The development of the subsystem of consonants in the Latgalian tribal language

ANTONS BREDIĀKSF

This article is devoted to the development of the subsystem of consonants in the Latgalian tribal language. The evolution of the Old Latgalian subsystem of consonants is described with reference to the period following upon the differentiation of the East-Baltic language unity and extending to the split of this subsystem into separate Latgalian variants.

The paper deals with the Common Latgalian subsystem of consonants between the disintegration of the East-Baltic linguistic unity and the split of the Common Latgalian subsystem into separate variants.

The process of disintegration of the East-Baltic linguistic unity and some phonetic changes within the subsystem of consonants (first, the depalatalization of \( ^*\dot{\varepsilon} (\text{<IE} *{k}, *\dot{k\varepsilon}) > \varepsilon \), \( ^*\dot{\varepsilon} (\text{<IE} *g, *\dot{g\varepsilon}) > \varepsilon \); secondly, the palatalization of \( ^*k > ^*k' \) and \( ^*g > ^*g' \) before front vowels and the consonant \( j \); thirdly, the primary affricatization of \( ^*k' \), \( ^*k'j > c \), \( ^*g' \), \( ^*g'j > g' \); fourthly, the fusion of combinations of front consonants and the palatal \( j \) into one consonant \( ^*lj > l, ^*n\dot{j} > y, ^*\dot{r}j > r, ^*s\dot{j} > s, ^*\dot{z}j > z, ^*dj > \dot{z}, ^*cj > \dot{c}, ^*gj > \dot{g} \) resulted in the following phonological subsystem of consonants in the Latgalian tribal language:

\*This article is based on the author's paper read at the Sixth International Congress of Balticists in 1991, in Vilnius. See Brediaks (1991:101–102).
The development of the subsystem of consonants...

In this subsystem the phoneme /n/, besides its fundamental variant, front [n], also had a positional variant, back [ŋ], before the back consonants [k, g]. The phoneme /l/, besides its fundamental variant, front [l], also had a positional variant, back [ʎ], between the vowels [u, ʊ, o, ɔ, y] and hard consonants. The phonemes /ɛ, ʒ, s, ə/, besides their fundamental variants, the hard consonants [c, ʒ, ʂ, ʐ], also had positional variants, the palatalized consonants [ɛ', ʒ', ʂ', ʐ'], before front vowels. The phonemes /n', ɬ', r', k', g'/, besides their fundamental variants, the palatalized consonants [n', ɬ', r', k', g'], also had positional variants, the palatal consonants [ŋ, l', ɬ, ʁ], before non-front vowels.

For some time after the second affricatization of the consonants [k', ɬ, g', ʁ] > [ɛ', ʒ'] (Brejda 1977:247-248; 1981:87-91; Brejda 1977:32) the Old Latgalian tribal language had only the velar phonemes /k, g/ without their correlatives, palatalized /k', g'/, and their positional variants, palatal [ŋ, ʁ] (Brejda 1991:102). At that stage of development the Old Latgalian phonological subsystem of consonants could be represented in the following way:

```
p  p'  b  b'  t  t'  d  d'  k  k'  g  g'
c  c'  ʒ  ʒ'  ɕ  ɕ'
m  m'  n  n'  s  s'  z  z'
```

In this subsystem the phoneme /n/, besides its fundamental variant, front [n], also had a positional variant, back [ŋ], before the back consonants [k, g]. The phoneme /l/, besides its fundamental variant, front [l], also had a positional variant, back [ʎ], between the vowels [u, ʊ, o, ɔ, y] and hard consonants. The phonemes /ɛ, ʒ, s, ə/, besides their fundamental variants, the hard consonants [c, ʒ, ʂ, ʐ], also had positional variants, the palatalized consonants [ɛ', ʒ', ʂ', ʐ'], before front vowels. The phonemes /n', ɬ', r', k', g'/, besides their fundamental variants, the palatalized consonants [n', ɬ', r'], also had positional variants, the palatal consonants [ŋ, l', ɬ], before non-front vowels.

After the second stage of reduction of the final syllables, the transformation of long vowels and diphthongs into short vowels, and, particularly,
after the transformation of the diphthong [ai] into the short vowel [i] in the Latgalian tribal language, the palatalized consonants [k', g'] reappeared before the vowel [i] in the dative singular of ā-stem nouns, e.g. *[rūk'j] ´to the/a hand´ < *rūkā]; in the second person singular of the Indicative Mood and the second person singular of the Imperative Mood of ā-stem verbs, e.g. [sok'i] ´say´ < *[sokā]; in the second person singular of the Past Indicative of ā-stem verbs, e.g. [lyk'i] ´(you put)´ < *[lykā]; in adverbs, e.g. [ilg'i] ´long´ < *[ilgā], and, probably, in the nominative plural of o-stem nouns, e.g. [vyl'k] ´wolves´ < *vyl'kā] (with reference to the latter see also Stang 1966:184; Rudzīte 1972:219-223). After the above-mentioned phonetic transformations the inventory of the subsystem of consonants in the Latgalian tribal language remained unchanged, because the reappearing palatalized consonants [k', g'] became positional variants of the phonemes /k, g/.

After the devoicing of voiced obstruents in absolute word-final position the Common Latgalian subsystem of consonants contained the following phonemes:

\[
\begin{array}{cccccccc}
p & p' & b & t & t' & d & k & g \\
c & c' & š & ʒ & ć & ʒ & \vline \\
m & m' & n & n' & s & s' & z & \hline
\end{array}
\]

But this stage of development of the Common Latgalian subsystem of consonants cannot be ascribed to the Latgalian tribal language, because the devoicing of voiced obstruents in absolute word-final position in Latgalian occurred under the influence of the neighbouring Slavonic languages not earlier than the integration of the Latgalian, Selonian, Semigalian and Curonian tribal languages into the Latvian national language (Breidaks 1972:52).

After this Common Latgalian stage of the phonological subsystem of consonants and as a result of inner language development as well as of the influence of neighbouring Slavonic languages and other Latvian subdialects, the Common Latgalian subsystem of consonants later developed several va-

### References

Breidaks [Breidaks], A. (1972), „Nekotore voprosy istorii konsanantizma i razvitie fonologicheskoj sistema согласных в говорах Латгалы“, Baltistica, priedas 1, 33-53.


Breidaks [Breidaks], A. V. (1977), „O влиянии прибалтийско-финских языков на латгальский и северский идиомы“, Baltistica, priedas 2, 26-35.


Breidaks [Breidaks], A. V. (1982), „Nekotore osobenosti foneticheskho podsystemy согласных в глубинных говорах Латгалы“, Балто-славянские исследования, 81-88.


Stang, Chr. S. (1966), Vergleichende Grammatik der baltischen Sprachen, Oslo etc.: Universitetsforlaget.