *auditum habemus*. The former term is used here in line with the definition given by DAHL and HEDIN (2000: 391–392) who claim that “it does not mean primarily that the direct result of the event is still valid, rather it means that the event has repercussions of some kind for the participants of the discourse situation.” Thus, the notion of current relevance is not limited to the meaning of a “result of a previous action,” but is used in a broader sense. The link between *auditum habemus* and *cernimus* can be observed in the syntax as well, since both share the same object – the accusative with an infinitive *multos fuisse dampnatos*. There is a variant reading of *audito*, which, however, is not relevant for the interpretation of *auditum habemus*, because *audito* cannot be interpreted as an ablative absolute, for example.

There are no more instances of *habere* with perfect participle in the analysed text. Other instances of the perfect participle show regular forms with the verb *esse*. The auxiliary verb *esse* is also used in a perfect form of the verb *ingredior*, another compound of the verb *gradior*, as seen in (3).

- (3) *Sed mox ut deputatur exilio, Christi gratia comitante, **ingressus est** paradiso. (Pass. Desid. 3)*

Thus, *habere transgressa* and *auditum habemus* remain isolated examples, although the language of *Passio Desiderii* displays a lot of characteristics of Vulgar Latin and Late Latin in terms of phonology, morphology and syntax.

***Habere* + past participle in other texts**

In the corpus of the texts from the 6th to the 8th centuries used for the purpose of this study,⁶ sequences of *habere* and past participle carry different meanings and reach varied stages of grammaticalization. Those instances which show the initial stages of the process of grammaticalization are often

⁶ The corpus comprises of all texts from the 6th to the 8th centuries included in the database *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (MGH), *Scriptores* series.

characteristic of a lower stage of grammaticalization than *habere transgressa*. In some cases, as seen in (2) below, the subject of *habere* is different from the agent of the participle.

(4) *Clemenciam Dagoberti vitam habent indultam.* (Fredeg. 4, 78)

Apart from instances with a finite form of *habere*, examples with infinitive have also been found in the texts under examination. These show similar characteristics as the finite ones (i.e. they have different meanings and stages of grammaticalization). It is clear, for example, that there is no reference identity between the subject of *habere* and the agent of participle in (5).

(5) *Sufficiat vobis vitam tantomodo habere concessam, ne inter tormenta deficiatis*". (Lib. hist. Franc. rec. A 18)

In other cases, the identity between the subject and the agent is obvious from the meaning and the context, as seen in the examples (6) and (7).

(6) *Quando istam aliam partem (sc. aurei) tibi transmisero, scias, me Francos tecum habere pacatos, et securus reverti in pace.* (Lib. hist. Franc. rec. A 6)

(7) *Obstantibus itaque omnibus vitae exitum et corporis sospitatem pollicentibus nec in propatulo habere dictum testantibus, illa conspicit duos iuvenes superius visos ad se venire...* (Ion. V. Columb. 2, 11)

In the corpus under examination, there are almost no inanimate subjects. The only identified inanimate subject is *urbs* in the example (8) below, which, however, is used metonymically and refers to citizens. The typical subject of both the infinitive and the finite *habere* with past participle sequences is thus animate and human in this corpus.

(8) *... meruitque ibi suscipere miracula, qua saepius urbs propria habet experta.* (Greg. Tur. Mart. 4, 8)

In most cases, a direct object is expressed by a noun phrase in the examined texts. Nevertheless, some instances of no explicit direct object (7) or examples with a complement clause like (2) in *Passio Desiderii* have also been identified.

In the whole corpus, nevertheless, no example of the same characteristics as *habere transgressa*, i.e. involving an inanimate subject, a participle

of an intransitive verb and a subject of *habere* unambiguously identical to the agent of the participle, have been identified. There is no variant reading that could cast doubt on these features of *habere transgressa*. Considering that it is an exceptional example, it is worth examining the factors which may have contributed to the use of the verb *habere*.

For example, CENNAMO (2008: 125) points out that “by the 7th century A.D., *esse* and *habere* appear to start differentiating two subclasses of intransitives (...), unaccusatives/class S_0 verbs and unergatives/class S_a verbs.” She shows that the subject of *habere* does not agree with the participle, and that *habere* gradually becomes associated with the agent or the subject of unergative verbs; *esse* instead becomes associated with the object and the subject of unaccusative verbs. She also points out,⁷ however, that the use of *habere* as an auxiliary of intransitive verbs is documented only scarcely in Latin. This account thus does not seem to provide an explanation for the use of *habere* in *habere transgressa*, since the subject *spatia longa* is not an agentive subject of an unergative verb and the participle agrees with the subject. In any case, one deviant case is unlikely to suffice as an argument against the claim that the differentiation of auxiliaries was already under way in Latin.

The use of *habere* instead of *esse* could be further influenced by the fact that *habere* gradually expanded its meaning and spread at the expense of *esse*. BALDI and NUTI (2010: 273–278) mention, for instance, that there were stative, locative and existential meanings of *habere*. In their view, in Late Latin the verb *habere* occurs in sentences which are very close to presentational sentences and carry the meaning of “there is/are”.⁸ Since the subject *spatia longa* expresses time duration, the development of impersonal *habet*, which could have both the locative and temporal meaning (see GARCÍA–HERNÁNDEZ 1992: 164–165), may have contributed to the use of *habere* as well. An example of a temporal meaning, cited by GARCÍA–HERNÁNDEZ (ibid.), is ...*ex quo hinc profectus est, habet annos quattuordecim*... “it has been fourteen years since he set out from here.”⁹ A possible influence of constructions with *esse* was also discussed by BALDI and NUTI (2010: 377), who claim that “set of constructions and functions displayed by *sum* naturally exerts a deep influence on the behavior (and, possibly, the development) of *habeo*-constructions.”

Another factor that may have played a role is that the verb *transgredior* can be both transitive and intransitive; the transitive uses might have thus

⁷ CENNAMO (2008: 126).

⁸ BALDI and NUTI (2010: 275).

⁹ *Hist. Apoll. rec.* A 31.

influenced the choice of use of the auxiliary verb. One must note, however, that no such example of a transitive *transgressus* with *habere* has been identified in the current corpus.

Given the foregoing, the use of *habere* in *habere transgressa* can be considered a result of interaction of various factors. In the first place, it is the grammaticalization of *habere* + past participle and its assumed spread in the Romance territory. Considering the relatively low number of instances of *habere* + past participle, there does not seem to be a sufficient reason for the choice of *habere* and avoidance of *esse* in this particular case. The development of *habet* with temporal meaning and spread of *habere* at the expense of *esse* in other domains may have played an important role in this regard. In contrast, the importance of the influence of a transitive *transgressus* with *habere* cannot be considered equally important, given the lack of examples. Finally, a lot of Vulgar characteristics found in the text point at the author's insufficient mastering of written Latin as another possible factor for the use of *habere*, which otherwise may have been avoided.

Conclusions

This paper has examined the use of *habere transgressa* in *Passio Desiderii*. To this aim, various instances of *habere* + past participle found in the work and in other texts have been compared. The present analysis suggests that *habere transgressa* is an important linguistic case with characteristics of a high degree of grammaticalization in its use of the inanimate subject *spatia longa* and the intransitive meaning of the verb *transgredior*. In *Passio Desiderii*, another example of a *habere* + participle which shows features of a high degree of grammaticalization, namely *auditum habemus*, has also been identified. It has been argued that the use of *habere* in *habere transgressa* may have been influenced by the fact that the verb *habere* was gradually expanding its meaning from the time of Archaic Latin onwards, expressing state, existence and location. The spread of impersonal *habet* expressing location and time might have played role as well. In *Passio Desiderii*, only two *habere* + past participle constructions, namely *habere transgressa* and *auditum habemus*, have been found. Apart from these, passive perfect participles in combination with forms of the verb *esse* have been found as regularly occurring. Yet, considering the scarcity of examples found in Late Latin texts, the importance of *habere transgressa* may not be overestimated. Rather, it seems to represent a notable piece in the mosaic of our understanding of the development of *habere* + past participle from Latin to Romance languages.

REFERENCES

- BALDI, PHILIP – NUTI, ANDREA. 2010. "Possession." In BALDI, PHILIP – CUZZOLIN, PIERLUIGI [EDS.]. *New perspectives on historical Latin syntax. Vol. 3: Constituent Syntax: Quantification, Numerals, Possession, Anaphora*. Berlin, 239–387.
- BOYE, KASPER – HARDER, PETER. 2012. "A usage-based theory of grammatical status and grammaticalization." *Language*, 88, 1, 1–44.
- CENNAMO, MICHELA. 2008. "The rise and development of analytic perfects in Italo-Romance." In EYTHORSSON, THORTALLUR [ED.]. *Grammatical Change and Linguistic Theory: The Rosendal Papers*. Amsterdam, 115–142.
- DAHL, ÖSTEN – HEDIN, EVA. 2000. "Current relevance and event reference." In DAHL, ÖSTEN [ED.]. *Tense and Aspect in the Languages of Europe*. Berlin – New York, 385–401.
- DÍAZ Y DÍAZ, PEDRO RAFAEL. 1993. "Tres Biografías latino medievales de San Desiderio de Viena (traducción y notas)." *Fortunatae: Revista canaria de filología, cultura y humanidades clásicas*, 5, 215–252.
- Die digitalen Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (dMGH) [online]. Reprint. Published by Monumenta Germaniae Historica and Bayerische Staatsbibliothek. [cit. 2013-6-20]. Available from: <<http://www.dmg.de>>.
- FRUYT, MICHÈLE. 2011. "Grammaticalization in Latin." In BALDI, PHILIP – CUZZOLIN, PIERLUIGI [EDS.]. *New Perspectives on Historical Latin Syntax. Vol. 4: Complex Sentences, Grammaticalization, Typology*. Berlin, 661–864.
- GARCÍA–HERNÁNDEZ, BENJAMÍN. 1992. "Nuevos verbos impersonales en latín tardío e influencia griega." In ILIESCU, MARIA – MARXGUT, WERNER [EDS.]. *Latin vulgaire – latin tardif III: actes du IIIème Colloque international sur le latin vulgaire et tardif (Innsbruck, 2–5 septembre 1991)*. Tübingen, 159–172.
- HASPELMATH, MARTÍN. 2000. "Periphrasis." In BOOIJ, GEERT E. – LEHMANN, CHRISTIAN – MUGDAN, JOACHIM [EDS.]. *Morphologie (Morphology), Number 1: Ein Internationales Handbuch Zur Flexion und Wortbildung (An International Handbook on Inflection and Word-Formation)*. Berlin, 654–664.
- HEINE, BERND. 1993. *Auxiliaries: cognitive forces and grammaticalization*. New York.
- HEINE, BERND – KUTEVA, TANIA. 2006. *The changing languages of Europe*. Oxford.
- JACOB, DANIEL. 1995. "A propos de la périphrase „habeo“ + participe parfait passif." In CALLEBAT, LOUIS [ED.]. *Latin vulgaire – latin tardif IV: actes du 4e Colloque international sur le latin vulgaire et tardif, Caen, 2-5 septembre 1994*. Hildesheim: Olms-Weidmann, 367–381.
- MARTÍN IGLESIAS, JOSÉ CARLOS. 1995. "Un ejemplo de influencia de la Vita Desiderii de Sisebuto en la hagiografía merovingia." *Minerva: Revista de filología clásica*, 9, 165–186.
- NUTI, ANDREA. 2005. "A few remarks on the *habeo* + object + passive perfect participle construction in Archaic Latin, with special reference to lexical semantics and the reanalysis process." In CALBOLI, GUALTIERO [ED.]. *Papers on grammar IX 1, Latina lingua! Proceedings of the twelfth international colloquium on Latin linguistics (Bologna, 9–14 June 2003)*. Roma, 392–404.
- PINKSTER, HARM. 1987. "The Strategy and Chronology of the Development of Future and Perfect Tense Auxiliaries in Latin." In HARRIS, MARTIN – RAMAT, PAOLO [EDS.]. *Historical Development of Auxiliaries*. Berlin, 193–223.
- PLAETSE, ROEL VANDER – TOMBEUR, PAUL [EDS.]. 2013. *The electronic Monumenta Germaniae historica (eMGH)* [database]. Release 13. Turnhout. Available from: <<http://www.phil.muni.cz/wlap/>>.

RAMOS GUERREIRA, AGUSTÍN. 1998. "Consideraciones sobre la expresión de la posesión externa en latín." In GARCÍA–HERNÁNDEZ, BENJAMÍN [ED.]. *Estudios de lingüística latina: actas del IX Coloquio internacional de lingüística latina: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, 14-18 de abril de 1997*. Madrid, 673–688.

Abbreviations not listed in *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*

Fredeg.	Fredegarius Scholasticus, <i>Chronicarum libri IV</i>
Ion. V. Columb.	Ionas, <i>Vitae Columbani</i>
Lib. hist. Franc., rec. A	<i>Liber Historiae Francorum. Recensio A</i>
Pass. Desid.	<i>Passio Desiderii ep. Viennensis</i>

RESUMÉ

V příspěvku se zkoumají charakteristiky spojení *habere transgressa*, které je doloženo v pozdně latinském textu *Passio Desiderii*. *Habere transgressa* vykazuje známky vyššího stupně gramatikalizace, protože má neživotný podmět a participium *transgressa* je zde intransitivní. Ve srovnávacím souboru textů nebyla nalezena žádná další konstrukce s těmito charakteristikami. Použití *habere* by mohlo souviset s rozšiřováním významu *habere* a vývojem neosobního *habet*. V *Passio Desiderii* jsou pouze dva případy perifrastické konstrukce s *habere*, převažuje spojení participia se slovesem *esse*. Třebaže je konstrukce *habere transgressa* ojedinělá, jedná se o jeden z dokladů, které umožňují lépe poznat vývoj *habere* s participiem do románských jazyků.

jmikulova@phil.muni.cz

