Title:　　　Genitive of Negation as Inherent Case
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It is widely assumed that, while inherent Case may be associated with θ-roles such as Agent and Experiencer, there can be no inherent Case associated with the Theme θ-role (Woolford 2006). One reason for this is that in the standard theory of argument structure, according to which the Theme argument (along with at least one other argument) is contained in a projection of V, it is unclear how inherent Case could be unambiguously assigned to the Theme θ-role without further unmotivated stipulations. In contrast, in the theory of argument structure proposed in Bowers (2010), according to which all arguments are introduced in projections of light verb heads, there is no reason why a language could not have an inherent Case associated with Theme arguments, under the assumption that inherent Case is quite generally assigned by an argument head to a DP in its specifier (Bowers 2010: 17).

I argue in this paper that the distribution of the widely discussed Genitive Case which is optionally permitted in the scope of negation in Russian (Timberlake 1975, Babby 1980, Pesetsky 1982, Neidle 1988, Bailyn 1995a,b, 1997, among many others) provides crucial evidence in support of the latter theory of inherent Case, since the Genitive of Negation, as is well known, is assigned only to underlying Theme arguments. I assume that DPs are initially merged as Caseless. If a Theme argument is marked with inherent Genitive, then it will be impossible for it to be assigned structural NOM or ACC, resulting either in transitive sentences with a GEN Case-marked thematic object, or in impersonal unaccusative or passive sentences with a GEN Case-marked Theme argument. Furthermore, a Theme argument marked with inherent GEN Case will necessarily fall within the scope of the existential operator along the lines of Diesing (1992), whereas one assigned structural NOM or ACC will necessarily move outside the scope of the existential operator and be interpreted as specific or definite. Finally, if a Theme argument marked with inherent Genitive Case does not happen to fall within the scope of a negative element, then it may be interpreted (depending on other factors) as a Partitive Genitive (Bailyn 2012: 208). Hence the 'Genitive of Negation' is simply inherent Genitive Case optionally assigned by the Theme head.