

IE *ǵ^her(H)- ‘enjoy’, ‘desire’ and *ǵeus- ‘taste’: defectivity and patterns of suppletion

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The evidence for IE *ǵ^her(H)- “Gefallen finden, begehren” (*LIV*²) in the daughter languages supports the reconstruction of a characterized present *ǵ^her(H)-jo/e- (Ved. *hárya-*^{ti}, Gk. *χαίρο/ε-*, Osc. Subj. *heriad*, U. *heriiei*, Umbr. *heriest* “uolet”, LHitt. *karje-*^{mi/ta} ‘be condescent’), originally *ǵ^hér-ti (Nussbaum 1976), but not that of an aorist, nor of a perfect, which are actually attested only in Greek: aor. *χαρη-* (: pres. *χαίρο/ε-*) fits into a productive pattern within Greek (pres. -jo/e- : aor. -ē-) and may be easily understood as secondary, and the same applies to the isolated forms of perfect, which are synonymous of the present. Contrarily Ved. *har*⁽ⁱ⁾ has no aorist, and no perfect. All this points to a durative, stative lexeme, with a defective paradigm in Indo-European, which has been completed only in Greek and in Italic. The original sense of *ǵ^her(H)- should be ‘to delight in’, ‘enjoy’ ([+ contact]: with acc. and loc., subject as experiencer: Ved. *hárya-*, *χαίρο/ε-*), with a further agentive reading ‘seek’ ([-contact]: Ved. *hárya-* also ‘desire’, PItal. **her-jo/e-* ‘will, wish’).

The comparative evidence for IE *ǵeus- “kosten” (*LIV*²) allows for the reconstruction of a root-aorist *ǵéus- / *ǵus- (Ved. *joṣ-á-*, athem. Ptc. *joṣāná-*) and a perfect *ǵéǵous- ‘enjoy’ (Ved. *jujoṣ-*, also → PGM. **kaus-*: ON. *kaus* ‘er chose’). There is, on the other hand, no support for the reconstruction of a present stem of the root: Hitt. *k/gu-gus-zi* ‘takes a taste’ (Watkins 2003=*Sel. Writ.*, 1030ff.) is actually an iterative-intensive formation (*Aktionsart!*), and the thematic presents Gk. *γεύομαι*, PGM. **keusan* (Goth. *kiusan*, OE *cēosan*, *ceōsan*) are most probably secondary. This clearly points to a momentative, telic lexeme IE *ǵeus-, the original sense of which is certainly ‘taste’ ([+contact]), and ‘be delighted with’ in the perfect, which are well attested in all the daughter languages. Vedic takes a special position, as *joṣ* ‘taste’, ‘enjoy’, has a reading ‘choose, prefer’ with agentive subject (Mignon 1988-1990), which clearly match that of *har*⁽ⁱ⁾.

On the assumption that *ǵ^her(H)- ‘enjoy’, ‘desire’ and *ǵeus- ‘taste’ are defective in Indo-European and that the same applies to Ved. *har*ⁱ- (pres. *hárya-* :31x) and *joṣ* (aor. *juṣá-* : 176x, perf. *jujoṣ-* : 47x; only 4x denominative *joṣáya-*), the present contribution will make the case for the integration of both verbs in a suppletive paradigm with pres. *hárya-* :: aor. *juṣá-* :: perf. *jujoṣ-* (pace Mignon 1998-90: 130 with n. 41, who assumes a suppletion *var*ⁱ (*vṛ*) :: *joṣ*, as *var*ⁱ (*vṛ*) ‘choose’ is actually not defective). In fact *har*⁽ⁱ⁾ and *joṣ* fill the conditions to be interpreted in terms of suppletion: they are in complementary distribution, they share vbasically the same meaning and readings, and a look on their occurrences clearly show that they share the same construction and collocations (with *sómam*, *mánman*, *vácaḥ*, *haviṣ*, *yajṣám* and others), as well as the same preverbs *prati-*, *abhí* (in both cases with the reading ‘gladly accept’), cf. for instance RV IV 58.8cd *ghṛtásya dhārāḥ samídho nasanta tá juṣānó haryati jātávedāḥ* ‘the streams of the ghee reach the firewood; Jatavedas, (Agni) Hitavedas **delights, taking pleasure** in them’, or V 54.15bc *idám sú me maruto haryatā vácaḥ* ‘**take pleasure**, Maruts, in this **speech** of mine’ beside I 75.1ab *juṣásva sapráthastamaṃ váco devápsarastamam* ‘**Take delight** in the most extensive **speech**, which affords most delight to the gods’.