Frederik KORTLANDT
Leiden University

BALTO-SLAVIC ACUTE

Abstract. There is no evidence for an acute as the phonetic reflex of a lengthened grade vowel in Balto-Slavic.
Keywords: Balto-Slavic; Indo-European; historical phonology; accentology; acute; laryngeal; lengthened grade.

Since the First International Conference on Historical Linguistics (Edinburgh 1973) I have advocated the thesis that the Balto-Slavic acute is glottalization and has nothing to do with tonal movements (e.g. Kortlandt 1975; 1985a)[1]. Thirty years later my thesis was taken over by Jay Jasanoff (cf. 2017, 71), who also adopted my view that the "history of the BSl. languages after the period of unity is in large part the history of how acuteness, originally an independent variable, came gradually to be absorbed into the accent system" (2017, 233; cf. Kortlandt 1977; 2011, 157–176). Unfortunately, Jasanoff evidently has not understood the implications of the new theory, perhaps because he is not sufficiently familiar with the data (cf. Kortlandt 2009, 81–86; 2010, 337–339). The main problem of Balto-Slavic accentuation is not stress or tone but quantity (cf. Vermeer 1992; Kortlandt 2015b).

Jasanoff's analysis of the Balto-Slavic acute is entirely based on his outdated reconstruction of the Proto-Germanic vowel system, which allegedly included a distinction between long (bimoric) and hyperlong (trimoric) vowels that were allegedly rephonemicized as acute versus non-acute long vowels in Balto-Slavic by the insertion of *stød* in the former (2017, 78). Unfortunately, Germanic and Balto-Slavic were never contiguous Indo-European dialects

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[1] My dissertation is not Kortlandt 1975 (thus Jasanoff 2017, 81[16]), which originated as a critique of Ebeling 1967, but Kortlandt 1972, because I started out as a mathematical linguist.

(cf. Kortlandt 2016; 2018c) and spontaneous glottalization is unattested anywhere in the world. Glottalization develops either (directly or indirectly) from a consonantal feature or from the apocope of a following syllable. Both developments are found in Danish (cf. Kortlandt 2010, 165–174, 293–318). Only the former can explain the Balto-Slavic acute, which occurs in any syllable.

Jasanoff's bimoric and trimoric long vowels largely represent Indo-European VH- and VHV-sequences, which are reflected as acute and non-acute long vowels in Balto-Slavic. He distinguishes between three types of "inherent long vowels" (2017, 75), viz. apophonic long vowels in Narten ablaut and *vṛddhi* derivation, long vowels allegedly from Szemerényi's law, e.g. nom. sg. *-tēr < **-ters*, and long vowels allegedly from inner-IE contraction, e.g. nom. pl. *-ōs < *-o-es*. The latter two types require special *ad hoc* rules because the circumflex tone of Lith. *duktė̃* 'daughter' < *-ēr, akmuõ* 'stone' < *-ōn, inst. pl. *-aĩs < *-ōis, dat. sg. *-uĩ < *-ōi*, also gen. sg. *-o < *-ōd* (Latin *-ōd*, not **-ād*, Lith. *-o* from unstressed *-ō, cf. Kortlandt 1977, 323), is contrary to the acute expected by Jasanoff (2017, 89–92). These forms actually disprove Jasanoff's theory. Conversely, the acc. pl. ending of the *aH*-stems, e.g. Lith. *gerą́sias* 'the good', directly continues *-aHns*, not *-ās < *-āms* (thus Jasanoff 2017, 77[7]). The gen. pl. ending Lith. *-ų̃*, OPr. *-on*, Slavic *-ъ* represents *-om*, Gothic *ā*-stems *-o < *-ōan < *-ā-om, i*-stems *-e < *-ēan < *-ei-om*, with introduction of the full grade suffix of the nom. pl. form, as in the Slavic *i*- and *u*-stems (cf. Kortlandt 1978; 2014a).

The pre-laryngealist idea that any Proto-Indo-European long vowel became acute in Balto-Slavic is a typical example of philosophical speculation contradicted by the comparative evidence. Other examples of philosophical speculation are Jasanoff's spontaneous glottalization, his trimoraic long vowels (cf. Boutkan 1995; Yoshida 2012, 240–242), Eichner's law (cf. Kortlandt 2010, 365–368), Osthoff's law (cf. Kortlandt 2014b, 220), and Szemerényi's law, which is an instance of circular reasoning: the long vowel is allegedly explained by the supposed loss of the consonant that is postulated in order to account for the long vowel. It is hard to see how Szemerényi's law can account for such instances as Greek ὕδωρ 'water', ἠχώ < *-ōi 'echo', Vedic loc. sg. *agnā́ < *-ēi* 'fire', *sūnáu* 'son'. In my view, the Proto-Indo-European long vowels *ē* and *ō* originated from phonetic lengthening in monosyllables and before final resonants (cf. Wackernagel 1896, 66–68; Kortlandt 2015a).

According to J a s a n o f f (2017, 81f.), "the main impetus for the glottalic theory in the form adopted by Kortlandt was the much-quoted, almost off-the-cuff 1958 observation by Roman Jakobson that no language adds to the pair /t/ ~ /d/ a voiced aspirate /dh/ without having its voiceless counterpart /th/". This is nonsense. The traditional reconstruction was challenged for various reasons by P e d e r s e n (1951), M a r t i n e t (1953), A n d r e e v (1957), S w a d e s h (1971) and others (cf. K o r t l a n d t 2010, 12–15), but their work is evidently unknown to Jasanoff. H a u d r i c o u r t reports (1975, 267) that as early as 1948 he arrived at the conclusion that the traditional voiced stops of the Indo-European proto-language were in fact glottalic and that the original pronunciation has been preserved in East Armenian. His argumentation was based on the types of phonetic development attested in the Far East. The negative attitude of Bloch and Kuryłowicz toward his view apparently kept him from publication. If Haudricourt, Pedersen, Martinet, Andreev and Swadesh had met at a conference in the late 1940-s, the glottalic theory might have become popular a generation earlier than it actually did.

It is remarkable that the comparative evidence has largely been left out of consideration in the discussion of the glottalic theory. I have argued that there is direct evidence from Indo-Iranian, Armenian, Baltic and Germanic and indirect evidence from Indo-Iranian, Greek, Latin and Slavic (cf. K o r t l a n d t 1985b; 2017c). In recent years new evidence from Indo-Iranian, Greek, Latin, Germanic, Slavic and Anatolian has been added (e.g. L u b o t s k y 2007; 2013; P r o n k - T i e t h o f f 2013; G a r n i e r 2014; K l o e k h o r s t 2014; 2015; 2016). Jasanoff completely disregards the comparative evidence except in the case of Lachmann's law, where he rejects the evidence on the basis of a mistaken analysis of Ukrainian dialectal material with imperfect voicing assimilation, e.g. in *veztý* 'to carry'.[2]

J a s a n o f f adduces the Austronesian language Kelabit as a parallel for the traditional reconstruction of a Proto-Indo-European system with *t*, *d*, *d^h* without *t^h* (2017, 83). This is again based on a mistaken analysis of the data. The Kelabit "voiced aspirates" b^h, d^h, g^h are voiced stops that are followed by homorganic voiceless stops that may be followed by little or

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[2] Cf. J a s a n o f f 2004, referring to A n d e r s e n 1969. The fricative in this word is voiceless lenis, sometimes written [zˢ] in the Ukrainian tradition (cf. B r o c h 1900, 31; Ž o v t o b r j u x 1965, 76; A n d e r s e n 1969, 169). There is no lengthening of the preceding vowel.

no aspiration: [bp$^{(h)}$], [dt$^{(h)}$], [gk$^{(h)}$] (cf. B l u s t 2006, 313). They occur only intervocalically after the stress and alternate with *b*, *d*, *g* in other positions, e.g. *tə́bʰəŋ* 'felling of trees', *təbáŋən* 'fell it!', *kátəd* 'back', *kətádʰən* 'be left behind'. Other consonants are lengthened after a stressed *shwa*, e.g. [kát:əd], [təbáŋ:ən]. After hearing word tokens illustrating the "voiced aspirates", Peter Ladefoged was sure that they must be consonant clusters of voiced and voiceless segments (B l u s t 2006, 318[4]). Historically related segments in other North Sarawak languages represent earlier voiced geminates. Nearly all other sources than Blust write *bp*, *dt*, *gk* for the Kelabit "voiced aspirates". Thus, Blust's superscript *h* denotes devoicing halfway the double consonant whereas in the Indo-European tradition superscript *h* denotes the breathy voice of a single consonant, which is practically the opposite (cf. also S t u a r t - S m i t h 2004, 18).

East Baltic metatony resulted from retractions of the stress from a prevocalic **ì* and from word-final **-à* (cf. D e r k s e n 1996, 374–377). Jasanoff adopts L a r s s o n's hypothesis (2004) that a short vowel was lengthened when it received the stress from a following prevocalic **ì*, attributes all instances of *métatonie douce* to this retraction followed by analogy, and completely disregards *métatonie rude* (2017, 84–86). In fact, the lengthening of short vowels is analogical (cf. already D e r k s e n 1996, 52), as is especially clear from its absence in *ragānius*, *vandẽnis*, *auksìnis*, *vasãris*, *beuodẽgis*, *bemotẽris*, *drapãnis*, and the alleged spread of *métatonie douce* "as a derivational marker to related nominal and verbal categories" is completely unmotivated. Jasanoff attributes the circumflex lengthened grade in *žolẽ* (4) 'grass' and *gèlà* (4) 'pain' to analogy because he would expect an acute. In combination with the possibility of attributing any unexpected acute to an imagined "Narten system" this puts an end to the falsifiability of his theory (cf. also P e t i t 2010, 113–139).

In fact, the concept of a Narten system is a mirage (cf. d e Va a n 2004; K o r t l a n d t 2012). J a s a n o f f assumes (2017, 86) Lith. *várna* 'crow' and *vìlkė* 'she-wolf' to be *vṛddhi* derivatives of *vařnas* 'raven' and *vil̃kas* 'wolf' though the former pair can hardly be separated from Latin *corvus*, *cornīx* and Greek κόραξ, κορώνη and the latter pair is identical with Sanskrit *vṛ́kas*, *vṛkī́s*. While the latter words have a zero grade root that is incompatible with *vṛddhi*, the former pair must rather be compared with Russian *sérna* 'roe deer' and Latvian *mẹl̃ns* 'black' beside Lith. *šiřvas* 'grey', *mul̃vas* 'reddish'

(cf. K o r t l a n d t 1985a, 121). Actual *vṛddhi* formations in Balto-Slavic do not have an acute root, e.g. Serbo-Croatian *jáje* 'egg', *mêso* 'meat', Lith. *mėsà* (4), Žemaitian *mę̃sà* (4), Latvian *mìesa*, Greek ᾠόν, Vedic *māṃsám*. On the other hand, Lith. *vìlkė* 'she-wolf', *zùikė* 'she-hare', *šérnė* 'wild sow' beside masc. *vil̃kas*, *zuĩkis*, *šer̃nas* have regular *métatonie rude* as a result of the accent retraction from a prevocalic **i < *iH*, analogically Latvian *siẽva* 'wife' (cf. already T r a u t m a n n 1923, 301). The long rising vowel in the Latvian iteratives *nę̃sât*, *tę̃kât*, *lę̃kât*, *mę̃tât* is strongly reminiscent of the long rising vowel in the Serbo-Croatian iteratives *nósati*, *vódati*, *vózati*, *hódati* and is clearly the result of a recent development (cf. S c h u y t 1990, 375f.; D e r k s e n 1996, 335–343). It cannot be compared with the lengthened grade of Latin *cēlāre* 'to hide', Greek πηδάω 'leap' (thus J a s a n o f f 2017, 87) because the latter represent a different formation (cf. S c h u y t 1990, 381–386; P e t i t 2010, 136–138). Latvian *ruõta* 'ornament' is a western variant of *rùota* and cannot be used (cf. D e r k s e n 1996, 263–265). Latvian *nuõma*, Lith. *núoma* 'lease' cannot be separated from Russian *naëm* 'hire' and represents **no-ʔm-* 'take on'.

The acc. pl. ending of the *o*-stems **-oHns* took its laryngeal from the *aH-*, *iH-* and *uH-*stems because the laryngeal had been lost before the final nasal in the acc. sg. endings *-ām < *-aHm*, *-īm < *-iHm*, *-ūm < *-uHm* in the Central Indo-European languages (i.e. Classic Indo-European without Italo-Celtic, cf. K o r t l a n d t 2017b).[3] Since I have discussed monosyllabic lengthening in detail elsewhere (2014b; 2015a; 2017a; 2017b), I shall not return to the matter here, and the same holds for the pronouns (K o r t l a n d t 2009, 89–92; 2013). Contrary to J a s a n o f f's assertions (2017, 97–99), the Serbo-Croatian forms *dònijeh* 'I brought', *ùmrijeh* 'I died', *zàklēh* 'I swore' show the expected reflex of the lengthened grade vowel and never had final stress because the sigmatic aorist belonged to accent paradigm (b), which did not shift the stress onto a final jer.[4] Again contrary to J a s a n o f f's expectations (2017, 101f.), the regular circumflex reflex of the lengthened grade is also found in the Lith.

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[3] J a s a n o f f questions the relevance of Latvian *âbuõls* 'apple' and Serbo-Croatian *žȅrāv* 'crane' (2017, 90), for no good reason. He cites K o r t l a n d t 1994, which should not be consulted because it is full of printer's errors. The correct text is K o r t l a n d t 1989, English version in K o r t l a n d t 2011 (157–176, see also 277–309).

[4] On the sigmatic future and aorist see further K o r t l a n d t 2002; 2014b; 2015a; 2017a; 2018a; 2018b.

preterits *bė̃rė* 'strewed', *lė̃kė* 'flew', *ė̃mė* 'took', which represent original root aorists (cf. K o r t l a n d t 2007, 154f.). The Baltic *ē*-preterit must be compared with the Slavic imperfect, e.g. Lith. *vẽdė* 'led', OCS *vedě-aše* (cf. K o r t l a n d t 2009, 185–187 on the distribution of *ā*- and *ē*-preterits in Baltic). I conclude that there is no evidence for an acute as the phonetic reflex of a lengthened grade vowel in Balto-Slavic.

BALTŲ IR SLAVŲ AKŪTAS

Santrauka

Duomenų, kuriais būtų galima pagrįsti nuomonę, kad akūtas yra ide. pailgintojo laipsnio balsio refleksas baltų ir slavų kalbose, nėra.

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Frederik KORTLANDT
Cobetstraat 24
NL-2313 KC Leiden
The Netherlands
[*f.kortlandt@hum.leidenuniv.nl*]