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NON-VERBAL PREDICATION IN BALTIC. LITHUANIAN *YRÀ*

This paper aims to describe the origin of Baltic **irà* ‘there is/are; is/are’ that appears to be due to the conflation of the demonstrative pronoun **i* (< instr. sg. **h_ii-h_i*) and two postpositions: *-r-* (cf. OIcel. *þa-r* ‘there’) and *-ā*. The latter comes from the abl. sg. of the IE demonstrative pronoun **h₁e/o-*. The presented analysis sheds some light on the etymology of the Lithuanian conjunction *ir* ‘and’ and Slavonic *i* ‘and’ (< **i* < instr. sg. **h₁i-h₁*).

Baltic languages, etymology, historical syntax and morphology

Introduction

In modern Lithuanian, the verb *būti* ‘to be’ is inflected in the present tense in the following way:

1sg. <i>esù</i> ‘I am’	1pl. <i>ėsame</i> ‘we are’
2sg. <i>esi</i> ‘you are’	2pl. <i>ėstate</i> ‘you are’
3. <i>yrà</i> ‘(s)he/it is, they are’	

As can be seen, *yrà* is a suppletive form. The uniqueness of *yrà* lies in the fact that this is the only Lithuanian verb stressed in the third person on the final syllable (as a paragon cf. Lith. *vėda* ‘(s)he leads; they lead’, not **vedà*). The previous form of the third person, i.e. Lith. *ėsti* ‘is/are usually’ (IE **h₁es-ti*), has been driven out of the paradigm and has been preserved only in the secondary, habitual meaning as

a synonym of *būna* 'is/are usually' (see Stang 1947/1970). A similar occurrence has taken place in Latvian as the older form **esti* has been supplanted by *ir* (OLatv. *jirā-g* / dial. *ira*), cf.:

1sg. <i>esmu</i> 'I am'	1pl. <i>esam</i> 'we are'
2sg. <i>esi</i> 'you are'	2pl. <i>esat</i> 'you are'
3. <i>ir</i> '(s)he/it is, they are'	

This paper aims to describe the origin of Baltic **irā* and show how this relates to the diachrony of Baltic postpositions and conjunctions. The etymology by Christian Stang (1963/1970) is also discussed as, although in principle correct, it requires some supplementation, including an explanation of the function and origin of the final morpheme *-ā* (see section 1.1.). Section 1.2. is dedicated to the origin of Baltic *ir* 'and; also' and Slavonic *i* 'and' (**i* < instr. sg. **h₁i-h₁*).

1. Lith. *yrā* 'there is/are; is/are' – state of affairs

Gordon B. Ford (1967), when analyzing the Old Lithuanian *Enchiridion* by Baltramiejus Vilentas (1579), established that *yrā* appears in three functions:

- 73× as a copula, e.g. *kas tikra ir kas netikra jra* (5, 4) 'was recht und unrecht ist'¹
- 18× as an auxiliary verb, e.g. *kaip apie texta jra sakit* (5, 17) 'gleichwie vom Text jetzt gesagt ist'
- 13× as an existential verb in affirmative sentences, e.g. *Ir labai daug jra Plebonu* (1, 17) 'Und es gibt (sind) sehr viele Pastoren'

On the other hand, *ēsti* in Vilentas' *Enchiridion* occurs exclusively as a copula (29×) and auxiliary verb (12×), but never as an existential verb. The difference between *yrā* and *ēsti* is even more apparent in non-affirmative sentences. According to Ford (1967), in such sentences in Vilentas' *Enchiridion*, only *nērā*, the non-affirmative variant of *yrā*, appears as an existential verb (2×). By contrast, *ne esti* is recorded only as a copula and auxiliary verb (3×). *nērā* and *ne esti* behave in the same way in *Punktai Sakimu* by Szyrwid (part 1: 1629, part 2: 1644) (see Stang 1947/1970). Stang hypothesized that the primary function of *yrā* was that of an existential verb like French *il y a*, and its earlier shape must be reconstructed as **irā*. The long *-ā* can be reconstructed based on OLatv. *girrahg* (Mancelius

1 German examples come from Martin Luther's *Enchiridion* (*Concordienbuch*; Ford 1967).

1593–1654) = *jirā-g* (dial. *ira*)² and Lith. dial. *ȳrotės/ȳrot* ‘is’ (LKŽ 4: 140). The acute intonation explains the shortening in word final position **īrā* > *yrà* (known as Leskien’s Law). The postposition *-tės*, (cf. *ȳrotės*) can be found in South-Aukštaitian *dartės* ‘still, more’ (: *dar* ‘still, more’) and OLith. *artės(i)* ‘perhaps’ (: question particle *ar*). Stang compared the internal *-r-* to the IE postposition *-r*, appearing after pronouns, e.g.:

- a. Gothic / Old Icelandic *hvar* ‘where?’ < **kʷo-r*, OHG *war* ‘where?’ (cf. Germ. *war-um* ‘why?’ < *war-umbi*, Lith./Latv. *ku-r* ‘where?’ < **kʷu-r*)
- b. Av. *ava-rə* ‘here’ (cf. OCS *ovъ*, Pol. *ów* ‘that, yonder’)
- c. Germanic place adverbs with the pronoun **to-*: Goth. *þar* ‘there’, Olcel. *þar* ‘there’, OHG *dā(r)* (cf. Germ. *dar-aus*), OE *þær* (Engl. *there*)

In his deliberations, Stang also included Lith. *aurė* ‘behold’ (OLith. *auré*, see DP 318, line 10) and *anrė-kui* ‘over there, behold’, which he linked to the aforementioned Av. *ava-rə* ‘here’, Lith. *anas* ‘that one’, and OCS *onъ* ‘he’. Both *aurė* and *anrė-kui* require, however, a comment. According to some scholars (e.g. Rosinas 1988), the postposition *-rė* might come from imperative **reg(i)* ‘look’ (cf. *regėti* ‘to see’). Latv. *re!* ‘behold’ < *redz(i)* ‘sieh!, schau!’ (ME 3: 501) can be seen as a parallel. Such a development may be compared to French *voilà* from *vois là* ‘look over there’. However, this elucidation has some weak points. Firstly, according to LKŽ (11: 344) the particle *rė* ‘behold’ is only attested in writings by Juozas Tumas-Vaižgantas (1869–1933), who hailed from the Lithuanian-Latvian borderline. *rė* therefore seems to be an obvious Latvian loanword. Secondly, in Lithuanian the postposition *và* ‘behold, lo’ rather than *rė* ‘behold’ (see LKŽ 17: 762; cf. *ana-và* = *ana-vė* ‘over there’) is typically used in this function. Thus, the question of how to explain *aurė* ‘behold’ remains open. I suggest division into *au-r-ė*, where *-ė* is the ending of the loc. sg., (cf. *nam-ė* ‘at home’ [4]), affixed to the protoform **ava-r*. The syncope in **ava-r-ė* > *au-r-ė* finds a brilliant parallel in *antai* ‘there, over there’ < **ana-tai* (see Stang 1963/1970: 209), as well as in *anrė-kui*, for which Stang assumes the older shape **ana-re*. As I shall show further, the suggested structure **ava-r-ė* (demonstrative pronoun + two postpositions) finds its exact counterpart in Baltic **ī-r-ā*.

As regards the initial *y-* = /i:/, in compliance with Stang’s hypothesis, it goes back to the stem of the IE demonstrative pronoun *i-* (cf. Latin *i-d*) and is directly attested in Lith. *ýnas* ‘real, genuine’ and *ypatùs/ýpatus* ‘distinctive, particular;

distinct, separate' (: *pàts* 'self'). I shall return to the origin of *y-* = /i:/ in 1.2. As the presented hypothesis by Stang requires some supplementation, I begin by determining the function and origin of the final **-á*.

1.1. Origin of Baltic postposition **-á*

The starting point of the analysis is the etymology of Lith. adverb *čia* 'here' < **tj-á*, which has been recently proposed by Ostrowski (2014). Place adverbs sometimes include local particles, e.g. Old Greek *ἐνθάδε* 'thither, hither; here, there; now', which consists of the adverb *ἐνθά* 'there' and the postposition *-δε*, denoting motion towards. The same postposition emerges in OCS *sb-de* 'here', which comes from the conflation of the demonstrative pronoun *sb* 'this' and the enclitic particle *-de* (cf. also Common Slavonic **kъ-de* 'where'; see Vasmer, Trubačev 1986 vol. 2). Lithuanian *ti* is directly attested as a focus particle in the following sentences: *Ti pasiuteš vaikas – neklauso*. 'What a savage kid – it does not obey'; *Ti dėl ko [negali siųsti]?* (Daukantas) 'So why [can you not send it]?' (LKŽ 16: 160). As *ti* stems from the monophthongisation of the demonstrative pronoun *tai* 'this',³ one can assume the structure of Lith. *čia* 'here' < **tj-ā* (demonstrative pronoun + postposition) to be similar to OCS *sb-de* 'here'. Based on Old Greek *ἐνθάδε* and OCS *sb-de* 'here' it is also reasonable to expect that the Baltic postposition **-á* could have an allative meaning. This assumption is supported by the new etymology of the Baltic illative.

1.1.1. Lithuanian-Latvian illative: *-nā* or **-á*?

According to the standard etymology, the so-called illative (e.g. Lith. *miškān* 'to the forest' / OLith. *miškana*) goes back to conflation of the acc. sg. (ending *-n*) and the postposition *-nā*. However, this explanation ignores the obvious fact that neither Lithuanian nor Latvian have **-nā* (e.g. Polish *na* 'on, to'), but rather *nuo* 'from' (ablative meaning [sic!]). As a consequence, a form like **miškanu* could be expected rather than the actually recorded OLith. *miškana* 'to the forest'. I do not discuss Old Prussian *na/ no* 'on' here because one cannot consider such a scarcely testified language as Old Prussian, given that Lithuanian and Latvian data unambiguously exclude *nuo* in illative. I assume that the primary structure of the Lithuanian-Latvian illative is as follows: acc. sg. *-n* + allative postposition **-á*, i.e. **miškan + *-á*. Another interesting fact for the history of the illative is the accentuation of OLith.

3 On the diachronic relationship between *ti* and *tai* see Ostrowski (2014, 2015).

kanàg ‘whither’ (e.g. DP 10, line 50), which points to the operation of de Saussure’s law, i.e. acc. sg. **kañ* + *-ā* > **kan*-*lā* > OLith. *kanà(-g)* (cf. acc. sg. *kq* < **kan*).

As for the origin of the Baltic allative postposition **-ā*, it is etymologically identical to the Lithuanian adversative connective *o* ‘and, but, while, whereas’ and Slavonic adversative connective, e.g. Polish, *a* ‘and, but’. An interesting parallel is delivered by Old Greek *δε* that also appears in two functions: 1) as the enclitic particle denoting motion towards, e.g. *οἴκα-δε* ‘homewards’, 2) as the adversative connective *δέ* ‘but’ (Klingenschmitt 2008: 411). The Slavonic connective *a* (and Lithuanian *o*) is traditionally explained (Vasmer, Trubačev 1986 vol. 1) as a successor of the ablative of the demonstrative **h₁e/***h₁o*, (cf. Avestan *āat* ‘so, then, and, but’, see Reichelt 1967: 427). Baltic **ā* ‘from’ is preserved in Lith. *óda* (1) / *odà* (4) ‘skin’ and Latv. *āda* ‘skin’ (see Ostrowski 2014). I think that Baltic words are compounds that consist of *ā-* ‘from’ and **-dā* < **deh₂₋* ‘separate, divide’ (cf. Vedic *áva adāt* ‘hat abgetrennt’ [LIV 86] and Lith. *do-* in *do-snus* ‘generous’ [Smoczyński 2007: 118]). The primary meaning would be ‘this that has been separated from animals’ flesh (animals’ flayed skin)’ (cf. Finnish *vuota* ‘skin flayed from an animal’, a borrowing from Baltic **ādā* [Karulis 1992: 56], which nicely agrees with the etymology presented here). Parallels for the development ‘to cut off’ > ‘skin’ are numerous, e.g. Old Greek *δέρμα* ‘skin, leather’ from *δέρω* ‘to skin, flay’ (Beekes 2010: 318), *ἀσκὸν δεδάρθαι* ‘to have one’s skin flayed off’ (Liddell, Scott 1889: 179), Old Indic *carman-* / Av. *čarəman-* ‘skin’ < *(*s*)*kér-men-* ‘Abschnitt → abgezogene Haut’ from *(*s*)*ker-* ‘cut’ (EWA 1: 537), Engl. *skin* < Middle Engl. *skynn*, ON *skinn* < **skind-* alongside OHG *scinten*, and Germ. *schinden* ‘to flay, skin’ (Klein 1966: 1451–1452; Buck, 1949: 200–201).

The difference in meaning between the presumed allative postposition *-ā* in **tj-ā* > *čią* ‘here’ and the ablative *ā-* in **ādā* is an obstacle, but such a variation is well documented in Lithuanian and other languages (cf. Lith. “ablative” prefix *at-* in *at-skirti* ‘to separate’ alongside “allative” *at-* in *at-važiuoti* ‘to come’, Latvian *iz* ‘from’, Latgalian *iz* ‘on’, Lithuanian *nuo* ‘from’, and Polish [common Slavic] *na* ‘at, on’). The aforementioned Vedic *ā* could also be, depending on the context, interpreted both as an “ablative” (1) and as an “allative” (2) adverb, as in two instances from Bubenik (2006: 108):

- (1) *imām sú asmai hṛdā ā sūtaṣṭām*
 this well be+DAT heart+GEN/ABL near well-fashioned+ACC
māntram vocema [RV ii.35.2]
 hymn+ACC utter+AOR+1PL

‘We would verily utter from our heart this well-fashioned hymn’

- (2) *áta á te rtašpršo ní šeduḥ* [RV iv.50.3]
 thence near you+GEN/DAT rite-cherishers down sit+PERF+3PL
 ‘from thence [coming] they have seated themselves for you’

In (2), “*á* hosts the pronominal clitic *te* (GEN/DAT) ‘you’ and has rather meaning towards (= Allative)” (Bubenik 2006: 108).

1.2. Lithuanian *yrà* ‘there is; is’ vs. *ir* ‘and; also’

The conducted analysis of the allative postposition **-á* makes it possible to clarify the primary character of Baltic **i-r-á*. In the beginning, Baltic **i-r-á* functioned as a local verb; the functional equivalent of Latin *adesse*. In the next step, a stage well visible in the 16th and 17th cent., **i-r-á* became an existential verb. This development is compatible with what we know about the relationships between locative and existential sentences, which we may observe in the languages of the world (see Lyons 1967; Clark 1978; Yong Wang, Jie Xu 2013). This can be seen in Jacob Wackernagel’s remarks (1924: 166) on the Old Greek *ἔνι*:

Anfänglich bedeutete es ‘ist (sind) darin’; von hellenistischer Zeit an ‘ist vorhanden’ mit ähnlicher Ausmerzung des lokalen Bedeutungsmoments wie in frz. *il y a*. Im Neugriechischen ist mit Umstellung der Vokale dafür *ine* eingetreten, und dies dient schlechtweg als Kopula ‘ist’ [...].

To begin with, it meant ‘is/are in’, from Hellenistic times on ‘is there, is at hand, there is’, with loss of the local meaning similar to that seen in Fr. *il y a*. In modern Greek, it has been replaced with */line/*, with metathesis of the vowels, which serves simply as the copula ‘is, are’⁴

A separate comment is required for the long */i:/* of *yrà*. Christian Stang saw in this a stem of the IE demonstrative pronoun. Literature on the predicative usage of demonstratives is well known, e.g. Diessel’s (1997: 10–11, 1999: 33–36) work on “demonstrative identifiers” and Petit’s (2010) work on “presentative particles”. Extensive data on this subject has also been gathered by Ballester (2004). The results of the analysis of the etymology of coordinative conjunctions in Baltic and Slavonic are eye-catching. The long */i:/* in **i-r-á* points to the older instr. sg. **h₁i-h₁* > *i*. From instrumental case-forms (in function of *instrumentalis sociativus*) may stem comitative markers (Stolz 1996). Furthermore, it is a very well-known fact that

4 Transl. by David Langslow 2009 (see Wackernagel 1924).

comitative markers are one of the main sources of connectives of noun phrases (see Mithun 1988; Stassen 2001; Haspelmath 2007). Since in Slavonic (and Baltic) the same conjunctions act as both connectives of noun phrases and sentence connectives, we might assume that the common Slavonic conjunction *i* ‘and’ comes from the former instr. sg. **ī* < instr. sg. **h₁i-h₁*. In Baltic the tautosyllabic **īr* has shortened regularly into *ir* ‘also; and’ (testified in Lithuanian, Latvian and Old Prussian). It is only the conditions in which the comitative meaning started to co-occur with the additive one that remain unclear, but such a coincidence is well documented in Latvian *ar* ‘with; also’ alongside *ar-ī* ‘also’, where *ar-ī* ‘also’ seems to be a case of reinforcing.

Conclusions

The conducted analysis sheds light not only on the origin of Lith. *yrà*, but also provides additional proof of the existence of the local postposition **-á* in Baltic languages (Lithuanian and Latvian). The presented etymology also makes it possible to clarify the etymology of the Slavonic conjunction *i* ‘and’. If we agree with the existence of the IE postposition *-r* in Baltic, then we obtain the possibility to elucidate the etymologically difficult Lithuanian particle *ar* ‘interrog. ptcl.; perhaps; also (!); whether’ (Latv. *ar* ‘also; with; interrog. ptcl.’). Unlike the widespread equation with Old Greek *ἄρα* ‘then, straightway, at once’ / *ἄρα* ‘interrog. ptcl.’, I propose that Lith./Latv. *ar* is a result of the conflation of demonstrative pronoun *a-* < **h₁o-* (cf. OLith. *a-dunt* ‘in order to’; on *adunt* see Petit 2013) and the abovementioned postposition *-r*. In the same way one can explain Old Prussian *er* ‘till, up to’ as *e-r* < **h₁e + -r*. The formal development of OPr. *er* ‘till, up to’ finds a good counterpart in Russ. *e-tot* ‘this’.

Source texts

- DP = *Postilla Catholica. Tái est: Ižguldimas Ewangeliu kiekvienos Nedelos ir szwėtes per wissús metús. Per Kúnigą Mikaloiv Davksą Kanoniką Médnikų... 1599.* – Palionis J. (ed.). 2000. *Mikalojaus Daukšos 1599 metų Postilė ir jos šaltiniai*. Vilnius.
- LKŽ = *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*. 1968–2002. [vols. 1–20]. Vilnius.
- ME = Mühlenbachs K. 1923–1932. *Latviešu valodas vārdnīca / Lettisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*. [Edited and complemented by J. Endzelīns; vols. 1–4]. Riga.

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