

Praepositiones in Latin and Albanian Text of Kuvendi i Arbënit

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Doi:10.5901/mjss.2013.v4n2p615

Abstract

The text of Kuvendi i Arbënit, written in 1706, first in Latin and then translated in Albanian is a text in which can be seen the potential of old Albanian, written lately in 1555, versus Latin, an ancient language written in VI a.D. As a text translated from Latin, it would be interesting to see how the prepositions of Latin are translated in Albanian. Prepositions remain an important means to express better the functions of the noun in a sentence. Even though Latin and Albanian are both languages with a developed inflection, still prepositions are often used with nouns in a sentence. In Latin and in Albanian prepositions are used mainly with nouns in accusative and ablative case. An important fact to be emphasized in Albanian, is the use of nominative case with prepositions nga (ka), te , tek phenomenon not found neither in Latin nor in any other indoeuropean language. In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit the prepositions, përpara, drejt, jashtë, prej are followed by nouns in ablative, not by accusative, as in other old texts like Meshari of Buzuku. In our text we found a correct use of the prepositions in the sentence, in which are observed clear functions and relations between the noun and the preposition.

Key words: prepositions, means, syntactic functions, inflection, case system.

Since in early times human languages expressed substantive syntactic relations in sentence through the system cases and declension. Languages developed and case forms became more insufficient to express the various syntactic functions of the substantive in the sentence. Scholars cite the case of prepositions, a new complementary means to the case forms affirming that they have been coined since the pre-historical of the Indo-European languages. The number and role of prepositions have kept on increasing in all these languages, standing always before a substantive or a pronoun. The same phenomenon is noticed also in Latin, known as *praepositiones*¹, even though the syntactic function of substantive is mainly expressed through case system. As scholars affirm,² the origin preposition class has to be searched in another class of invariable words, such as adverbs. Actually, prepositions at their beginnings, have been adverbs and mainly at least in Latin and Albanian still preserve this value. Words like *ante, post, adversus, circa, super, secundum* etc, in Latin depending on the use and functions in sentences sometimes are adverbs and sometimes are prepositions. Notice the use of preposition *post* in the following sentences.

1) *id post faciam* – I'll do it later.

2) *id post reditum faciam* – I'll do after coming back.

In the first sentence *post* does the function of an adverb, whereas in the second sentence it is a preposition. The same phenomenon is noticed in Albanian too, as a result of participation in the group of prepositions of adverbs and conjunctions. To make it more concrete, see the following examples.

Ai doli **jashtë** shtëpisë. (*jashtë* as a preposition)

Ai walked **jashtë**. (*jashtë* as an adverb).

He walked out of the house.

He walked out.

¹ *Praepositio* is a translation of the Greek word πρόθεσις.

² Flochini, N, *Grammatica di lingua rom vep.* cit. f. 287.

Our study will be focused on the prepositions of latin, their classification and use in Latin, especially in the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit.³

Classification of prepositions

In Latin, one way to classify prepositions, is according to syntactic function in the sentence. In the sentences prepositions are used with nouns in different cases. As a result, there are prepositions (*ad, ob, inter* etc), followed always by a noun in accusative. Others (*a, ab, e, ex, de*) are used with nouns in ablative. To be mentioned are some prepositions used with nouns in accusative and in ablative.⁴

Let us see the prepositions used more often in the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit, and their translation in Albanian, focused on the accordance and differences when used in both languages

a, ab

(*a* before a consonant: *ab* before a vowel)

In latin this preposition expresses the idea of removal, of moving away. *Unde?* – from where? It is followed by nouns in ablative. In Albanian it is translated by the preposition *prej*⁵, which is also used to express the idea of removal, as in the following sentences.

A Iesu Christo Domino nostro instituta.... (f. 16)
E çane prej Christit Zotit tine... (f. 3)

...ut sancta a sanctis tractentur...(f. 29)
...Kinese çafscia te sçenta, prej Sçentesc te jene precune (f. 19)

de, e, ex

These prepositions, like *ab*, express the idea of moving away or separation and used with nouns in ablative. In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit it has been translated with *prej* and in many occasions with the old preposition *n* (*en*)⁶.

Descendit de Caelis, et incarnatus est de Spiritu sancto, ex Maria Virgine... (f. 16)
Sdripi prej Chijeiscit, e u miscenue per virtyt te Scpiritit Scind prej Virginet Mrii.. (f. 2)

Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula; Deum de Deo, lumen de lumine (f. 16)
E leem prej Atit perpara giçç Scecuje, Hyin prej Hyit: Drittene n'drittet...(f. 2)

illegitimo thoro procreati.... (f. 47)
leem ' n prindesc, chi skane passune per lighie.... (f. 36)

The use of the preposition *n* is not frequent, especially in Bogdani and later.

In modern Albanian instead of it is used more often the preposition *prej*, which is used more frequently in our text too.

ad

³ An interesting study on the history, development and features of prepositions in Meshari of Buzuku is Parafjalët në "Mesharin" e Gjon Buzukut, Tiranë, 2005, by M. Karagozi,

⁴ The same feature can be noticed in Albanian where the prepositions *ndaj* and *për* are used with the two cases. For more see Gramatika e gjuhës shqipe, Tirana, 1995, p. 87.

⁵ *Prej* is an early preposition, found in Buzuku, instead of latin respective prep. *ex, de*. *erdh një e madhe erë prej malshit së shkreta (f. 385)*. This preposition is used with the same meaning of its respective latin prep. *ad, versus*. For example: in Buzuku *O gojëtareja jonë, ata syte e tû të përmishëriershim rutullo prej nesh (=toward us) (p.31)*.

⁶ This is the preposition used more frequently in Buzuku e other authors after him, especially in Budi, Bardhi and less in Bogdani. For example in Buzuku: *erdh tek aj një krye n nierëzish (p.103)*; in Bardhi: *me çkulë n fare (p.134)*; *petëk n gruaje (pallea) : in Bogdani: ..se ujënatë dalënë n'deti (I/IV/17)* As we see it is used also in our text too, in XVIII century.

This preposition expresses the idea of movement or nearness toward a place and use with a noun in accusative. Quo? - Where? In our text this preposition is translated with preposition *mbë*⁷ followed by a noun in accusative.

The origin of this preposition some linguists, Bopp and Xhuvani is related to San-skrit *abi*, old Greek *amphi* and Latin *amb-*.

sedet ad dexteram Patris (f.16)
rri mbete diaξξet Atit (f. 2)

In most cases this preposition is not translated, especially when is not given the direction or the arriving point of an action, or when it is a complement of purpose.

ad Eucharistiam accedimus (f. 39)
t'affrohem i Sciacramentit Eucharistijese (f. 30)

Non solum corde creditur ad iustitiam, sed ore etiam confessio fit ad salutem (f. 18)
Nuk mbaston vece me εembre me bessuem te dereitene, pò duhet ende refimi i gojese per te scelbuemit (f. 5)

cum

This preposition expresses the idea of accompaniment. In Latin is always used with nouns in ablative to express the thing or person whom the subject does an action with. In our text it is translated with the preposition *me*⁸, which in Albanian is used with nouns in accusative.

qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur (f. 16)
i silli me Atin, e Birin mbasck aξorohet (f. 2)

in

The preposition *in* expresses state in a certain place and movement toward a place. In Latin it is used with nouns in accusative when it expresses movement to a place. It is used with ablative when it expresses state in a place. In both uses this preposition in our text is sometimes translated with the preposition *ndë/në*⁹ and other times with *mbë*¹⁰, both used with nouns in accusative.

intellectum redigens in obsequium Christi (f. 15)
chi siell schissete nde scerbetyre te Crisctit (f. 1)

Credo in unum Deum Patrem Omnipotentem (f. 15)
Bessogn mbe gnia te vetemin Hyi Atin e Pusctuescim (f. 2)

In the following example, as it happens in Latin, to express the complement of time, often is not used the preposition *in*, whereas in Albanian text it is given by the preposition *ndë* followed by a noun in accusative.

Inter regnantium hac tempestate scelerum ... (f. 28)
Nder sciummizza te fajevet, chi nde keta kohe ... (f. 18)

per

This preposition is used with accusative and expresses passage or mean is through which the action is done.

⁷ This preposition is early and quite often used in Meshari, the first book in Albanian. For example: *e grishnë shokëtë qi ishnjinë mbë tjetëret barkëzë p. 281/b*

⁸ This preposition is used at Buzuku : *Ti që me Atët zotënon e jet, për jetë të jetësë, p. 17/a*

⁹ That is the old form as in Meshari of Buzuku: *nd'ato ditë u mbëlodhnë bjtë ... (p.161/a)*

¹⁰ At Buzuku: *...u qit mbë gjuhnjë përpara Tinëzot p. 89/a.*

In Albanian it is translated sometimes with *prej*, with ablative, to express complement of manner¹¹, sometimes with preposition *ndë për*¹², to express movement through space in place or in time, as it can be noticeable in the following examples.

per haec Decreta excitantur (f. 78)
prej kessosc decretasc eembrohen mbe te nalte essape ... (f. 77)

non tantum sonet in Ecclesiis, sed per rura, per campos, per privata pauperum domicilia (f. 81)
pr' ata te ndiet eani jo vece nde per Kiscia, po nde per katunde, nde per basctina, nde per fuscia, nde per scptepija te vorfenise (f. 80)

In the following example we can notice that when this preposition expresses the means through whom the action is done, it is used with accusative, in its other form *për*¹³, expressing the indirect object with preposition, the means the action is done with.

...ne dum per scientiae viam, sed per semitam quoque pietatis gradiendum est (f. 44)
...iò vece per sccteku te dijese, pò endë per urome te scendeniise e et miscerierese duhet me zzune (f. 37)
an in ea se quisquam per vim intruserit (f. 57)
A hiini cusc nder tò per forze? (f. 51)

sub

In Latin the preposition *sub* is used with nouns in accusative and in ablative. In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit it is translated with *ndë/në*¹⁴, whose origin Meyer sees in *intus* of Latin, thesis that is rejected by Pedersen who thought that it is formed inside Albanian.¹⁵ According to him, its origin is from *ndër*-.

crucifixus etiam pro nobis sub Pontio Pilato (f. 16)
Kië vuum mbe krychie per nee ndene Punzin Pilat (f. 2)

coram

This preposition in Latin is used with nouns in ablative and in our text it is translated with the preposition *përpara*, which in Albanian is formed by an adverb and compound. Mainly it is used with ablative¹⁶. In the following example it is used to express the complement of place.

Omnis, qui confitebitur me coram hominibus, confitebor et ego eum coram Patre meo... (f. 20)
Giçç i silli ci ka me refyem mue perpara Nierzet: une kam me refyem atà perpara tim Et... (f. 8)

inter

The preposition *inter* in Latin is used mainly with plural nouns or pronouns in accusative, to express place in proportion to others. In the Albanian text it is translated with the preposition *ndër*, which in Albanian is used with plural nouns and in accusative

saepius tamen orta inter eos contentione, quis eorum in aeconomica

¹¹ The same usage is found at Buzuku, ..e pa një dash qi ish ngatëruom për brienësh f. 233/b not only here, but also in today's Albanian in expressions such as: *e kapi për dorë*.

¹² See the separate way of writing this preposition, which in today's Albanian it is written as whole one.

¹³ This usage is found at Buzuku: *Nd'ato dit foli Zotynë për gojë të Ezaisë regjit Akax tue i thashune... (p. 89)* For that reason the prepositions *për* and *prej*, for the scholars Meyer and Pedersen they are identical, having the same meaning.

¹⁴ Old preposition, as mentioned above, found at Buzuku, too.

¹⁵ For more information about the origin of this preposition, see Demiraj, quoted work. p.630, Karagoji, M, p.k 90.

¹⁶ The same form is found in Meshari of Buzuku: *Hinje se u dergonj engjëlline tem përpara faqesë sate, e aj të trajtonjënë udhënë tande p.87/a. though used with dative.*

administratione videatur esse maior (f. 75)
scium here prò nder tà asct dalle sciamate, tue u marre per tesiln di màa fort
me mbaitune sctepiine (f. 73)

In the following example, the preposition *inter* is used with the singular word *multitudo*, because it is used to express plurality. It is noticeable the translation *ad litteram*, as a result, in Albanian too is used with singular noun, bringing an incorrect use of the albanian preposition *ndër*.

Inter regnantium hac tempestate scelerum multitudinem ... (f. 28)
Nder sciumizza e fajevet, chi nde këta kohe mbałognene çene... (f. 18)

post

This preposition is used with nouns in accusative and in Albanian text is translated with the ablative preposition *mbas*. Our author of translation has not been influenced this time by the original text, bringing to us a correct use of this preposition in Albanian.

Et abierunt post concupiscentias carnis... (f. 24)
E sckuene mbas lakmijasc se miscit... (f. 13)

Albanian language has prepositions used with nouns in nominative, whereas in Latin there are no prepositions of nominative. In fact this is a typical feature of Albanian. It is about prepositions *nga*, *tek* with their respective dialect variants *ka*, (*kaha*),¹⁷ that are analyzed in different studies as a phenomenon generated during the historical evolution of Albanian.¹⁸

In the albanian text of *Kuvendit i Arbënit*, it is not noticed a frequent use of nominative case with prepositions. Two examples of the preposition *nga*, in its gegë dialect variant *kaa*, have been found. In both cases, it is used before numerals to express complement of manner and the way an action is done.

Ut autem de singulis agamus, omnium primus occurrit, Sacramentorum ianua, Baptismus
(f. 30)
Tue passune per te folle per giçç Sciecramenta kaa gnià, maa pare... (f. 20)

Singulis saltem mensibus sacramentalis confessionis ... (f. 73)
Te refehen maa pak, caa gni here nde muoj... (f. 70)

There is one example of the preposition nga used as a conjunction of place¹⁹. See the following sentence.
e mba kiscia e Romes, e me ketà giçç cund ka jane kisciat. (f. 32)

Actually it was expected to find more cases, because this is a phenomenon encountered in the first book of written Albanian, even though not so often. The only explanation is related to the fact that the author of translation, not having Albanian as mother tongue, perhaps did not prefer the use of these prepositions. As it is written in gegë dialect, the author has preferred *prej* +ablative or *ndë* +accusative to nominative prepositions. Some prepositions, *prej*, *ndaj*, *jashtë*, *përpara*, are used with nouns of different cases. Demiraj affirms²⁰ that this phenomenon is noticed in written Albanian, and sometimes in the books of the same author.

¹⁷ In Meshari of Buzuku, the preposition *nga* has the old phonetic form *ka-*, *këha* or *kaha*. For example:

Faqetë e tyne e pendetë e tyne ishnë ndem përmbi ta e ka dy pendë". p. 355/b
Nd atë mot erdhnë tek Jezu parizejtë (LXXVIII / 2a = LXXXVIII / 2a).
e u godit me ta ka një denam ditet p.107/a ; E shpune tek farizejtë p.177/b

¹⁸ In reference to origin and usage of these prepositions see Demiraj, quoted work.p.643: *Pëmaska, R Analizë stukturore-semantike e togfjalshave me parafjalën nga që shprehin marrëdhënie objektore, SF.1,1991, p 59*

¹⁹ That is why scholar Cirrioncione, A, *Sintassi albanese degli antichi scrittori, Roma 1968, p. 40, not admitting easily the usage of prepositions with nominative affirms: "Nominative case is used with some prepositions, still they are not real prepositions, meanwhile they are adverbs of time, manner or place. These, in a certain syntactic form present their nature as adverbs, while in another case they look like prepositions". Actually, their origin should be searched in adverbs group, as it is accepted for many prepositions, but in Albanian grammar's books they are treated like conjunctions, respectively nga as a place conjunction and tek as time conjunction.*

The preposition *ndaj* in the old texts is used mainly with nouns in accusative²¹, whereas in today's Albanian they are used with nouns in ablative.

The prepositions originated from adverbs, *përpara,jashtë*, are used with nouns in ablative, but still there exist examples used with accusative²².

In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit it is used only with nouns in ablative:

Per jashta malleve/ përpara nesh/ per mbrenda scerbimit f. 67, 55, 63

The use of these prepositions with accusative is a feature of the language used in the old texts, and it is not encountered in today's Albanian. So, in face of such a situation, the main question is put: The usage of these prepositions is a feature of author's speaking, feature of Albanian or this phenomenon is seen as an influence by the original texts? Many scholars have given their own opinion about this question.

According to Bokshi²³ in Albanian language many times ago, these prepositions were used with accusative, and later they are used with ablative. According to him, the use with accusative is a common phenomenon, in the Indo-European languages. The scholar Mansaku affirms²⁴: "Buzuku could not use these preposition only being influenced by the latin text, because according to him, prepositions direction is not easily borrowed from other languages. This thesis is reinforced also by the frequent use of these prepositions with accusative nouns and rarely used with ablative. Another important point is that used with nouns in accusative are not only the prepositions *te* (*te*), *jashtë*, their respective latin prepositions *extra*, *trans*, but also the prepositions like *përpara*, (*coram*). *Coram* in latin is used with ablative

In the text of Kuvendi i Arbënit these prepositions are not used with nouns in accusative. At this stage of Albanian language, it is noticeable the correct use of prepositions, presenting the important fact that in Albanian of XVIII century there was stability and clear syntactic relations between prepositions and nouns.

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²⁰ Work quoted, p.637. Preposition *ndaj* in the old books is used mainly with nouns in accusative, whereas in today's Albanian with ablative.

²¹ See Buzuku: E ju e njihni përse aj jet ndaj ju ..f. 163/b: Budi: ndaj Krishtnë SC f, 295

²² See Buzuku: *jashtë ordhënit Tinëzot f. 69/a: Buzuku: e u ngritënë, e qitnë jashtë qytetnë f. 155/a ; përpara ty f. 149 Bardhi: te përruenë, te detine f.175,176*

²³ Bokshi, B. *Rruga e formimit të fleksionit të sotëm nominal të shqipes*, Prishtinë,1980,fp141

²⁴ Mansaku, S. *Some morpho-syntactic features in the first book of albanian language*, *Studime filologjike* 1-2, p.27