

OBSERVATIONS ON THE USE OF THE
DEFINITE ADJECTIVE IN BRETKŪNAS'
TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

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§ 1. The definite adjective in Lithuanian has been investigated quite closely. Important and well-documented surveys have studied its origin¹, morphological evolution², functions and use in the modern language³. On the contrary, observations on the characteristics of the use of the definite adjective in Old Lithuanian texts are fragmentary. What scholars usually affirm is that its distribution is less consistent and less regular than the one codified by the present norm⁴. The facsimile reproduction of the manuscript of Bretkūnas' translation of the Bible, whose publication has recently begun⁵, gives the opportunity to shed light on some phenomena related to the use of the definite adjective in this and, at least in part, in other texts of the first period of Lithuanian literature. Furthermore, the data obtained by this research, which takes

¹See old and new hypotheses in Valeckienė 1986, 1990; Koch 1992.

²Zinkevičius 1957, 1978.

³Valeckienė 1957; Baldauf 1967.

⁴See e.g. Valeckienė 1957, pp. 183-184, 188, 191-192.

⁵*Psalteras Ing Lietvishka Liefzvwj pergulditas Jano Bretkuno, Labguwos plebono Metuŕa Chriŕtaus 1580 / Psalter in die litauische Sprache übersetzt von Johann Bretke, Pastor zu Labiau im Jahre Christi 1580*, Faksimile der Handschrift, Band 6, Labiau i. Pr. 1580, Hrsg. von Dieter Range und Friedrich Scholz, Paderborn 1991; *Navias Testamentas Ing Lietuwifchka Liefzuwj perrafchitas per Jana Bretkuna Labguwos plebona 1580 / Das Neue Testament in die litauische Sprache übersetzt von Johann Bretke, Pastor zu Labiau 1580*, Faksimile der Handschrift, Band 7 und 8, Labiau i. Pr. 1580, Hrsg. von Dieter Range und Friedrich Scholz, Paderborn 1991.

into account the use of the definite adjective in the translation of the New Testament (1579-1580), may be linked to more general observations about cross-linguistic regularities which may be noticed in the occurrence of the overt markers of definiteness.

§ 2. First of all, it is evident that, in Bretkūnas' text, the choice between the simple form and the definite one also depends on grammatical case. In fact, we notice that the occurrence of the definite form is preferred in less marked cases (in particular in the nominative), whereas the simple form is mostly used in more marked cases⁶. This is true both of attributive and substantivised adjectives (like the definite article in other languages, the enclitic pronoun in Lithuanian is used to assign definiteness as well as nominality). In order to exemplify the phenomenon, we have chosen the two most frequent expressions which present it: *a)* the translation of Germ. *die Hohenpriester* and Lat. *principes sacerdotum* 'the chief priests' (oscillating between an attributive and a genitival noun phrase); *b)* the translation of Germ. *die Heiligen* and Lat. *sancti* 'the saints'⁷. In the Lithuanian translation of these elements, in the nominative case the adjective is *always* in the definite form, while in the accusative and genitive there is a more or less clear oscillation between the definite form and the simple one. In the other cases, the definite form *never* appears. This is the complete list of the occurrences:

a) 'the chief priests'

NOM / 40 occurrences, all in the definite form: *Wiriaufieghi kunigai* (Mt. 21,15 21,23 21,45 27,12 27,62 Mc. 11,18 11,27 14,1 14,53 15,1 15,3 Io. 7,32

⁶On the degree of markedness of cases see Greenberg 1966, pp. 37-38; Blake 1994, pp. 36-47.

⁷On the sources of Bretkūnas' translation of the New Testament see Range 1992, pp. 76-140.

11,57 12,10 18,35 19,6 19,21 Act. 4,23 22,5 25,2 25,15), *kiti Wiriaufieghi kunigai* (Act. 5,24), *Wiriaufieghi kunigu* (Mt. 26,3 27,6 27,20 Mc. 15,10 15,11 Io. 19,15), *Wiriaufieghi kunigu* (Mt. 26,59 Io. 11,47), *Wiriaufiej kunigu* (Mt. 27,41), *wifsi Wiriaufieghi kunigu* (Mt. 27,1), *Wiriaufieghi plebonu* [in the margin kaplonu] (Mc. 15,31), *wiriaufieghi kaplanu* (Lc. 19,47), *wirefnej kaplanu* (Lc. 20,1), *wirefnieghi kaplanu* (Lc. 20,19 22,2), *wirefnej kaplanu* (Lc. 22,66 23,10 24,20).

ACC / 2 occurrences, all in the simple form: *wifsus Wiriaufius kunigus* (Mt. 2,4), *Wiriaufius kunigus* (Act. 22,30).

GEN / 9 occurrences, 6 in the simple form and 3 in the definite form: *Wiriaufiu kunigu* (Io. 18,3), *nug Wiriaufiu kunigu* (Mt. 26,47), *nug Wiriaufiu kunigu* (Act. 9,14 26,10 26,12), *ifch Wiriaufiu kunigu* (Act. 4,6). – *nug.. Wiriaufiuiu kunigu* (Mt. 16,21 Mc. 8,31), *nug Wiriaufiuiu kunigu* (Mc. 14,43).

DAT / 5 occurrences, all in the simple form: *Wiriaufiems kunigams* (Mt. 20,18), *Wiriaufiemus kunigams* (Mc. 10,33), *Wiriaufiams kunigams* (Mt. 28,11), *Wiriaufiems kunigu* (Mt. 27,3), *aniemus Wiriaufiemus kunigams* (Hebr. 7,27).

INSTR / 3 occurrences, all in the simple form: *fu wirefneis kaplanu* (Lc. 22,4), *wirefneis kaplanu* (Lc. 23,13), *Wiriaufeis kunigais* (Hebr. 7,28).

ALL / 7 occurrences, all in the simple form: *Wiriaufiump kunigump* (Mt. 26,14 Io. 7,45 Act. 9,21 23,14), *Wiriaufiump kunigup* (Mc. 14,10), *wirefniumpi kaplanu* (Lc. 22,52), *wirefniump kaplanu* (Lc. 23,4).

b) 'the saints'

NOM / 3 occurrences, all in the definite form: *Schwentiej* (1 Cor. 6,2 Col. 3,12), *wifsi fchwentiej* (Phil. 4,22).

VOC / 1 occurrence in the definite form: *Schwentiej* (Apoc. 18,20).

ACC / 6 occurrences, 1 in the simple form and 5 in the definite form: *wifsus fchwentus* (Rom. 16,15). – *Schwentufius* (Act. 9,41), *fchwentofius* (Rom. 8,27), *ufzu wifsus fchwntufius* (Eph. 6,18), *Wifsus fchwentufius* (Phil. 4,21), *wifsu Schwentofius* (Hebr. 13,24).

GEN / 23 occurrences, 1 in the simple form and 22 in the definite form: *tarp wifsu Schwentu* (Eph. 3,8). – *Schwentuiu* (Mt. 27,52), *Schwentuiu* (1 Cor. 6,1 14,33 2 Cor. 9,12 Philm. 7 Apoc. 14,12 15,3 16,6 19,8), *Schwentuiu* (Judae 15 Apoc. 20,9), *fchwentuiu* (Lc. 1,70 Rom. 12,13 Col. 1,12 Apoc. 18,24), *fchwentuiu* (Act. 26,10 1 Cor. 16,15 1 Tim. 5,10 Apoc. 8,4 13,10), *wifsu Schwentuiu* (Apoc. 8,3), *wifsu ia Schwentuiu* (1 Thess. 3,13).

DAT / 17 occurrences, all in the simple form: *Schwentiemus* (Act. 9,13 Rom. 1,7 15,31 16,2 1 Cor. 16,1 2 Cor. 8,4 9,1 Col. 1,2 Iudae 3 Hebr. 6,10 Apoc. 11,18), *fchwentiemus* (Rom. 15,25 15,26 Eph. 5,3 Col. 1,26), *Schwentiems* (1 Cor. 1,2), *wifsiems fchwentiemus* (Phil. 1,1).

INSTR / 4 occurrences, all in the simple form: *fu wifsaus Schwentais* (2 Cor. 1,1 Eph. 3,18), *fu Schwentais* (Eph. 2,19 Apoc. 13,7).

LOC / 1 occurrence in the simple form: *fchwentofu* (Eph. 1,18).

ALL / 4 occurrences, all in the simple form: *ſchwentumpi* (Act. 9,32), *wifſump Schwentump* (Eph. 1,15 Col. 1,4 Philm. 5).

In the choice between definite and simple form, prosody may intervene. For instance, the ending of gen. pl. *-ŭ* easily accepts pronoun *ju*, whereas the phonetically more complex ending of dat. pl., still often in its dissyllabic form *-iemus*, seems to hinder the union of the clitic (oversights in my analysis excepted, in the New Testament the adjectives in dat. pl. are never in the definite form)⁸.

In any case, instances of the relation between the presence or the absence of the overt marker of definiteness and the degree of markedness of the various cases are regularly found in other languages. An example is provided by Slovenian, where the opposition between the definite and the simple form is seen only in the nominative and accusative singular of the masculine gender⁹. Similar indications are given by Rumanian, where the definite article cannot co-occur with prepositions, and especially by Bulgarian. For the masculine nouns in the singular, it distinguishes between a long form (*grad-ăt*) and a short form (*grad-a*) of the definite article; since the latter form is the result of the re-interpretation of the old genitive-accusative ending¹⁰, it serves as proof of the existence of a linguistic stage where the definiteness marker was expressed only in the direct case¹¹. Thus, we notice the existence of a range of accessibility. On the one end of it, we find the nominative case, which is mostly favoured in the acceptance of the definiteness markers, while, on the other, there are the most marked oblique

⁸Maybe again for prosodic reasons, we always have the nom. sing. *wiriausis kunigas* (Act. 23,5 etc.) or *wiriausis kunigu* (Act. 24,1 etc.) with the adjective in the simple form.

⁹Lencek 1982, p. 189.

¹⁰Mayer 1988, p. 66.

¹¹This linguistic stage seems to be documented in the *Slavjanobolgarskaja gramatika* by Bozveli (1835); see Mayer 1988, p. 66.

cases, where, on the contrary, the definiteness marker may be more or less obligatorily absent. Thus, we may say that the phenomenon found in Bretkūnas, which shows the use of the definite adjective not yet normalised, reflects this more general tendency.

§ 3. The alternation between definite forms and simple forms is also found in sequences of ordinals. Often, only 'first' is in the definite form, while the following ordinals are in the simple one. In Bretkūnas' translation of the New Testament, we find five suchlike sequences:

Mc. 12,20 ſeptini Brolei. Pirmafis... 12,21 antras... 12,22 Treczas.

Lc. 19,13 deſchimti tarnu 19,16 pirmafis... 19,18 antras... 19,20 treczias [correction of *kitas*].

1 Cor. 15,47 pirmafis ſzmogus... antras Szmogus.

Apoc. 4,6 kieturi Szwieris... 4,7 pirmafis Szwieris... antra Szwieris... treczia... ketwirta Szwieris.

Apoc. 21,19 pirmafis gruntas... antras... treczias... ketwirtas... 21,20 Penktas... ſcheſchtas... ſekmas... aſchmas... dewintas... deſchimtas... liekas... antras liekas.

In other three sequences, the remaining ordinals, or at least most of them, are in the definite form:

Lc. 20,29 ſeptini bralei... pirmafis... 20,30 antraſis... [correction of ſekanſis] 20,31 tretifis.

Apoc. 8,6 ſeptini anie Angelai... 8,7 pirmafis Angelas... 8,8 antras Angelas... 8,10 trecziaſis Angelas... 8,12 ketwirtaſis Angelas... 9,1 penktaſis Angelas... 9,13 ſcheſchtaſis Angelas... 11,15 ſekmas Angelas.

Apoc. 16,1 ſeptiniump Angelump... 16,2 pirmafis... 16,3 antras Angelas... 16,4 treczas Angelas... 16,8 ketwirtaſis Angelas... 16,10 penktaſis Angelas... 16,12 ſcheſchtas Angelas... 16,17 ſekmas Angelas.

While the last two passages simply show the use of the definite adjective which has not been normalised yet, the sequences where only the ordinal 'first' is in the definite form require a more specific explanation. The phenomenon is not fortuitous, since it is not isolated, as is shown in Daukša's *Postilla* (1599); see e.g. DP 2₁₆₋₂₀ *Ketwe^ariopā tad'*

ateiíma... Pirmá'is... Antras... Tręczes... kęwirtas, DP 130₃₈-131₄ *pękis wáif'tus... Pirmá'is... Antras... Tręczes... Ketwírtas... Pęktas*. One possible explanation is that 'first', marking the beginning of a sequence, anticipates at the same time also the following elements, so that the repetition of the marker of nominality and definiteness is unnecessary. This amounts to saying that we have a first marked form followed by one or more unmarked forms.

This is similar to those cases included by P. Kiparsky in the phenomenon called 'conjunction reduction', that is the optional omission of shared items in co-ordinate structures¹². Such a reduction, that in the Indo-European languages is normally applied to words and higher constituents¹³, may at times involve grammatical markers, too. In particular Kiparsky studies cases, commonly documented in the old Indo-European languages, where the conjunction reduction is applied to the inflectional categories of tense and mood: for example, in the historical present used after a true past tense (e.g. in Greek: Th. 7,29 ἄμα δὲ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ πόλει προσέκειτο [...] καὶ αἰρεῖ 'at daybreak he attacked the town and takes it'); in Vedic injunctive, which may appear conjoined with each of the four moods as well as with verbs in the present, imperfect and aorist¹⁴. Rarer in the Indo-European languages are the examples where it is the category of case to be subject to conjunction reduction, with the nominative serving as the unmarked case. Among these, Kiparsky quotes the famous passages Ζεῦ πάτερ (voc.) [...] Ἡέλιος τε (nom.) 'father Zeus and Helios' (Il. 3,276 f.), *vāyav* (voc.) *indraś ca* (nom.) 'Vāyu and Indra' (RV 4,47,2)¹⁵. In all these cases, we have a marked form followed by an unmarked one. This

¹²Kiparsky 1968.

¹³E.g. the sentence *John likes swimming and Bill likes sailing* can be reduced to *John likes swimming and Bill sailing* (Kiparsky 1968, p. 34).

¹⁴On Vedic injunctive, though, see Lazzeroni 1977.

¹⁵Kiparsky 1968, p. 54.

kind of phenomena are common in non-Indo-European languages as well. A similar case, though in the reverse order, is found in Turkish, where in sequences of two or more co-ordinate words, the case marker is present only in the last one, whereas the preceding word (or words) is in the nominative (or *absolute form*). An example of it is *sıhhat ve afiyet-te* 'in health and well-being'¹⁶.

As we have seen, the conjunction reduction is applied also to grammatical marks and it functions at different levels, from phrases up to the highest syntactical structures. In the case of the above-mentioned sequences of ordinals, the phenomenon may be favoured by the fact that in Lithuanian the complete grammaticalisation of the definite adjective is relatively recent¹⁷, and the low degree of fusion between the two elements still allows the identification of the enclitic pronoun quite easily.

The facts observed in Lithuanian recall a passage of the second Prussian Catechism: *Staej deff'impts Pallapfaey. Pirmois*¹⁸... *Anters... Tirtis*... etc. (5₁ ff.), where we find the definite form *pirmois* 'first'¹⁹ followed by the other ordinals in the simple form. The data of the *Enchiridion* are partially different. Though here too only the first ordinal is in the definite form, each member of the sequence appears with the definite article²⁰: *Stai Delf'imton Pallaip'ai... Stas Pirmois Pallaips... Stas Antars Pallaips... Stas Tirts Pallaips*... etc. (27₁ ff.); *Stas Pirmonnis Dell'ijks... Stas Antars Dellicks... Stas Tirts Dell'iks* (39₁₆ ff.). Similar passages are found in Old Latvian texts, for example in the Catechism of 1585 (pp. 8 ff.): *te Diwpaddeff'mitte gable... Taes pirmais... Tas oters*...

¹⁶Lewis 1967, p. 35.

¹⁷Cfr. Zinkevičius 1978.

¹⁸The first Catechism (5₂) shows the simple form *pirmas*.

¹⁹Endzelīns 1943, p. 71.

²⁰We believe that, in Prussian, the article was actually used; its presence was obviously due to contact with German.

Tas treffches... etc.; in the Catechism of 1586 (pp. 1 f.): *Te delmette dewe bowfsle...* *Tas pirmais boufslis...* *Tas oteers...* *Tas treffches...* etc. The presence of the article in sequences which are otherwise the same as those found in Lithuanian, needs a more complex explanation. Since the article actually duplicates the function performed by the enclitic pronoun within the definite adjective, we must affirm that in Prussian and in Latvian the definite form of the ordinal 'first' had become the normal one before the introduction of the use of the article (which is anyway absent in Modern Latvian)²¹. Such generalisation of the definite form of the ordinal 'first' may have been caused by the frequency of sequences with conjunction reduction such as those documented for Lithuanian.

§ 4. A distribution of the definiteness markers comparable to that seen in the preceding paragraph may be found also between pairs of co-ordinate adjectives. The phenomenon is well-known in Old Church Slavonic: two co-ordinate adjectives, either attributive or substantivised, appear one in the definite form, the other, optionally, in the simple form: *věrnyj rabŭ i mōdrŭ* 'the faithful and wise servant' (*Mt.* 24,45 Ostr.; *mōdry* Codd. Mar. Zogr. Ass.); *zŭlyjē že i dobry* 'the wicked and the good' (*Mt.* 22,10 Cod. Mar.; *dobryjē* Ass. Ostr.)²². Co-ordinate adjectives behave similarly, though maybe less frequently, in Old Lithuanian. Some instances were collected elsewhere²³. In Bretkūnas' translation of the New Testament, two cases are certain:

²¹A following stage is documented by Modern Latvian, where all the ordinals normally are in the definite form (except for 'second', which is also used in its simple form *otrs*).

²²See Miklosich 1868-74, pp. 148-149.

²³A. Parenti, *Osservazioni sulla storia dell'aggettivo determinato lituano*, in print in *Studi linguistici per i 50 anni del Circolo Linguistico Fiorentino*, Firenze 1995, with data drawn from Mažvydas' and Vilentas' Catechisms, from Daukša's *Postilla* and from Sirvydas' *Punktay sakimu*.

Apoc. 3,14 *wiernas ir tikrafis Liudinikas* 'the faithful and true witness';
Rom. 14,9 *idant ant numirufu ir giwuiuiū*²⁴ *Wielchpatautū* 'to rule over the dead and the living' (for this second example compare *Mž* 22₃ *ateis fuditu giwu ir numirufuiu*, SP I 4₃₁ *Sudziu giwuiū ir mirufiu*).

The following passages show how this rule is optional in Lithuanian: BB *Mt.* 25,21 25,23 *Gierafis ir wiernafis Tarne* (voc.) 'good and faithful servant', *Act.* 10,42 *Sudzia giwuiū ir numirufiuiū* 'the Judge of the living and the dead', 1 *Petr.* 4,5 *fuditi Giwofius ir Numirufiofius* 'to judge the living and the dead'.

As for the simultaneous occurrence of the definite and the simple form in co-ordination, a fact that may be included among the cases of conjunction reduction, it is possible to recover its historical motivation, linked to the original role of *Gelenkpartikel* of the pronominal element. Such a role was acknowledged by H. Wissemann: as for the Greek article located between a noun and an attribute (e.g. in the phrase τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον 'the Holy Spirit'), in the definite form the enclitic pronoun does not have an anaphoric function, but it provides the adjective with syntactic and semantic independence. In phrases with a definite adjective 'das Attribut und sein Bezugswort werden nicht als Ganzheit, sondern als zwei gleichgewichtige Teil-Ganze präsentiert'²⁵. Thus, it is an element of an appositional kind. In this kind of structure, as Greek shows once again (see e.g. *Hdt.* 4,20,1 *Σκύθαι οἱ ἄριστοί τε καὶ πλεῖστοι* 'the bravest and most numerous of the Scythians'), with two co-ordinate adjectives there is no need to repeat the pronoun, at least until it will be recognisable as such.

²⁴In *giwuiuiū* the pronoun is repeated twice (see Bezenberger 1877, p. 157, where furthermore the occurrence of the definite form together with the simple one has been focused). Other instances of the double presence of the pronoun are quoted by Fraenkel 1947, p. 18 and Zinkevičius 1957, p. 8.

²⁵Wissemann 1957, p. 68.

The fact that the non-repetition of the pronoun, seen also in Lithuanian, is a general feature of the structures which have been examined above, invalidates Vaillant's opinion, according to which the examples of Old Church Slavonic would be a calque of the Greek pattern²⁶.

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²⁶Vaillant 1942, p. 11.

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Observations on the use of the definite adjective in Bretkūnas' translation of the New Testament. Alessandro Parenti (Firenze)

This article deals with some peculiarities in the use of the definite adjective in Bretkūnas' New Testament. The analysis of some recurrent expressions shows that the occurrence of the definite form is favoured in less marked cases, whereas it is not in more marked cases. Furthermore, cases are discussed where the definite form applies only to the first member of a series of ordinals or to the second of a couple of co-ordinate adjectives. Such cases may be considered as instances of "conjunction reduction".