ON -ki AND OTHER MATTERS

K. Shields has proposed (Baltistica 22 (1), 1986, 48—55) to trace the origin and development of the Lithuanian imperative -k(i). He wishes to have it original *-k with an imperative (?) -i (52); but surely the particle is *-ki, with loss of -i by final apocope, but not internally.

I have no quarrel with the possibility of resegmentation with zero (48—9); such a diachronic development is banal. I do however differ with the claim (49) that the 2nd person was marked with zero, and that it thereby shares a categorial ancestry with the 3rd. Surely, the imperative is different in structure — paradigmatic range, oppositions of person, and syntactic options (witness the Old Irish prototypic form and lack of “deponent” endings, and the Vedic sentence order) — from other finite forms. Thus, while in these other paradigms the third, or non-, person was unmarked, in the imperative it was the second; indeed, in the imperative the other persons are handled quite apart.

A fair part of Shields’s discussion (49—50) is occupied with the hic-et-nunc *-i. I do not agree with Safarewicz that this element was a “strengthening”; it was a straight locative → temporal in origin. But properly the topic of *-i is not germane, I think, to the explanation of -ki.

I agree with Shields (50—1) that *ki marked ‘ich-deixis’, but this surely did not compete with *-i, which rather marked the ‘speech scene’ (defined originally by *e g and *tu). I disagree with his idea (taken from Allen and others before; see footnote 5) that the palatal quality of *k, etc. was allophonic (51); see my summary statement in The New Sound of Indo-European: Essays in Phonological Reconstruction, ed. Theo Vennemann (Berlin: Mouton De Gruyter, 1989), p. 209 f. The Baltic and Slavic doublets have a different explanation, largely inter-dialect borrowing from “centum” branches or Albanian (or ‘its early kin). In any event, the admission by Shields and Allen (51) of “unmotivated conversions” essentially vitiates their argument.

Therefore -ki cannot be derived from *ki, which, moreover, from the forms cited (50) is seen to have regularly contained /i/.
Turning now to -\textit{ki}, we see in Shields's argument of "reduced deictic force" (51) and "non-present verbal formation" (52) a case of \textit{lucus a non lucendo}. In this fashion -\textit{ki} ends up (52—3) embracing futurity.\footnote{Incidentally, in δέδωξα \textit{x} belongs to the root.} The final sentence (53) leaves me quite bewildered.

I cannot therefore abandon my position stated in \textit{Baltistica} 12 (1), 1976, 29—30, as superseded by \textit{Baltistica} 14, 1978, 110—1.\footnote{The latter revision was too late to be inserted in the proof of the former, and hence appeared separately.}