

RECENZIJOS

Frederik Kortlandt, **Baltica & Balto-Slavica**, Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi 2009, xiv + 440 p. (*Leiden Studies in Indo-European* 16)

Frederik Kortlandt (K.) needs no presentation in the field of Baltic, Slavic and Indo-European studies. After the publication of his *Kleine Schriften* on Armenian (2003) and Celtic (2007) the time has now come to one of the branches on which he has written most extensively: Baltic (including some papers on Balto-Slavic and other languages).¹ The papers collected in this volume cover a time span of some 35 years. They nevertheless display a remarkable coherence in both content and style. The articles have been retyped and updated for the occasion. For instance, the notation of the laryngeals has been homogenized throughout: *ʔ *ʕ *ʕʷ for traditional *h₁ *h₂ *h₃, *ʔ for the Balto-Slavic glottal stop. All references are presented at the end of the book (pp. 371–398), which also contains an index of words (pp. 399–440). An

index of subjects would also have been useful. The book is distributed in three sections: “Phonology”, “Morphology” and “Prussian”.

The section on Phonology (pp. 1–109) is mostly devoted to accentological matters. As is well-known, K. belongs to the first adherents to the “new look” of Balto-Slavic accentology (post Stang 1957), which he has led in a different direction from that of the Moscow school. As Vermeer (1998, 247) points out, whereas the later has been mostly concerned with place of stress and the reconstruction of synchronic accentual paradigms, the Dutch school (which could also be called “Kortlandt’s school”) has focused on vowel quantity and relative chronology of sound changes. The importance that K. attributes to relative chronology (partly following his teacher Ebeling 1967) is evident from the beginning of his career (e.g. K. 1975) to his most recent studies. The cornerstone of K.’s accentological conception is the idea that the Balto-Slavic acute tone was in fact a glottal stop that developed from the Indo-European laryngeals and the glottalic feature of the “voiced” stops. It was kept as a segmental phoneme well into the individual history of the Baltic and Slavic languages. The broken tone of Latvian and Žemaitian, for instance,

¹ A volume entitled *Studies in Germanic, Indo-European and Indo-Uralic* is scheduled for 2010 (Rodopi). A compilation of his articles on Slavic, a necessary companion to the book under review, is also planned for the near future.

is regarded as a direct continuant of the Balto-Slavic glottal stop. This section also includes important contributions on problems like *Gutturalwechsel* (pp. 27–36), the development of the syllabic resonants (pp. 39–41), or the rules that blocked Winter's law (pp. 36–38, 65–76).

Six out of the twelve articles of the section devoted to Morphology (pp. 111–187) deal with the verb (pp. 151–187). His well-known article on the Balto-Slavic verbal endings (pp. 151–165, first published in 1979) also presented for the first time an alternative reconstruction of the Indo-European verbal system. K.'s approach to the Indo-European verb is neither biased toward Greek and Indo-Iranian (the traditional and still widely held approach) nor toward Hittite (the choice taken by most authors presenting alternative views on the Indo-European verb). As a result K.'s views on the prehistory of the Baltic and Slavic verb diverge quite strongly from most other models. This section also includes important articles on the genitive plural (pp. 111–123), on the Baltic \bar{e} -nouns, which he derives in part from a class of Indo-European eh_1 -stems (pp. 129–135), or on the thematic nominative plural (p. 147–149).

The section devoted to Old Prussian (pp. 189–308) includes three articles published here for the first time (on Old Prussian personal endings, diphthongs and pronouns), as well as an edition of the three Catechisms (pp. 309–370). As K. emphatically points out, his approach to Old Prussian is characterized by an attempt to take the texts seriously as we

have them, assuming mistakes or incorrect orthographic rendering of Prussian phonology only when it is unavoidable. Well-known theories that have emerged from this method are Kortlandt's law, according to which Prussian underwent a progressive accent shift broadly similar to Dybo's law in Slavic (pp. 241–246), or the notion that the three Catechisms reflect different stages in the evolution of Old Prussian in the 16th century (pp. 195–213, 223–240), in spite of the little time elapsed between them. The Prussian verb takes most of the space devoted to Prussian morphology (pp. 269–300, 307f.). Just as K.'s reconstruction of the Balto-Slavic verb avoids being biased toward Vedic or Greek, his treatment of the Prussian verb tends to rely on internal reconstruction and avoids a too strong bias toward East Baltic. As a result it diverges heavily both from the traditional approach as well as from other alternative proposals.

It is impossible to discuss in detail any of K.'s major theories within the limits of a review (I will tackle K.'s views on the reflex of Indo-European long vowels in Balto-Slavic in a forthcoming publication). While one can only admire his courage to address almost prohibitively complex topics and his impressive command of the data and the literature, one must immediately add that K.'s proposals are almost invariably controversial. They have had a tremendous impact on Leiden scholars, but I doubt they can otherwise be qualified as influential and in fact they are often not even properly discussed. I think there are two main reasons why K.'s

views have received less attention than they clearly deserve. First, what K. offers is not a series of solutions to individual problems, but a whole new system that often departs very strongly from more mainstream positions. His proposals thus tend to depend on chains of assumptions that few scholars are prepared to accept in their entirety. Second, K.'s articles are characterized by an extremely concise and lapidary style that can hardly be qualified as reader-friendly. Having them collected in a volume will no doubt contribute to make them more easily understandable, as they abound in cross-references. Even so, one often misses a more detailed treatment.

To give an example, on several occasions K. has expressed the idea that Old Prussian must be regarded as a third branch of Balto-Slavic beside East Baltic and Slavic (p. 5 and *passim*). Features in common with East Baltic would reflect shared retentions, parallel developments, or secondary interaction. This view informs much of K.'s treatment, but to my knowledge has never received a monographic treatment. If one takes a look at any list of features defining Baltic unity (e.g. Stang 1966, 2–9; Petit 2010, 6–11), the following picture emerges. We have a large number of lexical isoglosses, which by themselves are of limited probative value. Common phonological developments are almost altogether absent, but there are a number of striking morphological isoglosses: \bar{e} -stem feminine nouns and adjectives, some specific nominal suffixes and, above all, the overall organization of the verbal

system, including such features as non-distinction of 3rd person singular/plural/dual, persistent thematic vowel $-a-$, \bar{e} - and \bar{a} -preterit, and a few others. In order to know how K. deals with these facts one has to search for observations scattered through several publications (e.g. pp. 129–135 on \bar{e} -stem nouns, 186f., 283–285 on the preterit, 162–175 on the 3rd sg./pl./du., 160 on the thematic vowel $-a-$). In order to account for the absence of number distinction in the 3rd person, for instance, K. starts from an Indo-European thematic paradigm with 3 sg. $*-e$, 3 pl. $*-o$ (p. 162). The process of merging would have started among $\bar{i}e/o$ -presents (pp. 160, 175), where 3 sg. $*-je$ and 3 pl. $*-jo$ merged in Baltic $*-ja$ along the lines proposed by Schmalstieg (1958). The gradual elimination of the distinction between 3rd singular and plural would have had by-side effects like the origin of the Baltic \bar{a} - and *ina*-presents (resegmented from 3 sg. $*stastāti$, 3 pl. $*stastinti < PIE *stisteŋti/*stestŋti$). Since this implies that the West and East Baltic development rests on an archaism of Indo-European date, it follows that the use of the 3rd sg. as 3rd pl./du. loses probative force as an argument for Baltic unity. The remarkable reconstruction of a thematic 3rd pl. $*-o$ depends on two further assumptions. First, K. reconstructs a set of thematic endings entirely different from those of athematic presents (them. 1 sg. $*-oh_1$, 2 sg. $*-eh_1i$, 3 sg. $*-e$, 1 pl. $*-omom$, 2 pl. $*-eth_1e$, 3 pl. $*-o$ vs. athem. $*-mi$, $*-si$, $*-ti$, $*-mes$, $*-th_1e$, $*-(e)nti$). Both sets of endings were functionally differentiated in Indo-European

(cf. K. 1983). A different 3rd pl. ending would thus not be very surprising. Second, K. does not accept the traditional view that a 3rd plural *nt*-ending was lost in Baltic because “[its] disappearance would be totally unmotivated” (p. 161). K. further denies Endzelin’s view that a relic of a 3rd plural *nt*-ending is found in constructions like *nėra kas pjauną* (Endzelin 1913/14, 125; I miss a reference to Cowgill 1970). K.’s views on the thematic conjugation can not be discussed at length here. They have for understandable reasons not met with general acceptance. As far as Baltic internal evidence is concerned, there is a huge argumentation jump between the lack of a satisfactory explanation for the loss of the 3rd plural in Baltic (irrespective of what one thinks about the construction *nėra kas pjauną* or the origin of the act. ptcp. nom. pl. *vedą*) and the reconstruction of a thematic 3rd pl. **-o* (apart from Baltic, the only piece of evidence he adduces is TB 3 sg. *āsām*, 3 pl. *ākem*, allegedly from 3 sg. **h₂eĝ-e*, 3 pl. **h₂eĝ-o* + enclitic *-m* in spite of TA 3 pl. *ākeñc* < **h₂eĝonti*). Since K.’s reconstruction of the Indo-European thematic endings is problematic (see Cowgill 2006 for a defense of the traditional view) and his reconstruction of a 3rd pl. **-o* rests on dubious methodology, one must conclude that the non-distinction of number in the 3rd person remains a major argument in favor of Baltic unity.

K.’s well-known article on the genitive plural (pp. 111–123, first published in 1978) begins with the following statement: “(...) Explaining an analogical

change amounts to indicating a model, a motivation, and a stage of development for its effectuation. If one of these cannot be indicated, we must look for a phonetic explanation” (p. 111). There is nothing to object to this reasoning. The problem, of course, is that there is a high degree of subjectivity in deciding what is an acceptable analogical account and what must necessarily reflect regular sound change. In this article K. reconstructs the genitive plural ending as **-om* and proposes an early Balto-Slavic sound law **-om* > **-um* (p. 116). In this way K. accounts directly for the genitive plural ending Sl. *-v*, Lith. *-ũ*, OPr. pronominal *-on*, but at the cost of explaining through analogy Lith. them. acc. sg. *-q* (after nom. sg. *-as* on the model of **-is* : **-in*, **-us* : **-un*) and OPr. them. acc. sg. *-an*, nom.-acc. sg. n. *-an*, nominal gen. pl. *-an* (with *a*-vocalism taken from other case endings). I find the analogy relatively unproblematic for Lithuanian, but not so for Prussian (especially not for the genitive plural). One of the arguments K. puts forward in defense of the Balto-Slavic character of **-om* > **-um* is that it must be anterior to the loss of final **t/d* because otherwise the 3rd pl. ending of the Slavic thematic aorist should be *†-v* (as in 1st sg. *-v* < **-um* < **-om*), not *-q* (< **-on* < **-ont*). In turn, the loss of final **t/d* must be anterior to Winter’s law (cf. neuter pronoun Sl. *to*, not *†ta* < **tod*). The reasoning is impeccable, but let us assume for a moment that **-oN* > **-uN* was posterior to the loss of final **t/d* (a chronology compatible with the traditional view that this

is an exclusively Slavic sound change). The 3rd pl. ending of the thematic aorist would indeed be expected to be †-v, but I suppose a proportional analogy *-εtv : *-ε = *-ϕtv : X, X = *-ϕ (with *-ϕ replacing *lautgesetzlich* *-v) would have been quite trivial at any stage. Similarly, K. argues that Lith. *akmuõ* must reflect the regular development of *-õn (thus rendering impossible the traditional account of the genitive plural *-õm/n > *-uon > *-un > Lith. -ũ) because Sl. *kamy* cannot be derived from *-õ (> Sl. -a). The alternative view that Balto-Slavic inherited a nominative singular without -n in amphikinetic n-stems (cf. Ved. *rājā* “king” beside *ātmā* “soul”, *pitā* “father”, *svāsā* “daughter”) and that Bl.-Sl. **akmõ* yielded Sl. *kamy* directly is not mentioned in this article (K. only criticizes, correctly in my opinion, the theory that starts from *sandhi* variants). The different treatment in the Slavic nom.-acc. du. -a could be explained through an earlier intonational contrast between n-stem nom. sg. *-õ and nom.-acc. du. *-ó (cf. Lith. *akmuõ* vs. *dù vilkù*), whereas the thematic gen. sg. -a (< *-ã(d), cf. Lith. *vilko*) could be explained by assuming that Sl. *-õ > -ũ was anterior to the merger of *-õ and *-ã in Slavic. I am not certain that this must necessarily be the correct solution, but it illustrates a characteristic of K.’s writings. One often gets the impression that the ultimate judgment on whether a given form is *lautgesetzlich* or analogical depends on what K. needs it to be, and alternative explanations are too quickly dismissed.

These critical notes should not be understood as a lack of appreciation for

K.’s work. His account of the difference between nominal and pronominal genitive plural in Old Prussian, for instance, is definitively eye-catching and has not been properly met with in the scholarly literature (as K. properly observes, p. 49). K. has been one of the major figures in the field during the last four decades, and his articles are worth reading carefully once and again.

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Daniel Petit, **Untersuchungen zu den baltischen Sprachen**, Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2010, ix + 324 p. (*Brill's Studies in Indo-European Languages and Linguistics* 4)

As D. Petit (P.) points out (3) the Baltic languages are often “nur ein toter Winkel in der Ausbildung der Indogermanisten”. This book, based on a series of lectures at the Indo-European Summer School in Berlin, 2006, is a most welcome attempt to bring Baltic historical linguistics to the attention of the general Indo-European reader. It consists of five autonomous chapters broadly divided into two parts: a presentation of a given topic followed by a discussion of a particular issue.

Chapter 1 offers an overview of Baltic dialectology: traits separating Baltic from the rest of Indo-European (pp. 6–11), differences between West Baltic and East Baltic (pp. 12–21), Old Prussian dialects (pp. 21–25), differences between Lithua-

nian and Latvian (pp. 25–35), Lithuanian dialectology (pp. 35–44), Latvian dialectology (pp. 44–48), including a list of ancient Lithuanian and Latvian texts (a couple of maps would also have been useful). Every section presents a similar structure: a short presentation of the basic facts is followed by a commented list of phonological, morphological and, specially, lexical isoglosses. P. also discusses areal and substrate approaches to the Baltic dialects and even to Baltic itself, which is seen as a “Zwischenzone” within Indo-European (pp. 48–51).

Chapter 2 presents a survey of the accentological and intonational system of the Baltic languages: Latvian intonations (pp. 55–60), Lithuanian intonations (pp. 60–64), correlation between Lithuanian accentual paradigms and Latvian intonations (pp. 64–71), Žemaitian intonations (pp. 71–75), Old Prussian (pp. 75–100). P. devotes considerable space to determine what the macron expressed in the