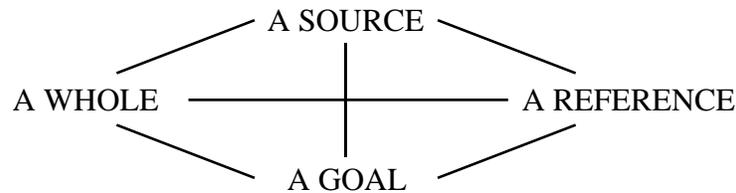


The genitive network:



Prologue

Let's start by looking at an example:

*Předseda **Komunistické strany Čech a Moravy** Miroslav Grebeníček řekl, že se komunisté nevzdávají **představy** o vstupu do **vlády**.

[President-NOM **Communist Party-GEN Bohemia-GEN and Moravia-GEN** Miroslav Grebeníček-NOM said, that self-ACC communists-NOM not-give-up **idea-GEN** about entry-LOC to **government-GEN**.]

The president **of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia** Miroslav Grebeníček said that the communists are not giving up **on the idea** of getting into **the government**.

Here we see five uses of the genitive case in a single sentence, one that is not even particularly long or unusual. Communism these days is probably more like sand in your bathing suit — it's hard to get rid of it entirely, but it's not really a threat either. The genitive case, however, is quite pervasive and cannot be ignored. Here are some of its characteristics:¹

- The genitive is the most used case in Czech. The likelihood of finding sentences with five uses of any other case is considerably smaller.
- The genitive is used with over sixty prepositions (about two dozen simple prepositions and about 50 complex ones), vastly more than all the other cases combined.
- The genitive is the only case that forms chains of consecutive uses, as in our example above: Předseda **Komunistické strany Čech a Moravy** [President-NOM **Communist Party-GEN Bohemia-GEN and Moravia-GEN**] 'The president **of the Communist Party of Bohemia and Moravia**'
- The genitive is probably the most complex case in Czech, and the basic idea of the genitive is perhaps the hardest to grasp.

¹ The genitive case is the most frequent case, has the most prepositions, forms chains of words, and has the most complex meaning.

These might look like formidable hurdles, but our strategy is to tackle the last item on the list, the meaning of the genitive. After that, all the other “problems” will become opportunities for easy success.

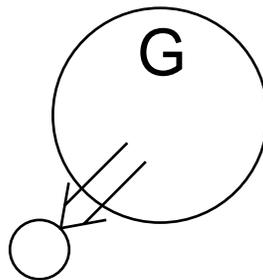
The uses of the genitive will be described in terms of four categories: GENITIVE: A SOURCE, GENITIVE:: A GOAL, GENITIVE:: A WHOLE, and GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE.² The four labels used here hint at both what the basic meaning of the genitive is and why it is so hard to make sense of it. The genitive is by nature an elusive beast, a sort of “back-seat driver” that is always handing off the responsibility of focusing attention to something else.³ When we say that something comes from a source, we generally aren’t as interested in the source as we are in the something that comes from it. The same goes for goals; while a goal is important, what we really care about is the person or thing that is headed for it. In the GENITIVE:: A WHOLE use, there is always another item that plays the role of the “part”, and of course when we are talking about something that is part of a whole, we are focusing our attention on the part more than on the whole. A reference point is something that we use to locate something else, and in its GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE use, the genitive serves as a mental address for other things. Rather than turning focus to the item it marks, the genitive deflects our focus away from it. It is this habit of retreating into the background that makes the genitive so hard to pin down. Passing the buck, by the way, also makes the chaining of genitives possible, allowing focus to bounce from one item to the next.

Looking at the labels, however, it is at first hard to understand what they have in common. After all, a source and a goal seem to be opposites, and both involve movement, whereas whole and reference do not. If we compare the diagrams of the four uses, we see that the GENITIVE:: A GOAL is really the same as the GENITIVE: A SOURCE, just run in reverse, and furthermore the GENITIVE:: A WHOLE and GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE are simply the two endpoints of GENITIVE: A SOURCE. More abstractly, we could say that all of the diagrams support the following definition:⁴

The genitive is a backgrounded item (big circle) that yields focus of attention to something else (small circle) which exists or maneuvers in its proximity.

In order to make sense of this definition we will have to examine the many faces of the genitive in action.

GENITIVE:: A SOURCE 1 — Z, s ‘from’



The GENITIVE: A SOURCE meaning is always triggered by a preposition or word indicating removal or withdrawal from the genitive item. The preposition *z* ‘from’ is the most versatile, and is used to express departure from most physical (and metaphorical) locations, including all locations that are expressed with both *v* + LOC ‘in’ and *na* + LOC ‘on, at’ when an item is at

² An overview of the genitive case.

³ The genitive case diverts attention to another item.

⁴ An abstract definition of the genitive.

rest. Here are some examples of the use of *z* to indicate a container or location from which something is removed:⁵

Ona není z **Prahy**.
[She-NOM not-is from **Prague-GEN**.]
She is not from **Prague**.

Vše mi zmizelo z **mozku**.
[Everything-NOM me-DAT disappeared from **brain-GEN**.]
Everything disappeared from my **brain**.

Z **mikrosvěta** vesniček se vydali do světa velkých hvězd.
[From microcosmos-GEN villages-GEN SELF-ACC set-out to world-GEN big stars-GEN.]
From **the** village **microcosmos** they set out for the world of the big stars.

In these three examples, the city of Prague, the speaker's brain, and the microcosmos of village life serve as containers from which various items ('she', 'everything', and 'they') emerge.

Z can also be used metaphorically to describe the sources of phenomena in the absence of physical movement through space.⁶

Z **jakého prostředí** váš otec pochází?
[From **what background-GEN** your father-NOM comes?]
What kind of background does your father come from?

Svět zná Václava Havla z **dálky**.
[World-NOM knows Václav Havel-ACC from **distance-GEN**.]
The world knows Václav Havel from **a distance**.

Předtím jsem toho herce znal jenom z **blbejch filmů**. (CCz)
[Previously AUX that actor-ACC knew only from **stupid movies-GEN**.]
I previously knew that actor only from **stupid movies**.

Although none of these examples involves real movement from a source, they are understood as metaphorical parallels to movement, and note that this is just as true of English as it is of Czech, because all of these examples can be translated with English 'from'.

Just as in English we can say that we make things *from* various raw materials, in Czech we can use *z* to refer to this process of creation, although sometimes Czechs will use *z* even when we wouldn't say *from*, as in *hrad z písku* [castle-NOM from **sand-GEN**] which is simply 'a **sand** castle'. Here are a couple of examples:⁷

⁵ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE 'from' in the domain of space.

⁶ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE 'from' in metaphorical domains.

⁷ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE can indicate what an item is made from.

V USA se už tehdy kontaktní čočky dělaly, ale pouze z **tvrdých látek** na bázi plexiskla.
[In USA-LOC SELF-ACC already then contact lenses-NOM made, but only from **hard substances-GEN** on basis-LOC plexiglas-GEN.]

At that time in the USA contact lenses were already being made, but only from **hard substances** on the basis of plexiglass.

Potah vějíře se obvykle vyráběl z **kuřecí kůže, hedvábí** nebo **papíru** a žebra z **rohoviny, slonoviny, kosti** nebo **dřeva**.

[Cover-NOM fan-GEN self-ACC usually made **chicken skin-GEN, silk-GEN** or **paper-GEN** and ribs-NOM from **horn-GEN, ivory-GEN, bone-GEN** or **wood-GEN**.]

The cover of a fan was usually made from **chicken skin, silk, or paper**, and the ribs were made from **horn, ivory, bone, or wood**.

Time is a domain that we all have to deal with, but because we have no direct experience of time (only of its effects on us and our surroundings), most human beings understand time in terms of space.⁸ This use of space as a source for understanding time is very evident in Czech, and we will see many examples of this throughout the case system. Czech *z* ‘from’ can identify a period of time in the past that is the source of knowledge or experience, usually *z mládí* ‘from/since **one’s youth**’ or *z dětství* ‘from/since **childhood**’, as in this example:

Její kamarádka *z dětství* ji také opustila.

[Her friend-NOM from **childhood-GEN** her-ACC also abandoned.]

Her **childhood** friend also abandoned her.

A group can serve as a container or source from which one or more items are picked out, and *z* is often used to express selection from a group, most frequently in the phrase *jeden z* ‘one of’, although other words are associated with this meaning as well.⁹ Here are a few examples:

Syn Václava Klause se stal ředitelem jednoho *z nejúspěšnějších českých soukromých gymnázií*.

[Son-NOM Václav Klaus-GEN SELF-ACC became director-INST one-GEN of **most-successful Czech private high-schools-GEN**.]

Václav Klaus’ son became the director of one of **the most successful Czech private high schools**.

Marie Pechová bývala jednou *z nejbližších kamarádek* Lucie Bílé.

[Marie Pechová-NOM was one-INST of **closest friends-GEN** Lucie Bílá-GEN.]

Marie Pechová used to be one of Lucie Bílá’s **closest friends**.

Málokdo *z lékařů* naši radu poslechl.

[Few-NOM of **doctors-GEN** our advice-ACC listened.]

Few of **the doctors** listened to our advice.

⁸ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE ‘from’ in the domain of time.

⁹ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE to indicate selection of something from a group.

Nikdo z **řidičů**, kteří před přechodem zastavili, mu nepřišel na pomoc.

[No-one-NOM of **drivers-GEN**, who-NOM before crosswalk-INST stopped, him-DAT not-came to help-ACC.]

None of **the drivers** who stopped at the crosswalk came to help him.

Here the sources are the following groups of items: the most successful Czech private high schools, Lucie Bílá's closest friends, doctors, and drivers at the crosswalk. From among those groups we mentally extract one, few, or no members, and we treat this mental exercise as if the items involved were actually leaving their groups, though of course they aren't.

In the next two sentences we see another kind of metaphorical use of *z*, in which ideas serve as sources inspiring the work of institutes and the behaviors of politicians.¹⁰

Ústavy vycházejí z **hodnot, morálky a ideálů**, které si společnost osvojila.

[Institutes come from **values-GEN, morals-GEN and ideals-GEN**, which-ACC self-DAT society-NOM adopted.]

Institutes are based on **the values, morals, and ideals** that society has adopted.

Jejich postup vychází z **neomezeného sebevědomí**, které získali, když byli zvoleni.

[Their attitude-NOM comes from **unlimited self-confidence-GEN**, which-ACC acquired, when were elected-NOM.]

Their attitude results from **the unlimited self-confidence** they acquired when they were elected.

A related idiomatic use of *z* is the expression *ze všech sil* [from **all strengths-GEN**] 'with **all one's might**', as in:

Křičel ze **všech sil**, ale hudba byla tak hlučná, že ho stejně nikdo neslyšel.

[Shouted from **all strengths-GEN**, but music-NOM was so loud-NOM, that him-ACC still no-one-NOM not-heard.]

He shouted with **all his might**, but the music was so loud that no one heard him anyway.

Lectures, courses and examinations are based upon a given subject matter, and this relationship is also expressed using *z*, as in:

Lze těžko porovnávat maturitní zkoušku z **matematiky** se zkouškou třeba z **designu**.

[Possible hard compare graduation test-ACC from **mathematics-GEN** with test-INST for-instance from **design-GEN**.]

It's hard to compare a graduation test on **mathematics** with a test on **design**, for instance.

Taking this sort of logic one step further, we can understand a source also as a cause, as something that motivates movement to a consequence. In English we can sometimes say things like *They did it **out of concern** for our safety*; in the following Czech example we see *z* used to express causation in this fashion:

¹⁰ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE to indicate inspirations, sources of knowledge, and causes.

Z **bezpečnostních důvodů** ve Velké sportovní hale sekt bude podáván v plastových lahvích.

[From **security reasons-GEN** in Great Sports Hall-LOC wine-cooler-NOM will-be served-NOM in plastic bottles-LOC.]

For **security reasons**, wine cooler will be served in plastic bottles in the Great Sports Hall.

It is common for people to understand states of being as locations that people and other items move to and from.¹¹ In English, for example, we can say that *Sally has gone from being a lowly factory worker to CEO of the company*. Czech often uses *z* with the verb *stát se* ‘become’ to describe transformations. As these examples show, this meaning of *z* also continues the logic of the examples we saw above concerning making items out of raw materials, but here the raw materials are people:

Z **taxikáře** se stal jezeďákem. CCz

[From **taxi-driver-GEN** self-ACC became cooperative-farmer-INST.]

He went from **being a taxi driver** to a cooperative farmer.

Byl to takový čas Václava Havla. Deset let tomu, co se z **disidenta** stal prezidentem.

[Was that-NOM such time-NOM Václav Havel-GEN. Ten-NOM years-GEN that-DAT, what-NOM SELF-ACC from **dissident-GEN** became president-INST.]

That was Václav Havel’s time. It’s been ten years since he went from **being a dissident** to become president.

Takže díky špatným fotkám se z **vás** stal milionář.

[So thanks-to bad photographs-DAT SELF-ACC from **you-GEN** became millionaire-NOM.]

So thanks to the bad photographs **you** became a millionaire.

With the verb *být* ‘be’ we see only the endpoint of a transformation, the situation in which a person or object has attained a new state of being. Here is a typical example:

Byla z **nich** známá dvojka.

[Was from **them-GEN** famous pair-NOM.]

They were a famous pair.

Před deseti lety by nikdo nevěřil tomu, že z **té nenápadné dívky** bude jednou nejžádanější filmová herečka.

[Before ten years-INST AUX noone-NOM not-believed that-DAT, that from **that inconspicuous girl-GEN** will-be once most-desired movie actress-NOM.]

Ten years ago no one would have believed that **that inconspicuous girl** would one day be the most desired movie actress.

¹¹ *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE to indicate transformations.

The preposition *z* is associated with the following verbs (note that English *from* often parallels this association): *obvinít/obviňovat z* ‘accuse of, indict for’, *po-těšit se z* ‘enjoy, derive pleasure from’, *zotavit/zotvovat se z* ‘recover from’, *vyloučit/vylučovat z* ‘exclude, remove from’, *vyřadit/vyřadovat/vyřazovat z* ‘discard, remove from service’, *vyobcovat z* ‘ostracize from’, *exkomunikovat z* ‘excommunicate from’, *vymanit/vymaňovat se z* ‘extricate oneself from’.¹² Here are a couple examples of how these verbs and *z* interact:

Kvůli mrakům by se Venušané nikdy nemohli těšit z **pohledu** na krásy hvězdné oblohy.
[Due-to clouds-DAT would SELF-ACC Venutians-NOM never could-not enjoy from **view-GEN** on beauties-ACC starry sky-GEN.]
Due to the clouds, Venutians could never enjoy **a view** of the beauty of a starry sky.

John Lennon byl ze **školy** vyloučen a věnoval se výhradně hraní.
[John Lennon-NOM was from **school-GEN** expelled-NOM and devoted SELF-ACC exclusively playing-DAT.]
John Lennon was expelled from **school** and devoted himself exclusively to playing.

GENITIVE:: A SOURCE 2 — *S* ‘off of, down from’, *zpod* ‘from beneath’, and *zpoza* ‘from behind’

The three prepositions *s* ‘off of, down from’, *zpod* ‘from beneath’, and *zpoza* ‘from behind’ are all closely related to *z* ‘from’ both in meaning and use.

The preposition *s* ‘off of, down from’ can be thought of as a version of *z* specific to surfaces that serve as source locations.¹³ *S* is used only to describe physical removal, and it is always possible to replace *s* with *z*. The following examples show how *s* is usually used:

Já se tu válím s Honzou po kopcích, do kopce funím a s **kopce** se kutálím.
[I-NOM SELF-ACC here roll with Honza-INST along hills-LOC, to hill-GEN puff and from **hill-GEN** SELF-ACC roll.]
I’m bounding about the hills here with Honza, puffing uphill and rolling downhill.

Sňal po jídle mandolínu se **zdi** — byla pověšena na zlaté lněné šňůře.
[Took-off after meal-LOC mandolin-ACC from **wall-GEN** — was hung-NOM on gold flaxen cord-LOC.]
After the meal he took the mandolin from **the wall** — it was hanging on a flaxen gold cord.

Spadl jsem se **stromu** zády na kořen a páteř se prolomila dovnitř do těla, takže došlo k porušení míchy.
[Fell AUX self-ACC from **tree-GEN** back-INST on root-ACC and spine-NOM self-ACC broke into to body-GEN, to happened to injury-DAT spinal-cord-GEN.]
I fell out of **a tree** landing on my back on the root and my spine broke inward in my body, so the spinal cord was injured.

¹² Verbs associated with *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE.

¹³ *s* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE ‘off of, down from’ can always be replaced by *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE.

However, the tendency is to use *z* instead of *s* even in contexts that have the specific meaning associated with *s*, as we see in these examples:

Loni v červenci sesadil Peta Samprase z **tenisového trůnu**.
 [Last-year in July-LOC unseated Pete Sampras-ACC from **tennis throne-GEN**.]
 In July of last year he unseated Pete Sampras from **the tennis throne**.

Ze **stěny** sundává paní Kuželková obraz v rámečku.
 [From **wall-GEN** takes-off Mrs. Kuželková picture-ACC in frame-LOC].
 Mrs. Kuželková takes a framed picture off of **the wall**.

Zpod ‘from beneath’ is used just as one would expect:¹⁴

Hasič zpod **trámů** vytáhl dítě s přeraženou nohou a mrtvého muže.
 [Firefighter-NOM from-beneath **beams-GEN** pulled-out child-ACC with broken leg-INST and dead man-ACC].
 The firefighter pulled a child with a broken leg and a dead man out from under **the beams**.

V noci byla taková zima, že se nedala vystrčit ani ruka zpod **peřiny**, aby neumrzla.
 [In night-LOC was such cold-NOM, that self-ACC not-gave stick-out even hand-NOM from-beneath **comforter-GEN**, so-that not-froze].
 It was so cold in the night, that you couldn’t even stick your hand out from under **the comforter** without it freezing.

Since seeing and looking are understood metaphorically as visual journeys, it is also possible to look out from beneath something using the Czech preposition *zpod*:

Jason neřikal nic, jen se na ni díval zpod **kšiltu** své baseballové čepice.
 [Jason-NOM not-said nothing-ACC, just self-ACC on her-ACC looked from-beneath **brim-GEN** own baseball cap-GEN].
 Jason didn’t say anything, he just looked at her from beneath **the brim** of his baseball cap.

The preposition *zpoza* describes motion ‘from behind’ something marked as GENITIVE: A SOURCE. This preposition can also describe the virtual motion of looking as well as the movement of sound from a source:¹⁵

Malé dítě vykouklo zpoza **vozu**.
 [Small child-NOM peeked-out from-behind **vehicle-GEN**.]
 A small child peeked out from behind **the vehicle**.

¹⁴ *zpod* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE ‘from beneath’.

¹⁵ *zpoza* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE ‘from behind’.

“Nemám čas,” ozvalo se zpoza **dveří**.

[“Not-have time-ACC,” responded self-ACC from-behind **door-GEN**.]

“I don’t have time,” came the reply from behind **the door**.

GENITIVE:: A SOURCE 3 — *Od* ‘(away) from’

When a human being serves as GENITIVE: A SOURCE, you can usually expect to see the preposition *od*.¹⁶ In this use *od* + GEN is associated with both *k* + DAT ‘to’ and *u* + GEN ‘by, at’, which are used when a person is a destination or a location. So when speaking of a person like *lékař*, one would say: *Šla jsem k lékaři* [Went AUX to doctor-DAT] ‘I went to the doctor’; *Byla jsem u lékaře* [Was AUX at doctor-GEN]; and *Přišla jsem od lékaře* [Came AUX from doctor-GEN] ‘I came from **the doctor’s**.’ Here are a few examples of how *od* is used with people:

Recept dostanete pouze od **lékaře**.

[Prescription-ACC get only from **doctor-GEN**.]

You can only get a prescription from **a doctor**.

Dívce se podařilo získat od **matky** bílou halenku a bílou plizovanou sukni.

[Girl-DAT self-ACC succeeded get from **mother-GEN** white blouse-ACC and white pleated skirt-ACC.]

The girl was able to get a white blouse and a white pleated skirt from **her mother**.

Here is an example of a more metaphorical usage where people are GENITIVE: A SOURCE:

Vždycky, když ji vidím v televizi, tak jsem hrdej, že je od **nás**, že je naše. (CCz)

[Always, when her-ACC see in television-LOC, then am proud-NOM, that is from **us-GEN**, that is ours-NOM.]

Whenever I see her on television, I am proud that she is from **us**, that she is ours.

Whenever location is expressed in terms of *u* ‘by’ + GEN (see below under GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE), removal from that place is expressed with *od*.¹⁷

Odstrčil se ve svém pojízdném křesle od **stolu**.

[Pushed-away self-ACC in own riding chair-LOC from **desk-GEN**.]

He pushed his chair on wheels away from **the desk**.

When stable locations are described, *od* can signal how far something is ‘away’ from something else, as we see here:

¹⁶ *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE ‘from’ in the domain of space.

¹⁷ *od* indicates removal from a location marked as *u* + GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE.

V Atlantickém oceánu, 978 km od **Lisabonu** a 545 km od **břehů** severní Afriky, leží Madeira.

[In Atlantic Ocean-LOC, 978-ACC km-GEN from **Lisbon-GEN** and 545-ACC km-GEN from **shores-GEN** northern Africa-GEN, lies Madeira-NOM.]

Madeira lies in the Atlantic Ocean, 978 km from **Lisbon** and 545 km from **the shores** of northern Africa.

If you take some *y* away from some *x*, that can imply that the *y* belongs to the *x*, and as a consequence *od* can signal belonging, particularly of something that can be separated, like a key from a lock, as in the common expression *klíč od domu* [key-NOM from **house-GEN**] ‘the key to the house’.¹⁸ Here is an example of how this works:

Víno zářilo ve sklenkách od **hořčice** jako krev.

[Wine-NOM glowed in jars-LOC from **mustard-GEN** like blood-NOM.]

The wine glowed in the **mustard** jars like blood.

Just as in English we use *from* to indicate the starting point of a list of things, as in *from A to Z* or *from soup to nuts*, Czech *od* can also mark the beginning of a range of relevant items, usually in combination with *přes* + ACC or (*až*) *po* + ACC, as we see in this example:¹⁹

V jedenácti kapitolách autoři podávají nástin dějin Starého světa od **prehistorie** po současnost.

[In eleven chapters-LOC authors-NOM present outline-ACC history-GEN Old World-GEN from **prehistory-GEN** along present-ACC.]

In eleven chapters the authors present a history of the Old World from **prehistoric times** to the present.

Od can be used in the domain of time to express when something begins.²⁰ In this use, *od* often appears together with *do* ‘until’, as we see in this example:

Aquapark bude dnes i zítra otevřen od **deseti** do dvaceti hodin.

[Aquapark-NOM will-be today and tomorrow open-NOM from **ten-GEN** to twenty hours-GEN.]

Today and tomorrow the Aquapark will be open from **ten am** until eight pm.

Czech can use the verb *lišit se* ‘differ’ with *od* to express how one thing differs from another (note that our logic of using English *from* parallels the Czech use of *od*), and note also the expression *na rozdíl od* [on difference-ACC from] ‘as opposed to’.²¹

Jeden prvek se od **druhého** liší v mnoha směrech.

[One element-NOM self-ACC from **other-GEN** differs in many directions-LOC.]

One element differs from **another** in many ways.

¹⁸ *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE can indicate belonging.

¹⁹ *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE can indicate the first item in a series.

²⁰ *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE can indicate a time when something begins.

²¹ *lišit se od, na rozdíl od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE ‘differ from’, ‘as opposed to’.

Na rozdíl od **čápů černých** absolvují čápi bílí podstatně delší cesty a často doletí až na jih Afriky.

[On difference-ACC from **storks black-GEN** complete storks-white-NOM considerably longer trips-ACC and often fly up-to to south-ACC Africa-GEN.]

As opposed to **black storks**, white storks complete considerably longer trips and fly all the way to the south of Africa.

In metaphorical uses, *od*, like English *from*, can identify the source of feelings, as in this sentence:²²

Pozdravuji Vás od **srdce** a těším se, že Vás brzy uvidím.

[Greet you-ACC from **heart-GEN** and enjoy self-ACC, that you-ACC soon see.]

I greet you from **my heart** and look forward to seeing you soon.

Various substances can cause our things to be dirty or stained, thus serving as the source of a laundry or other cleaning challenge, motivating uses like *skvrny od krve* [stains-NOM from **blood-GEN**] ‘**blood stains**’ and the following example:²³

Ráno ještě čistě vyprané oblečení bylo celé od **bláta** zepředu i zezadu.

[Morning still cleanly laundered clothing-NOM was all-NOM from **mud-GEN** front and back.]

Even in the morning the freshly laundered clothing was already **muddy** both front and back.

The most significant idioms involving *od* include *kreslit/črtat od ruky* [draw/sketch from **hand-GEN**] ‘draw/sketch **free-hand**’, *vařit od oka* [cook from **eye-GEN**] ‘cook by **instinct (without measuring ingredients)**’, *špatně/blbě od žaludku* [bad/stupid from **stomach-GEN**] ‘sick to **one’s stomach**’. Here are a couple of examples:²⁴

Bylo mi špatně od **žaludku** a vzadu na jazyku jsem cítila pachut’ žluči.

[Was me-DAT badly from **stomach-GEN** and in-back on tongue-LOC AUX sensed aftertaste-ACC bile-GEN.]

I was sick to **my stomach** and at the back of my tongue I sensed the aftertaste of bile.

Půdorys kuchyně načrtněte od **ruky**, ale náčrt opatřete přesnými rozměry.

[Plan-ACC kitchen-GEN sketch from **hand-GEN**, but sketch-ACC provide exact dimensions-INST.]

Make a **free-hand** sketch of the kitchen, but provide the exact dimensions with the sketch.

By itself, *od ruky* [from **hand-GEN**] just means that something (usually work) goes well, as we see in this sentence:

²² *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE can indicate the source of feelings and motives.

²³ *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE can indicate a substance that dirties something.

²⁴ Idiomatic uses of *od* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE.

Raději si ráno přivstanu, práce mi jde dopoledne lépe od **ruky**.

[Preferably self-DAT early get-up, work-NOM me-DAT goes morning better from **hand-GEN**.]

I prefer to get up early, work goes better for me in the morning.

In both Czech and English we can take a break from something, signalling a separation understood as if it were a physical separation, as in this example:

Ale jeden den v týdnu je třeba dát si volno od **normálního života**.

[But one day-ACC in week-LOC is necessary give self-DAT free-time-ACC from **normal life-GEN**.]

But one day a week it is necessary to give oneself a break from **normal life**.

GENITIVE: A SOURCE 4 — Withdrawal

In addition to prepositions, some other words trigger the use of GENITIVE: A SOURCE.²⁵ Like the prepositions, they all indicate motions of withdrawal from the genitive item, whether due to fear or disgust. Mothers commonly express withdrawal using GENITIVE: A SOURCE when they chastise children by saying *Nech toho!* [Leave **that-GEN**!] ‘Stop **it**/Leave **that** alone!’ Here is a table of the words you are likely to encounter, followed by a few examples:

<i>bát se</i>	‘fear, be afraid of’	<i>vystříhat/vystříhávat se</i>	‘avoid’
<i>chránit se</i>	‘refrain from, avoid’	<i>vy-varovat/vyvarovávat se</i>	‘escape from, avoid’
<i>leknot/lekat se</i>	‘be frightened of’	<i>vzdát/vzdávat se</i>	‘give up’
<i>nabažit se</i>	‘get tired of’	<i>za-litovat</i>	‘regret, be sorry about’
<i>obávat se</i>	‘be apprehensive of’	<i>za-nechat/zanechávat</i>	‘relinquish, leave’
<i>ostýchat se</i>	‘be shy of’	<i>stydět se</i>	‘be ashamed of’
<i>děsit se</i>	‘be terrified of’	<i>zbavit/zbavovat (se)</i>	‘rid (self) of’
<i>pozbyt/pozbývat</i>	‘lose’	<i>zdržet/zdržovat se</i>	‘abstain from’
<i>pustit/pouštět se</i>	‘let go of’	<i>z-hrozit se</i>	‘be horrified at’
<i>stranit se</i>	‘avoid’	<i>zřít/zřít se</i>	‘renounce’
<i>štítit se</i>	‘shun’		

Jak to, že se Frank bojí **lásky**, a nebojí se **života**?

[How it-NOM, that SELF-ACC Frank-NOM fears **love-GEN**, but not-fears self-ACC **life-GEN**?]

How is it that Frank is afraid of **love** but is not afraid of **life**?

²⁵ Words indicating withdrawal can trigger GENITIVE: A SOURCE.

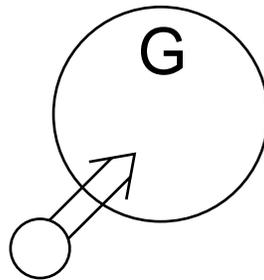
Proč jsme se vzdali **vůdcovské pozice** ve světě?
 [Why AUX SELF-ACC gave-up **leader's position-GEN** in world-LOC?]
 Why have we given up our **position of leadership** in the world?

Bratr zanechal **svých kreslířských ambicí** a začal psát scénáře.
 [Brother-NOM gave-up **own painting ambitions-GEN** and began write screplays-ACC.]
 Brother gave up **his ambitions of becoming a painter** and began writing screenplays.

Pánové se většinou chtějí zbavit jen **svých tukových polštářů** na bocích a **pivních břich**.
 [Men-NOM SELF-ACC primarily want get-rid-of only **own fat pillows-GEN** on hips-LOC and **beer bellies-GEN**.]
 Men for the most part only want to get rid of **their love-handles** and **beer bellies**.

Od poloviny století Krumlov zvolna pozbýval **středověkého charakteru**.
 [From middle-GEN century-GEN Krumlov-NOM gradually lost **medieval character-GEN**.]
 Beginning in the middle of the century Krumlov gradually lost its **medieval character**.

GENITIVE:: A GOAL 1 — Do ‘to’



As its name suggests, GENITIVE:: A GOAL identifies an item that is approached. Like GENITIVE: A SOURCE, GENITIVE:: A GOAL is always triggered by a preposition or other word. By far the most common of all of these is the preposition *do* ‘to’, which can be applied to the domains of space and time, as well as metaphorical realms. Here are two examples of how *do* indicates an approach in terms of physical space:

Když chci jet do **Rakouska**, tak jedu.
 [When want go to **Austria-GEN**, then go.]
 If I want to go to **Austria**, then I’m going.

Jan si stěžuje a usedá do **svého křesla**.
 [Jan-NOM self-DAT complains and sits to **his armchair-GEN**.]
 Jan complains and sits down in **his armchair**.

Note that it doesn’t matter how long the journey is. In the first example we have a trip to Austria, but in the second example the “trip” is only that of Jan’s backside on the way to his chair. What does matter is how the endpoint of the journey is expressed in Czech. *Do* can and will be used whenever the corresponding final location is expressed using *v* + LOC ‘in’. After I have traveled

to Austria, I can say *Jsem v Rakousku* [Am in Austria-LOC] ‘I am in Austria’; and after Jan’s body has traveled to his seat, we can say *Jan sedí v křesle* [Jan-NOM sits in armchair-LOC] ‘Jan is sitting in his armchair.’

Do can indicate the direction of motion even when there is no verb involved as in this example:

Stařec otevřel dveře do **kuchyně**.

[Old-man-NOM opened door-ACC to **kitchen-GEN**.]

The old man opened the **kitchen** door.

Do is the antonym of *z*, and they often appear together, just like English *from...to*:

“Z jednoho snu do **druhého**,” šeptala si.

[“From one dream-GEN to **another-GEN**,” whispered self-DAT.]

“From one dream **to another**,” she whispered to herself.

Although the primary meaning of the verb *dát* is ‘give’ (motivating its use with DATIVE: A RECEIVER), this verb also serves as an all-purpose equivalent for English *put*, *place*. This secondary meaning of the verb gives life to many uses of the combination *dát do* + GENITIVE:: A GOAL ‘put in (a place)’, which can be used to describe both the physical placement of objects and also the metaphorical act of putting things in a certain state (usually that of good order). In this example of *dát do* a WWII veteran expresses his frustration with the Soviet army when in 1968 this ally turned its aggression on the Czechs:

Vracím Vám všechna vyznamenání účastníka Velké vlastenecké války a dávám je do **muzea** na paměť toho, že lidé, kteří nás osvobodili, stali se našimi okupanty.

[Return you-DAT all medals-ACC participant-GEN Great Patriotic War-GEN and give them-ACC to **museum-GEN** on memory-ACC that-GEN, that people-NOM, who-NOM us-ACC liberated, became self-ACC our occupiers-INST.]

I’m returning all my medals from the Great Patriotic War and putting them in a **museum** as a memorial to the fact that the people who liberated us later occupied our country.

One can also throw oneself into one’s work or other activities, and this is done with the same expression, just by adding *se*, to form *dát se do* or with *pustit se do*:

Rozdali karty a pustili se do **hraní**.

[Distributed cards-ACC and let self-ACC to **playing-GEN**.]

They dealt out the cards and set about **playing**.

Physical blows are delivered to one’s body or to a part of the body using *do* as well, motivating uses like those in the three examples below. This use of *do* is so well entrenched that you don’t even need a verb, as we see in *Do hlavy ne!* [To **head-GEN** no!] ‘Don’t hit me **in the head!**’

Tři holohlavci do **něho** kopali, ale nikdo z kolemjdoucích mu nepomohl.

[Three skinheads-NOM to **him-GEN** kicked, but no-one-NOM from passersby-GEN him-DAT not-helped.]

Three skinheads were kicking **him**, but none of the passersby helped him.

Vyskočil a využil příležitost, aby Itala kopl do **břicha**.

[Jumped-up and used opportunity-ACC, so-that Italian-ACC kicked to **stomach-GEN**.]

He jumped up and took advantage of the opportunity to kick the Italian in **the stomach**.

Dostáváte do **držky**? Od koho?

[Get to **mouth-GEN**? From whom-GEN?]

Do you get slugged **in the jaw**? By whom?

Other, less violent, items can also be delivered to a person's body parts using *do* + GENITIVE:: A GOAL, as in this example:

*Jakýsi mladík mi strká do **ruky** modrý papírek.

[Some young-man me-DAT sticks to **hand-GEN** blue paper-ACC.]

Some young man sticks a blue piece of paper in **my hand**.

The use of *do* can be extended to metaphorical domains where there is no real movement involved, as we see in the following examples (but note that the association with *v* + LOC is maintained, since that is how the end result is expressed):

Fischer vyhrál volby do **Senátu** s rekordní převahou.

[Fischer-NOM won election-ACC to **Senate-GEN** with record predominance-INST.]

Fischer won election to **the Senate** with a record lead.

Ruská mafie proniká stále hlouběji do **evropských finančních a podnikatelských struktur**.

[Russian mafia-NOM penetrates constantly deeper to **European financial-GEN** and **entrepreneurial structures-GEN**.]

The Russian mafia is penetrating ever deeper into **European financial** and **entrepreneurial structures**.

There is a related, though somewhat idiomatic use of *do* with *mluvit* 'talk' which can be used when you want someone to mind their own business, as in *Prosím tě, do toho nemluv!* [Ask you-ACC, to **that-GEN** not-talk!] 'Please stay out of **this!**' Translation from one language into another also occasions the use of *do*, as in this sentence:

Kvalita překladu do **mateřského jazyka** bývá zpravidla lepší, než když tentýž překladatel překládá do **cizího jazyka**.

[Quality-NOM translation-GEN to **mother tongue-GEN** is as-a-rule better-NOM, than when same translator-NOM translates to **foreign language-GEN**.]

As a rule the quality of translation into **one's mother tongue** is better than when the same translator translates into **a foreign language**.

In the domain of time, *do* can simply treat the timeline as a type of metaphorical space, or it can indicate a deadline or a time when something ends, as in these examples:²⁶

*Musíme jít daleko do **minulosti**, abychom mohli důkladněji analyzovat, proč komunistické systémy byly neživotné.

[Must go far to **past-GEN**, AUX could more-thoroughly analyze, why communist systems-NOM were inanimate-NOM.]

We have to go far into **the past** in order to do a more thorough analysis of why the communist systems were unable to thrive.

*V Praze 13 má do **tří let** vyrůst rozsáhlý aquapark.

[In Prague-LOC 13-NOM has to **three years-GEN** grow-up extensive water-park-NOM.]

An extensive water park is supposed to appear in Prague 13 within **three years**.

Podle spolupracovníků od rána do **večera** tvrdě pracuje.

[According-to co-workers-GEN from morning-GEN to **night-GEN** hard works.]

According to his co-workers, he works hard from morning til **night**.

In other realms *do* can express an extreme limit, comparable to English *all the way up to* or *to the very*, as in this example:²⁷

Vím do **posledního nervu**, co je jeho úzkost.

[Know to **last nerve-GEN**, what-NOM is his anxiety-NOM.]

I know to **my very last nerve** what his anxiety is like.

Do appears in a number of important idioms, such as: *být někomu do pláče* [be someone-DAT to **crying-GEN**] ‘make someone feel like **crying**’, *být někomu do žertu* [be someone-DAT to **joke-GEN**] ‘make someone feel like **joking**’, *Co je vám/ti do toho?* [What-NOM you-DAT to **that-GEN**?] ‘What’s **it** to you?’, *do toho se neplet’(te)* [to **that-GEN** self-ACC not-weave] ‘don’t get involved/mind your own business’, *dát něco do pořádku/kupy* [give something-ACC to **order-GEN/heap-GEN**] ‘put something in **order**, fix something up’. Here are a few examples:²⁸

“Třeba Martané,” nutil se Prokop zažertovat, ale opravdu nebylo mu do **žertu**.

[“Maybe Martians-NOM,” forced self-ACC Prokop-NOM joke, but really not-was him-DAT to **joke-GEN**.]

“Maybe Martians,” Prokop forced himself to make a joke, but he really didn’t feel like **joking**.

Nech to být, nepouštěj se do **toho**, neplet’s se do **toho** — at’to zůstane, jak to je.

[Leave that-ACC be, not-let self-ACC to **that-GEN**, not-mix self-ACC to **that-GEN**, may that-NOM stay, how that-NOM is.]

Leave it be, don’t get involved in **it**, don’t get mixed up in **it** — let it stay the way it is.

²⁶ *do* + GENITIVE:: A GOAL means ‘into, within, until’ in the domain of time.

²⁷ *do* + GENITIVE:: A GOAL can indicate an extreme limit.

²⁸ Idiomatic uses and verbs associated with *do* + GENITIVE:: A GOAL.

Nevíte o někom, kdo by to tady dal do **pořádku**?

[Not-know about someone-LOC, who-NOM ACC this-ACC here give to **order-GEN**?]

Don't you know anyone who could **fix** this?

Proč nehrajete, proč prostě nedáte do **kupy** kapelu, abyste mohli hrát?

[Why not-play, why simply not-give to **heap-GEN** band-ACC, so-that could play?]

Why don't you play, why don't you just put **together** a band, so that you can play?

There are a few verbs associated with *do* that indicate getting into something in a metaphorical way, such as *zamilovat se do* 'fall in love with', *dát se do* 'set about doing something', and *pustit se do* 'set about doing something', *zapojit se do* 'get involved in something'.

No a potom jsem se zamilovala do **Martina**.

[Well and then AUX SELF-ACC fell-in-love to **Martin-GEN**.]

Well and then I fell in love with **Martin**.

Teď se raději dáme do **jídla**, máme už hlad.

[Now self-ACC rather give to **food-GEN**, have already hunger-ACC.]

Now let's get going with **the food**, we're already hungry.

Do **ničeho** se nechci zapojit.

[To **nothing-GEN** SELF-ACC not-want get-involved.]

I don't want to get involved in **anything**.

Wishes can be directed toward given times when it is hoped that they will be realized, motivating the idiomatic use of *do* with *po-přát* 'wish', as in this example:

Všem čtenářům děkujeme za přízeň, kterou nám věnovali v tomto roce a do **nového roku** přejeme mnoho osobních i pracovních úspěchů.

[All readers-DAT thank for goodwill-ACC, which-ACC us-DAT bestowed in this year-LOC and to **New Year-GEN** wish many personal-GEN and work successes-GEN.]

We thank all our readers for the goodwill they have bestowed on us this year and wish them much personal and professional success in **the New Year**.

GENITIVE:: A GOAL 2 — Approach

Two groups of words denote various kinds of approach and are associated with the genitive case.²⁹ For one group the use of the genitive is mandatory, but for the second group the accusative case is preferred, and the genitive is relatively bookish, characteristic of LCz. In both groups significant number of words are prefixed with *do-*, which like the preposition *do*, indicates approach. Many of the verbs on these lists and the list of words meaning withdrawal above have *se*, which also helps to motivate the use of the genitive, since verbs with *se* rarely

²⁹ Some words denoting inclinations and metaphorical approaches require GENITIVE:: A GOAL.

have accusative direct objects (the only common exceptions are *učit se* ‘study’ and *dozvědět se* ‘find out’).

Words that Require the Genitive

<i>dbát (čeho or na co)</i>	‘pay attention to, have concern for’		
<i>dočkat se</i>	‘wait for’	<i>týkat se</i>	‘concern, pertain to’
<i>domoci/domáhat se</i>	‘demand, exact’		
<i>dopustit/dopouštět se</i>	‘commit (a bad act)’	<i>ujmout/ujímat se</i>	‘take up, assume’
<i>dotknout/dotýkat se</i>	‘touch’	<i>vážít si</i>	‘have respect for’
<i>dovolat/dovolávat se</i>	‘invoke, call’	<i>všimnout/všímat si</i>	‘notice’
<i>dožadovat se</i>	‘beg for, demand’	<i>vyčkat /vyčkávat</i>	‘wait for’
<i>držet se</i>	‘hold on to’		
<i>hledět si</i>	‘attend to’		
<i>hodný</i>	‘worthy of’	<i>zastat/zastávat se</i>	‘stand up for, advocate’
<i>chopit/chápat se</i>	‘take hold of, seize’	<i>zeptat/ptát se</i>	‘ask, inquire’
		<i>zmocnit/zmocňovat se</i>	‘seize, take possession of’
<i>chytit/chytat se</i>	‘get caught on, cling to’	<i>zúčastnit/ zúčastňovat se</i>	‘participate in’
<i>nadát se/nadít se</i>	‘expect’	<i>žádostivý</i>	‘greedy, eager for’
<i>schopný</i>	‘capable’		

Here are a few examples to illustrate these words in action:

Přicházející návštěvníci mávali zakoupenými lístky a dožadovali se **vstupu**, aby na vlastní oči spatřili uprchlou gorilu.

[Arriving visitors-NOM waved purchased tickets-INST and demanded SELF-ACC **entry-GEN**, so-that on own eyes-ACC saw runaway gorilla-ACC.]

The arriving visitors waved the tickets they had purchased and demanded **entry** so that they could see the runaway gorilla with their own eyes.

Koncem listopadu se únosci zmocnili **Boeingu 767 letícího** z Etiopie do Keni a přeměrovali ho na Komorské ostrovy.

[End-INST November-GEN SELF-ACC hijackers-NOM seized **Boeing 767-GEN flying-GEN** from Ethiopia-GEN to Kenya-GEN, and redirected it-ACC to Comoros islands-ACC.]

In late November hijackers seized a **Boeing 767 flying** from Ethiopia to Kenya and redirected it to the Comoros Islands.

Patrně pod vlivem zvyšující se hladiny hormonů si začal všímat **dívek**.

[Apparently under influence-INST increasing-GEN self-DAT level-GEN hormones-GEN SELF-ACC began notice **girls-GEN**.]

Apparently under the influence of increasing hormone levels he started noticing **girls**.

Kdosi hrál Chopina, avšak vždy na stejném místě se znovu a znovu dopouštěl **jedné a téže chyby**.

[Somebody-NOM played Chopin-ACC, however always on same place-LOC SELF-ACC again and again committed **one-GEN** and **same error-GEN**.]

Somebody was playing Chopin, but again and again he made **one** and **the same error** in the same place.

Asijská hospodářská krize se **Spojených států** prozatím dotkla jen okrajově.

[Asian economic crisis-NOM SELF-ACC **United States-GEN** for-the-time-being touched only marginally.]

For the time being the Asian economic crisis has only affected **the United States** marginally.

Ptala jsem se **Filípka**, jestli by chtěl bratříčka, nebo sestřičku, ale chce pejska, takže nemůžu sloužit. (CCz)

[Asked AUX SELF-ACC **Filípek-GEN**, whether AUX wanted little-brother-ACC, or little-sister-ACC, but wants doggie-ACC, so cannot serve.]

I asked **Filípek** whether he wants a little brother or a little sister, but he wants a doggie, so I can't help him.

Čeho se týkaly ty nepříjemné diskuse?

[**What-GEN** SELF-ACC concerned those unpleasant discussions-NOM?]

What were those unpleasant discussions about?

Verbs that Can Govern the Genitive or the Accusative

<i>cenit si</i>	‘appreciate’	<i>po-/vy-užít/ po-/vy-užívat; užít si</i>	‘use, enjoy’
<i>dobýt/dobývat</i>	‘gain, get’	<i>požívat (LCz)</i>	‘enjoy’
<i>dosáhnout/ dosahovat</i>	‘reach, gain’	<i>za-žádat</i>	‘desire, demand’
<i>po-přát</i>	‘wish’	<i>zneužít/zneužívat</i>	‘abuse’
<i>potřebovat</i>	‘need’		

Since the use of the genitive with these verbs is more characteristic of LCz than of CCz, examples tend to have a literary character.³⁰ All of these sentences reflect a style not usually found in CCz, and some have additional features (such as the use of *jenž* ‘who’ instead of *který* and the word *již* ‘already’ instead of *už*) that mark them as LCz.

V poledne dosahuje teplota **čtyřiceti stupňů** ve stínu.

[In noon-LOC reaches temperature-NOM **forty degrees-GEN** in shade-LOC.]

At noon the temperature reaches **forty degrees** in the shade.

³⁰ Some words denoting inclinations and metaphorical approaches can use either GENITIVE:: A GOAL or ACCUSATIVE: A DESTINATION.

K vládnutí Saddám používá **všech možných**, často **stalinistických, metod**.

[To reigning-DAT Saddam-NOM uses **all possible-GEN**, often **stalinist, methods-GEN**.]

To maintain his power, Saddam uses **all possible methods**, often **stalinist ones**.

Nikdo neví přesně proč: všichni, kteří byli poblíž, když se jako dvanáctiletá dívka rozhodla užívat pro sebe **tohoto jména**, již zemřeli.

[No-one-NOM not-knows exactly why: everyone-NOM, who-NOM was close, when SELF-ACC like twelve-year-old girl-NOM decided use for self-ACC **that name-GEN**, already died.]

No one knows exactly why: everyone who was close to her when as a twelve-year-old girl she decided to use **that name** for herself, has already died.

Využívá **transparentnosti** laminátů k překvapivým optickým účinkům šperků-objektů, jež jsou zdobnými sochami.

[Uses **transparency-GEN** glass-fibers-GEN to surprising optical effects-DAT jewels-objects-GEN, which-NOM are miniature sculptures-INST.]

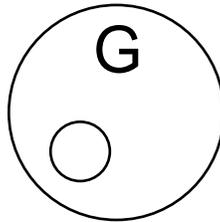
He uses **the transparency** of glass fibers to produce the surprising optical effects of the jewel-objects that are miniature sculptures.

Jeden nejmenovaný politik chtěl **této situace** zneužít, aby si udělal jméno.

[One unnamed politician-NOM wanted **this situation-GEN** abuse, so-that SELF-DAT made name-ACC.]

An unnamed politician wanted to abuse **this situation** in order to make a name for himself.

GENITIVE:: A WHOLE 1 — ‘Of’, possession, and color



In this submeaning the genitive is a whole of which something else is a part.³¹ This accounts for all the uses of the genitive that can be translated as ‘of’, as well as numerical quantifications indicating amounts of things.

By far the most common use of the genitive is what we call its “bare case” usage, where it is not triggered by any other word.³² In this pristine state the genitive can indicate possessors, wholes (in relation to parts), and other kinds of ‘having’ relationships that can motivate a meaning of ‘of’.

³¹ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE can indicate ‘of’ and numerical quantification.

³² GENITIVE:: A WHOLE means ‘of’.

Perhaps the most basic use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE is to identify wholes that parts belong to.³³ In the physical realm we have parts of discrete objects (feet of mortals and gates of palaces), as in the first example below. More abstractly one could say that purity is part of the water and healthy development is part of the carp, as in the second example; and that meaning is part of forests just as life is part of people, as in the third example. In the domain of time, seasons can be understood as parts of the year, as illustrated in the fourth example.

Noha **obyčejného smrtelníka** se nesměla dotknout bran **královského paláce**.

[Foot-NOM **ordinary mortal-GEN** self-ACC not-dared touch gates-GEN **royal palace-GEN**.]

The foot of an ordinary mortal was not allowed to touch the gates of the royal palace.

Pro zdravý vývin **kaprů** je velmi důležitá čistota **vody**.

[For healthy development-ACC **carp-GEN** is very important-NOM purity-NOM **water-GEN**.]

The purity **of the water** is very important for the healthy development **of carp**.

Význam **lesů** pro život **lidí** je obrovský.

[Meaning-NOM **forests-GEN** for life-ACC **people-GEN** is enormous-NOM.]

The meaning **of the forests** for **people's** lives is enormous.

Naše partnerství skončilo na jaře **minulého roku**.

[Our partnership-NOM ended on spring-LOC **last year-GEN**.]

Our partnership ended in the spring **of last year**.

Since a part belongs to a whole, it can also be thought of as a possession of the whole, and GENITIVE:: A WHOLE is often used for this meaning, translatable into English with either the possessive form in 's, or with *of*, as in these examples:³⁴

Manželka **britského premiéra** očekává ve svých pětáctyřiceti letech čtvrté dítě.

[Wife-NOM **British Prime-Minister-GEN** expects in own forty-five years-LOC fourth child-ACC.]

The British Prime Minister's wife is expecting her fourth child at the age of forty-five.

*Členové **světového výkonného orgánu** by nemuseli být vybíráni podle toho, z jaké země pocházejí.

[Members-NOM **world executive body-GEN** AUX not-had-to be chosen-NOM according-to that-GEN, from what country-GEN come.]

The members **of a world executive body** would not have to be chosen according to what country they are from.

³³ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE expresses parts 'of' wholes.

³⁴ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE expresses possession.

*Výstava **světoznámého malíře Alfonse Muchy** byla otevřena v Prostějově.
[Exhibit-NOM **world-famous painter Alfons Mucha-GEN** was opened-NOM in Prostějov-LOC.]

An exhibit **of the world-famous painter Alfons Mucha** opened in Prostějov.

Metaphorical expressions of possession are also possible, as we see in this example:

Našel jsem ženu **svého srdce**.

[Found AUX woman-ACC own heart-GEN.]

I found the woman **of my heart**.

Images and jobs are also possessions of a sort, and again the Czech GENITIVE:: A WHOLE corresponds to English *of*, as we see in these two examples:

Když jsem jim ukazoval obrázek **císaře Karla a jeho manželky Zity**, asi si mysleli, že jsem blázen.

[When AUX them-DAT showed picture-ACC **emperor Karel-GEN** and **his wife Zita-GEN**, probably self-DAT thought, that am crazy-person-NOM.]

When I showed them a picture **of the emperor Karel** and **his wife Zita**, they probably thought I was crazy.

Dánská královna vám prý v žertu nabídla místo **dvorního šaška**.

[Danish queen-NOM you-DAT allegedly in joke-LOC offered position-ACC **court jester-GEN**.]

The Danish queen allegedly offered you the position **of court jester** as a joke.

Of course the Czech GENITIVE:: A WHOLE shares much of the range of meanings of English *of*, namely belonging to a category, being of a type.³⁵ Here are some examples:

Muzeum vlastní sbírky **textilu, fotografií, a zemědělského nářadí a náčiní**.

[Museum-NOM owns collections-ACC **textiles-GEN, photographs-GEN, and agricultural tools-GEN** and **implements-GEN**.]

The museum owns collections of **textiles, photographs, and agricultural tools** and **implements**.

Rusko je zemí **paradoxů**, která nesnáší a současně bezmezně obdivuje vše, co je cizí.

[Russia-NOM is land-INST **paradoxes-GEN**, which-NOM not-endures and at-same-time endlessly admires everything-ACC, what-NOM is foreign-NOM.]

Russia is a land **of paradoxes** that cannot endure yet at the same time endlessly admires everything foreign.

³⁵ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE expresses membership in a category.

Zvýšené odpařování povrchu těla vyvolává pocit **chladu**.

[Increased evaporation-NOM surface-GEN body-GEN produces feeling-ACC **coolness-GEN**.]

Increased evaporation of the body's surface produces a feeling **of coolness**.

Czech characteristically uses the GENITIVE:: A WHOLE to describe colors of objects, using the logic of the English phrase *a horse of a different color*:³⁶

Zvláště vysoko jsou ceněny květy **pupurové a levandulové barvy** a vůbec nejvýše květy **modré barvy**.

[Especially highly are valued-NOM flowers-NOM **purple-GEN** and **lavender color-GEN** and entirely most-highly flowers-NOM **blue color-GEN**.]

Purple and **lavender flowers** are especially highly valued, and most of all **blue** flowers.

GENITIVE:: A WHOLE 2 — Events, idioms, and chains

The items that participate in an event (subject, object, action) share a common bond, a special relationship. In English this relationship is expressed by *of*, and in Czech by the GENITIVE:: A WHOLE.³⁷ In this first example, the event is *setkaly se děti* ‘the children met’, which is reduced to *setkání dětí* [meeting-NOM **children-GEN**] ‘the meeting **of children**’. This event links the action *setkání* ‘meeting’ to the subject *děti* ‘children’:

*V Praze se uskutečnilo setkání **dětí**, které se narodily pomocí asistované reprodukce — ze zkumavky.

[In Prague-LOC self-ACC took-place meeting-NOM **children-GEN**, who-NOM self-ACC were-born help-INST assisted reproduction-GEN — from test-tube-GEN.]

In Prague there was a meeting **of children** who were born with the help of assisted reproduction — from a test-tube.

In this next example, the event is *Jozef Jašík pojídal švestkové knedlíky* ‘Jozef Jašík ate plum dumplings’, and the phrase *pojídání švestkových knedlíků* ‘eating **of plum dumplings**’ reduces it to a relationship between the action *pojídání* ‘eating’ and the object *švestkové knedlíky* ‘plum dumplings’:

*Jozef Jašík se stal vítězem letošní Velké ceny Vizovic v pojídání **švestkových knedlíků**, když jich během hodiny spořádal 123.

[Jozef Jašík-NOM self-ACC became victor-INST this-year's Grand prize-GEN Vizovice-GEN in eating-LOC **plum dumplings-GEN**, when them-GEN during hour-GEN consumed 123-ACC.]

Jozef Jašík became the victor of this year's Vizovic **plum-dumpling** eating Grand Prize when he polished off 123 of them in an hour.

³⁶ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE describes color.

³⁷ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE indicates participation in an event.

The common greeting *Co je nového?* [What-NOM is **new-GEN?**] ‘What’s **new?**’ is an idiomatic use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE.³⁸ As the following examples show, GENITIVE:: A WHOLE can be used this way with a variety of words related to *co* ‘what’, including *cośi* ‘something’, *něco* ‘something’, and *nic* ‘nothing’:

To vše je pro něho **cośi cizího**.
 [That all-NOM is for him-ACC something-NOM **foreign-GEN.**]
 For him all that is something **foreign**.

Tady je pošta docela **něco neobvyklého** ve světě samoty.
 [Here is mail-NOM altogether something-NOM unusual-GEN in world-LOC isolation-GEN.]
 Here in the world of isolation mail is something altogether **unusual**.

Vidím jen tmavé stěny. Nic **přívětivého**.
 [See just dark walls-ACC. Nothing-NOM **welcoming-GEN.**]
 I see just dark walls. Nothing **welcoming**.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, the genitive is the one case that can be repeated to form chains.³⁹ It is specifically the GENITIVE:: A WHOLE in its bare case usage that makes this possible. Here is a chain of four consecutive genitive items:

*Databanka **českých “nej” pelhřimovského Muzea rekordů a kuriozit České republiky** už eviduje rekordy v nejrůznějších kategoriích a disciplínách, ale nejvyšší Čech v ní chybí.
 [Databank-NOM **Czech “mosts”-GEN Pelhřimov Museum-GEN records-GEN and curiosities-GEN Czech Republic-GEN** already has-on-file records-ACC in most-varied categories-LOC and disciplines-LOC, but tallest Czech-NOM in it-LOC is-missing.]
 The databank **of Czech “mosts” of the Pelhřimov Museum of Records and Curiosities of the Czech Republic** already has on file records in all kinds of categories and disciplines, but the tallest Czech is missing in it.

Strings of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE are not unusual in Czech, and unfortunately they often translate into clumsy trails of *of* in English.

GENITIVE:: A WHOLE 3 — Trigger words and phrases

Several dozen words and phrases regularly behave like prepositions triggering the use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE in Czech.⁴⁰ Nearly all of these words and phrases have meanings that include English *of*. These words and phrases are encountered very often in Czech, and are well worth learning. The following table is a collection of the most common words and phrases associated with GENITIVE:: A WHOLE:

³⁸ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE in idiomatic expressions.

³⁹ The chaining capacity of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE.

⁴⁰ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE can be triggered by many words and phrases.

<i>formou</i>	‘in the form of’	<i>prostřednictvím</i>	‘by means of, through’
<i>koncem</i>	‘at the end of’	<i>škoda</i>	‘a waste of’
<i>na bázi</i>	‘on the basis of’	<i>uprostřed</i>	‘in the middle of, among’
<i>na dně</i>	‘on the bottom of’	<i>uvnitř</i>	‘inside of’
<i>na konto</i>	‘on account of’	<i>v centru</i>	‘in the center, downtown of’
<i>na pokraji</i>	‘on the brink of’	<i>v duchu</i>	‘in the spirit of’
<i>na principu</i>	‘on the principle of’	<i>v mezích</i>	‘within the bounds of’
<i>na účet</i>	‘on the account of’	<i>v oblasti</i>	‘in the field of’
<i>na újmu</i>	‘to the detriment of’	<i>v průběhu</i>	‘in the course of’
<i>na úkor</i>	‘to the detriment of’	<i>v rámci</i>	‘in the framework of’
<i>na úseku</i>	‘for the space of’	<i>v roli</i>	‘in the role of’
<i>na vrcholu</i>	‘at the height of’	<i>v zastoupení</i>	‘on behalf of’
<i>na základě</i>	‘on the basis of’	<i>včetně</i>	‘including’
<i>následkem</i>	‘as a result of’	<i>ve formě</i>	‘in the form of’
<i>po stránce</i>	‘with respect to’	<i>ve sféře</i>	‘in the sphere of’
<i>po vzoru</i>	‘following the pattern of’	<i>ve smyslu</i>	‘in the sense of’
<i>pod hlavičkou</i>	‘under the heading of’	<i>vinou</i>	‘due to’
<i>pod jménem</i>	‘under the name of’	<i>z hlediska</i>	‘from the point of view of’
<i>pod vedením</i>	‘under the leadership of’	<i>začátkem</i>	‘at the beginning of’
<i>pod záštitou</i>	‘under the protection of’	<i>zásluhou</i>	‘as a result of’
<i>pomocí</i>	‘with the help of, by means of’	<i>ze stanoviska</i>	‘from the point of view of’

Some of these entries are the instrumental forms of words (and themselves conventionalized examples of INSTRUMENTAL: A MEANS): *formou* ‘in the form of’ *následkem* ‘as a result of’, *pomocí* ‘with the help of, by means of’, *prostřednictvím* ‘by means of, through’, and most of the rest are prepositional phrases (or result historically from prepositional phrases) using *na*, *v*, and *po* + LOCATIVE: A PLACE, *pod* + INSTRUMENTAL:: A LANDMARK, or *z* + GENITIVE: A SOURCE. Here are some examples to give you a feeling for how these words and phrases are used:

Jihokorejská firma Daewoo se ocitla na pokraji **bankrotu**.

[South-Korean company-NOM Daewoo-NOM SELF-ACC appeared on brink-LOC **bankruptcy-GEN**.]

The South Korean Daewoo company found itself on the brink of **bankruptcy**.

Jste na vrcholu **kariéry**, máte všechno, o čem většina lidí jen sní.

[Are on height-LOC **career-GEN**, have everything-ACC, about what-LOC majority-NOM people-GEN only dreams.]

You are at the height of **your career**, you have everything that most people only dream about.

Soud ho uznal vinným — na základě velmi **sporných svědectví** — a vyřkl nejtěžší trest: šibenici.

[Court-NOM him-ACC recognized guilty-INST — on basis-LOC very **questionable testimonies-GEN** — and pronounced harshest punishment-ACC: gallows-ACC.]

The court found him guilty — on the basis of very **questionable testimonies** — and pronounced the harshest sentence: the gallows.

Jejich současná karma je následkem **minulých životů**.

[Their present karma-NOM is result-INST **past lives-GEN**.]

Their present karma is a result of **their past lives**.

Jednotlivé aparáty jsou pomocí **rádiových vln** propojeny s počítačem.

[Separate devices-NOM are help-INST **radio waves-GEN** connected-NOM with computer-INST.]

Separate devices are connected with the computer by means of **radio waves**.

Cestou v pustině uprostřed **skal** se ozvaly výstřely a mikrobus zastavil.

[Trip-INST in desert-LOC among cliffs-GEN SELF-ACC resounded shots-NOM and minivan-NOM stopped.]

On the trip in the desert shots rang out among **the cliffs** and the minibus stopped.

Vůbec netušíte, jaká bouře se odehrává uvnitř **mého těla**.

[Not-at-all not-suspect, what storm-NOM SELF-ACC takes-place inside **my body-GEN**.]

You have no idea what kind of a storm is brewing inside **my body**.

Sem nemají přístup žádní cizinci včetně **novinářů**.

[Here not-have entrance-ACC no foreigners-NOM including **journalists-GEN**.]

No foreigners, including **journalists**, can come in here.

GENITIVE:: A WHOLE 4 — Amounts

A part of a whole can be interpreted as an amount of the whole.⁴¹ In this use, the genitive is viewed as a set of objects or as a substance, and portions of the genitive item are measured out. This accounts for the use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE with numerals, with words meaning ‘add’, ‘subtract’, ‘full’, ‘enough’, as well as what we call “partitive” uses.

Numerals come in many types. There are integers, fractions, and indefinite numerals such as *kolik* ‘how many’, *několik* ‘several’, *trochu* ‘some’, *tolik* ‘so many’, *mnoho* ‘many/much’, *málo*

⁴¹ GENITIVE:: A WHOLE expresses quantification with numerals and other quantifiers.

‘few/little’, *více/víc* ‘more’, *méně/míň* ‘fewer’. There are also many other words indicating amounts, like *pár* ‘a couple’, *řada* ‘a lot’, *nedostatek* ‘lack’, *dost* ‘enough’, and *hojnost* ‘abundance’ which behave just like numerals. Here is a sampling of quantifiers with GENITIVE::AWHOLE:

Strýčku, nedal bys mi milión **dolarů**, abych měl něco do začátku?

[Uncle-VOC, not-gave AUX me-DAT million-ACC **dollars-GEN**, so-that had something-ACC to start-GEN?]

Uncle, won't you give me a million **dollars** so that I will have something to start out with?

Mnoho **cizinců žijících** dlouhodobě v České republice se probudilo do nového roku a zjistilo, že v zemi pobývají ilegálně.

[Many **foreigners-GEN living-GEN** long-time in Czech Republic-LOC SELF-ACC awoke to new year-GEN and discovered, that in country-LOC reside illegally.]

Many **foreigners who had lived** in the Czech Republic for a long time woke up on New Year's day to discover they were residing in the country illegally.

Potřebujete víc **života** a míň **politiky**.

[Need more-ACC **life-GEN** and less-ACC **politics-GEN**.]

You need more **life** and less **politics**.

Otec vůbec nesnášel nedostatek **aktivity**.

[Father-NOM not-at-all not-endured lack-ACC **activity-GEN**.]

Father could not endure lack **of activity** at all.

Já mám dost **sebedůvěry** a **smělosti**.

[I-NOM have enough-ACC **self-confidence-GEN** and **daring-GEN**.]

I have enough **self-confidence** and **daring**.

V době železné byla zalesněna téměř polovina **suchého zemského povrchu**.

[In age iron-LOC was forested-NOM almost half-NOM **dry Earth's surface-GEN**.]

In the iron age almost half **of the Earth's dry land** was forested.

In the following two examples, note that the quantifiers (*Kolik* and *tisíce*) and the quantified (*nových věcí* and *jich*) do not have to appear in sequence in a sentence; the case endings do the job of making the connection clear:

Kolik ty zase vidíš **nových věcí**!

[How-many-NOM you-NOM again see **new things-GEN**!]

How many **new things** you are seeing!

Byly **jich** tisíce a generál je všechny během několika měsíců vyzbrojil a vycvičil.

[Were **them-GEN** thousands-NOM and general-NOM them all-ACC during several months-GEN armed and trained.]

There were thousands **of them** and the general armed and trained them all in the course of a few months.

Any container can likewise serve to quantify the amount of matter it can hold, motivating the use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE to mark objects and substances when triggered by words designating containers, as in these examples:

Pohledná dívka podává strážcům budovy láhev **šampanského**.

[Pretty girl-NOM hands guards-DAT building-GEN bottle-ACC **champagne-GEN**.]

A pretty girl hands a bottle **of champagne** to the building guards.

Kdosi přináší košík **buchet** a jiný zase z venkova tašku **jitrnic**.

[Someone-NOM brings basket-ACC **sweet-buns-GEN** and other-NOM again from country-GEN bag-ACC **sausages-GEN**.]

One person brings a basket **of sweet buns** and another brings a bag **of sausages** from the country.

GENITIVE:: A WHOLE 5 - Implied amounts

There are some words that do not designate an amount themselves, but imply that an amount is involved (often translatable into English as ‘some’); these words have meanings relating to increasing, decreasing, and being or becoming full.⁴² Czech uses GENITIVE:: A WHOLE with these words because they imply the manipulation of an amount of something. Here is a table of these words, grouped into words meaning ‘increase’ or ‘decrease’, the adjective meaning ‘full’, verbs of consumption in *na- se* that mean ‘get one’s fill of’, and verbs of consumption in *pře- se* that mean ‘get too much of’.

Words implying amounts

Verbs meaning ‘increase’ or ‘decrease’

<i>dodat/dodávat</i>	‘add’	<i>přibýt/přibývat</i>	‘increase’
<i>přidat/přidávat</i>	‘add’	<i>ubrat/ubírat</i>	‘reduce’
<i>ubýt/ubývat</i>	‘decrease’		

Adjective meaning ‘full’: *plný*

Verbs of consumption in *na- se*

<i>nabumbat se (CCz)</i>	‘get a drink of’	<i>nacpat se</i>	‘stuff oneself’
<i>nadýchat se</i>	‘breathe in a quantity of’	<i>načichat se</i>	‘smell a quantity of’
<i>nalokat se</i>	‘breathe in a quantity of’	<i>najíst se</i>	‘eat enough of’
<i>napít se</i>	‘get a drink of’	<i>napapat se (CCz)</i>	‘eat enough of’
<i>nažrat se</i>	‘eat enough of’ (animal or vulgar)	<i>nasytit se</i>	‘get enough of’

Verbs of consumption in *pře- se*

<i>přecpat se</i>	‘overstuff oneself’	<i>přesytit se</i>	‘get too much of’
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⁴² GENITIVE:: A WHOLE is used with words that imply amounts.

přejíst se ‘eat too much of’ *přežrat se* ‘eat too much of’
(animal or vulgar)

The verbs in the first group are used in constructions that lack a subject, so the verbs themselves have the “default” neuter third-person singular agreement (in other words, they behave as if the subject were *ono* ‘it’). The item that is increasing or decreasing is marked GENITIVE:: A WHOLE. Here are a few examples of this construction:

Mnozí lidé tedy ztratili víru v politiky: ubylo i **občanů ochotných** veřejně se angažovat.
[Many people-NOM consequently lost faith-ACC in politicians-ACC: decreased also **citizens-GEN willing-GEN** publicly SELF-ACC engage.]
As a result, many people lost faith in politicians, and the number of **citizens willing** to become publicly engaged also decreased.

Je tohle důvod, proč **skautů** ubývá?
[Is that-NOM reason-NOM, why **scouts-GEN** decreases?]
Is that the reason why there are fewer and fewer **scouts**?

Počet telefonátů na policii se nesnižuje, přibývá **anonymů**.
[Number-NOM phone-calls-GEN to police-ACC SELF-ACC not-decreases, increases **anonymous-callers-GEN**.]
The number of phone calls to the police is not decreasing, and the number of **anonymous callers** is increasing.

Note that not all verbs meaning ‘increase’ or ‘decrease’ use the GENITIVE:: A WHOLE construction. In the last example above the verb *snižovat se* ‘decrease’ appears with a subject marked NOMINATIVE: A NAME.

The use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE with the adjective *plný* ‘full’ parallels our own use of English *of* with *full*. In Czech this association has spawned an idiomatic expression *mít něčeho plné zuby* [have **something-GEN** full teeth-ACC] ‘be fed up with **something** (literally ‘have one’s teeth full of **something**)’). Here are some examples of both *plný* and this idiom:

Tak řekněte — není ta čeština plná **skvělých barvitých slov** a **obrazných rčení**?
[So say — not-is that Czech -NOM full-NOM **terrific colorful words-GEN** and **figurative sayings-GEN**?]
So say — isn’t Czech full of terrific colorful words and figurative sayings?

Měl jsem plné zuby **únavného** a navíc **bezvýsledného jednání** s úředníky, tak jsem šel rovnou za starostou.
[Had AUX full teeth-ACC **tiresome-GEN** and furthermore **fruitless negotiation-GEN** with officials-INST, so AUX went straight beyond mayor-INST.]
I was fed up with **tiresome** and furthermore **fruitless negotiations** with officials, so I went straight to the mayor.

The prefix *na-* can indicate that something is done in quantity; when it and *se* are added to verbs describing taking substances into the body (by breathing, drinking, or eating), the resulting word

means ‘get one’s fill of’ (or even too much of) and the substance that is consumed appears as GENITIVE:: A WHOLE. The following examples illustrate these verbs:

Nechcete se napít **pramenité vody** z naší vlastní studny?
 [Not-want self-ACC drink **spring water-GEN** from our own well-GEN?]
 Don’t you want to take a drink **of spring water** from our very own well?

Maminčiných vdolečků s jahodovou marmeládou se nikdy nemohu nasytit.
 [**Mother’s doughnuts-GEN** with strawberry jam-INST self-ACC never not-can get-sated.]
 I can never get enough of **mom’s** strawberry jam **doughnuts**.

Muž v Novodvorské ulici se nadýchal **zplodin**, ale lékaři se podařilo jej zachránit.
 [Man-NOM in Novodvorská Street-LOC self-ACC inhaled **waste-products-GEN**, but doctor-DAT self-ACC succeeded him-ACC save.]
 A man on Novodvorská Street inhaled a lot of **waste products**, but the doctor managed to save him.

The prefix *pře-* always indicates that a line has been crossed, in this case the upper limit of what one’s belly can hold. All of the verbs with *pře-* *se* in our table above refer to overeating, and as we saw for the *na-* *se* verbs, the item that is consumed is marked as GENITIVE:: A WHOLE. Here is an example:

Po večeři, kdy jsme se přejedli **ústřic**, nás čekala těžká noc s velkými bolestmi břicha.
 [After dinner-LOC, when AUX self-ACC over-ate **oysters-GEN**, us-ACC waited hard night-NOM with great pains-INST stomach-GEN.]
 After a dinner at which we ate **oysters** to excess, a hard night with great stomach pains awaited us.

Sometimes an amount can be implied even when there is no word suggesting a quantity.⁴³ In these instances, the amount is either a small amount, equivalent to English *some*, or an unexpectedly large amount, equivalent to *a lot*. The use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE to designate small amounts is archaic for most words in Czech. It used to be possible to encounter phrases like *Dej mi vody* [Give me-DAT **water-GEN**] ‘Give me **some water**’, but this kind of usage is now unusual even in LCz; in CCz one would say instead *Dej mi vodu* [Give me-DAT water-ACC] or *Dej mi trochu vody* [Give me-DAT some-ACC water-GEN]. There are two important exceptions, however: *chléb* ‘bread’ and *sýr* ‘cheese’. For these two words the use of GENITIVE:: A WHOLE to mean ‘some’ is very common, and in CCz the genitive forms **chleba** and **sejra** have practically eclipsed the nominative and accusative forms, so that you hear only **chleba** and **sejra** as subjects and direct objects in all contexts, even when there is no implication of an amount. Here are is an example to illustrate:

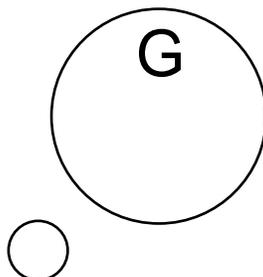
⁴³ By itself, GENITIVE:: A WHOLE can express small or large amounts.

Podala mu **vody, chleba**.
 [Gave him-DAT **water-GEN, bread-GEN**.]
 She gave him **some water** and **some bread**.

GENITIVE:: A WHOLE can also be used to indicate unusually large numbers of objects, as we see in this example:

Všude bylo **pěkných holek**, radost pohledět!
 [Everywhere was **pretty girls-GEN**, joy-NOM look!]
 There were **so many pretty girls** everywhere, it was a joy to look at them!

GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE 1 — Dates and other reference points



In the fourth and final meaning of the genitive, the focus of our attention is located near the genitive item, from which it is separated.⁴⁴ This combination of proximity and separation allows the genitive to serve as a reference point in various domains of time, and space, or to represent an item that is not available. In the domain of time, the most obvious use of the GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE is with dates, which serve as temporal reference points for events:⁴⁵

Pojistka mi skončí **patnáctého** ledna.
 [Insurance-NOM me-DAT ends **fifteenth-GEN** January-GEN.]
 My insurance runs out on January **15th**.

Dnes je **sedmnáctého** října.
 [Today is **seventeenth-GEN** October-GEN.]
 Today is October **17th**.

In addition to calendar dates, Czech can use GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE to refer to other time periods that act as settings:

Slibuju Vám, že budu **letošního roku** Vaší nejpilnější a nejhodnější žačkou.
 [Promise you-DAT, that will-be **this year-GEN** your most-diligent and best-behaved student-INST.]
 I promise you that **this year** I will be your most diligent and best behaved student.

⁴⁴ GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE serves as a reference point in time and space, and for expressions of lack.

⁴⁵ The use of GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE to express dates in the domain of time.

Otec byl **toho dne** neklidný.
 [Father-NOM was **that day-GEN** not-calm-NOM.]
 Father was not calm **that day**.

Scházíme se pravidelně **každého půlroku** už asi pět let.
 [Meet self-ACC regularly **every half-year-GEN** already five-ACC years-GEN.]
 We've been meeting regularly **every six months** for about five years already.

When a time period is alluded to by mentioning phenomena or people connected with a given era, *za* + GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE 'during the time of' locates the event of a sentence in the proximity of the associated time period.⁴⁶ Common examples of this use of *za* include *za války* [during **war-GEN**] 'during **the war**' and *za komunistů* [during **communists-GEN**] 'during **the communist era** (literally 'during the time of **the communists**')'. Here are a couple of contextualized examples:

Za **minulého režimu** tělesně postižení lidé zůstávali "schovaní".
 [During **previous regime-GEN** bodily sticken people-NOM remained "hidden-NOM".]
 During **the previous regime** handicapped people were kept "hidden".

Dnes je u nás situace horší než za **komunistů**.
 [Today is by us-GEN situation-NOM worse-NOM than during **communists-GEN**.]
 Today our situation is worse than it was during **the communist era**.

The preposition *během* + GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE is a more all-purpose equivalent of English *during* and can be used with all kinds of words to mark temporal reference points, as we see in these examples:⁴⁷

Vězni mají během **práce** přísně zakázáno oslovit kolemjdoucí.
 [Prisoners-NOM have during **work-GEN** strictly forbidden address passersby-ACC.]
 Prisoners are strictly forbidden to talk to passersby when **they are working**.

V roce 1971, během **bojů** o nezávislost Bangladéše, situaci ještě zhoršila vlna uprchlíků.
 [In year-LOC 1971, during **battles-GEN** for independence-ACC Bangladesh-GEN, situation-ACC yet worsened wave-NOM refugees-GEN.]
 In 1971, during **the battles** for an independent Bangladesh, a wave of refugees made the situation even worse.

Jak se změnila tato země během **jednoho století**?
 [How SELF-ACC changed that country-NOM during **one century-GEN**?]
 How has that country changed in the course of **a century**?

Over a dozen prepositions locate items in space with reference to GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE as being near, alongside, around, next to, etc.⁴⁸ Many of these prepositions operate in other domains, such as time (especially *kolem* 'around') or concepts (*dle*, *podle* 'according to').

⁴⁶ *za* + GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE 'during the time of'.

⁴⁷ *během* + GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE 'during'.

<i>blízko</i>	‘near’	<i>okolo</i>	‘around’
<i>daleko</i>	‘far from’	<i>poblíž</i>	‘near’
<i>dle</i>	‘according to’	<i>podél</i>	‘along’
<i>kolem</i>	‘around’	<i>podle</i>	‘according to’
<i>kromě</i>	‘except’	<i>u</i>	‘near, by, at’
<i>místo</i>	‘instead of’	<i>vedle</i>	‘next to’
<i>nedaleko</i>	‘not far from’	<i>vně</i>	‘outside of’

The following examples display some of the range of these prepositions:

Jiří Bartoška je dle **svých vlastních slov** drogově závislý.

[Jiří Bartoška-NOM is according-to **own own words-GEN** on-drugs dependent-NOM].
According to **his very own words**, Jiří Bartoška is addicted to drugs.

Řez se vede kolem **ucha**, aby byly jizvičky nenápadné, kůže se vypne a přebytečná je odstraněna.

[Cut-NOM SELF-ACC leads around **ear-GEN**, so-that were scars not-obvious-NOM, skin-NOM SELF-ACC draws-tight and excess-NOM is removed-NOM.]

The cut goes around **the ear** so that the scars won't be obvious, the skin is drawn tight and the excess is removed.

Když chtějí nakoupit maso, jezdí na farmu nedaleko **Toronta** — je tam prý asi o dva dolary levnější.

[When want buy meat-ACC, ride to farm-ACC not-far-from **Toronto-GEN** — is there allegedly about by two dollars-ACC cheaper-NOM.]

When they want to buy meat, they go to a farm not far from **Toronto** — it is supposedly about two dollars cheaper.

Samozřejmě se vše začne točit okolo **dítěte a jeho potřeb**.

[Of-course SELF-ACC everything-NOM will-begin revolve around **child-GEN** and **his needs-GEN**.]

Of course everything will begin to revolve around **the child** and **his needs**.

Obrovský meteorit dopadá poblíž **severního pólu**.

[Enormous meteorite-NOM will-hit near **North Pole-GEN**.]

The enormous meteorite will hit the ground near **the North Pole**.

Pracovala jsem tehdy v obchodě vedle **tetovacího salónu** a dostali jsme darem od šéfa poukázky na tetování.

[Worked AUX then in shop-LOC next-to **tattoo parlor-GEN** and received AUX gift-INST from boss-GEN coupons-ACC for tattooing-ACC.]

At the time I was working in a shop next to **a tattoo parlor** and we got free tattoo coupons from the boss.

⁴⁸ GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE with prepositions.

In addition to these basic meanings, some of these prepositions are used in metaphorical extensions, so that for example *okolo* can be used for approximations (much as *around* is used in this way in English), and *vedle* can mean ‘in addition to, aside from’, as we see in these examples:

Její koníček jí stojí okolo **patnácti set korun** měsíčně.
 [Her hobby-NOM her-ACC costs around **fifteen hundred crowns-GEN** monthly.]
 Her hobby costs her around **fifteen hundred crowns** a month.

Vedle **angličtiny** zní hojně i němčina.
 [Next-to **English-GEN** sounds plentifully also German-NOM.]
 In addition to **English**, German is heard a lot.

The preposition *u* ‘near, by, at’ has both a spatial meaning and an idiomatic one that indicates location at someone’s place. Here are some examples of both uses:

Nejraději usedám u **hořícího krbu** a poslouchám muziku.
 [Most-gladly sit by **burning hearth-GEN** and listen music-ACC.]
 I like best of all to sit by **a burning hearth** and listen to music.

V poslední době se prudce zvýšil počet krádeží v autech zaparkovaných u **lesa**.
 [In latest time-LOC self-ACC sharply increased number-NOM thefts-GEN in cars-LOC parked-LOC by **forest-GEN**.]
 Recently there has been a sharp rise in the number of thefts from cars parked near **the forest**.

Tati, myslíš, že bych u **tebe** moh přespat? (CCz)
 [Daddy-NOM, think, that AUX by **you-GEN** could sleep-over?]
 Daddy, do you think I could sleep over at **your place**?

The meaning of ‘at someone’s place’ can be extended to include much larger entities than a single household. In this sentence *u nás* [by **us-GEN**] literally means something like ‘in **our** country’:

Dnes je u **nás** situace horší než za komunistů.
 [Today is by **us-GEN** situation-NOM worse-NOM than during communists-GEN.]
 Today **our** situation is worse than it was during the communist era.

Attributes and parts of items can be conceived of as located ‘at’ items, motivating uses of *u* like the following:

Príslušníci elity u **přírodních národů** třeba vůbec neumějí číst a psát.

[Members-NOM elite-GEN by **primitive nations-GEN** perhaps entirely not-know-how read and write.]

It's possible that members of the elite of **primitive nations** don't even know how to read or write.

Location 'at' something can imply that people are engaging in an activity normally associated with an item. Here the participants are not just located near some beer, but most likely enjoying heated discussion while drinking in a pub:

Muži dělají rádi politiku u **piva**, ale konkrétní věci nechávají na nás.

[Men-NOM do gladly politics-ACC at beer-GEN, but concrete things-ACC leave for us-ACC.]

Men like to conduct politics over **beer**, but they leave the concrete things to us.

GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE 2 — Lack

As we have already seen above under GENITIVE:: A WHOLE, the genitive case in Czech is associated with quantification.⁴⁹ Taken to its logical extreme, the notion of separation characteristic of GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE would imply absolute separation and inaccessibility, here interpreted as negative quantification, or lack. Note that separation does not necessarily imply non-existence, it just means that we aren't in contact with the genitive item.

The most common way for Czech to express 'lack' with GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE is by using the preposition *bez* 'without'.⁵⁰ Here are some examples of how this preposition is used:

Chut' zelí ještě zlepší hroznové víno bez **jadérek**.

[Flavor-ACC cabbage-GEN further improves grapes-NOM without **seeds-GEN**.]

Seedless grapes will further improve the flavor of the cabbage.

Česká spořitelna by bez **pomoci** státu již neexistovala.

[Czech savings-bank-NOM AUX without **help-GEN** state-GEN already not-existed.]

The Czech Savings Bank would not exist anymore without the state's **help**.

Bodyguard podává svému chráněnci balíček fotografií a on je bez **mrknutí** oka podespisuje.

[Bodyguard-NOM hands own ward-DAT packet-ACC photographs-GEN and he-NOM them-ACC without **batting-GEN** eye-GEN signs.]

The bodyguard hands his ward a packet of photographs and he signs them without **batting** an eye.

This use of GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE to indicate 'lack' is also associated with negated verbs, and therefore sometimes called "the genitive of negation".⁵¹ In modern Czech the genitive of

⁴⁹ GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE can express lack.

⁵⁰ *bez* + GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE 'without'.

⁵¹ GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE with negated verbs.

negation survives primarily in a few fixed phrases like *Nemám slov* [Not-have **words-GEN**] ‘I have **no words** (I am tongue-tied)’, *Nemohl dechu popadnout* [Not-could **breath-GEN** catch] ‘He couldn’t catch **his breath**’, and *Není divu* [Is-not **surprise-GEN**] ‘That’s **no surprise**’. Occasionally GENITIVE:: A REFERENCE can still be found, more often in LCz texts than in CCz conversation. Here are a few examples:

Jenom Vás prosím, abyste opravdu nikde a nikomu **ničeho** neříkal.
 [Just You-ACC ask, so-that really nowhere and no-one-DAT **nothing-GEN** not-said.]
 I’m just asking you to really not say **anything** to anyone anywhere.

Ve Vašem lístku není ani **slova** o tom, věříte-li mi.
 [In your letter-LOC is-not even **word-GEN** about that-LOC, believe-whether me-DAT.]
 There isn’t even **one word** in your letter about whether you believe me.

Není vlastně **důvodů**, abychom příštích dvacet let nežili krásně.
 [Is-not actually **reasons-GEN**, so-that next-GEN twenty-ACC years-GEN not-lived beautifully.]
 There’s actually no **reason** why we shouldn’t live well for the next twenty years.

Epilogue

The word *genitive* is related to *generation* and *genesis*, and all these words are derived from a Latin root meaning ‘give birth’. Indeed giving birth is the means by which living creatures such as ourselves serve as sources for more of our kind. The genitive is used for a variety of maneuvers and manipulations involving removal, withdrawal, and locating an item in reference to another. The genitive case is also very concerned with quantity, be it positive or negative, as well as with the measure of time. Against the backdrop of the genitive we have seen repeatedly that physical space is often used as a metaphor for understanding time and other domains (including the elusive realm of the emotions) — this is a theme that will continue throughout the book, since the dative, accusative, instrumental, and locative all have spatial meanings that are likewise used in metaphorical extensions. Many of the concepts associated with the genitive case are familiar from the conceptual structure of English; even the ideas that strike us as foreign make sense in the overall structure of the genitive case, because even though the genitive is quite complex, all the parts fit together to make a coherent whole. Understanding the whole helps you orient to the individual meanings of the genitive because you have a structure to relate those meanings to. Even if you don’t memorize all the meanings right off, you will now have a “feel” for the genitive, and you’ll be surprised how well your new-found intuitions will serve you.