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### From the Editors

Baltic Linguistics, one of the youngest offshoots of comparative Indo-European Grammar, has reached its age of emancipation in the 20th century. Thanks to such great comparatists as Schleicher, Brugmann, Leskien, de Saussure and Kuryłowicz, who demonstrated by their own research how important the Baltic material is for Comparative Grammar, a host of linguists has emerged who have devoted themselves specifically to research on the Baltic languages. At the European universities, besides chairs of Slavonic Philology, chairs in the field of Balto-Slavonic and even exclusively Baltic scholarship have also been founded.

The extraordinary events of the past few years, in the course of which we have witnessed the reemergence of Lithuania and Latvia as independent states, have also brought about a revival of native languages as tokens of national identity. This historical process seems to hold the promise of a renaissance of linguistic investigations in the Baltic countries, similar to that which manifested itself after the First World War. On the other hand, this process opens new possibilities for broad international scientific cooperation no longer hampered by political considerations. It also constitutes a challenge for those who have chosen the Baltic languages as the domain of their scientific activities.

The last volume of the *Studi baltici*, founded in 1931 by Giacomo Devoto, was published in 1969. After that time, there was no journal outside the Baltic countries serving as an international means of communication between the Baltologists of Lithuania and Latvia and their colleagues all over the world. It is the intention of *Linguistica Baltica (LgB)* to take over this role, and the idea of its foundation has been agreed with the participants of the 6th International Congress of Baltologists held in 1991 in Vilnius.

Like any other scientific journal, *LgB* is meant first of all as a forum for discussion and polemics serving, in the broadest sense, the cause of progress in the discipline it represents.

Although problems of diachrony have traditionally been prominent in Baltic linguistics, *LgB* will be open to contributions of a synchronic character as well. Along with the diminishing interest in historical and comparative studies after the Second World War, there has also been a decrease in the number of Indo-European and Slavonic scholars using the Baltic languages as a source of data. One of our aims will therefore be to reestablish the links traditionally connecting Baltic Studies both with Slavonic Studies and with Comparative Indo-European Linguistics, now cultivated mainly in the German speaking countries and in the USA.

Whether this aim will be achieved will depend, as always, on the Authors and their willingness to cooperate with the Editors.

For ourselves we reserve the role of coordinators and performers of editorial tasks. Here we wish to thank those scholars who have agreed to be members of the Advisory Board supporting our endeavours. Our thanks are also due to those who, within a short space of time, sent us contributions for the inaugural volume of *LgB*. The wide range of subjects covered by it augurs well for the future.

Starting with the first volume, *LgB* is publishing a *Current Bibliography of Baltic Linguistics*, compiled with the aid of colleagues from various countries. In order to ensure that the bibliographical data are complete, the Authors are requested to send offprints of their publications to the coordinator of the Bibliography, Dr. A. Holvoet.

Our journal is published with modest financial support. As expenses should be kept as low as possible, all editorial work is done by the staff members of the Department of Baltic Philology of the University of Warsaw rather than by the publisher. In order to help them in performing this task, the contributors are kindly requested to submit carefully prepared manuscripts conforming to the instructions contained in the Notes to Contributors. Authors using a computer are encouraged to send us a disk copy of their paper in addition to the manuscript (an IBM compatible editor should be used).

## Centum borrowings in Balto-Slavic

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### Abstract

Stray forms in Balto-Slavic with unexpected reflexes of Indo-European palatals cannot be explained away by ad hoc Lautgesetze. Occasionally the selfsame language shows two forms in seeming conflict as reflexes of a single ancestor; such is seen in Old Prussian *balgnan* and *balsinis*. One of these must then be a loan. Instead of lowering our standards in the search for regularity, we must subdivide our data to discern more restricted regularities, and recognize the social intrusion of borrowing as itself a normal and highly constrained regularity.

The fact that Balto-Slavic must be seen as having had early contacts with centum-type dialects has long been known. Attempts to explain away such forms as Lith. *klausyti* or *kárvė* = Russ. *koróva*, SCr. *krava* as special indigenous sound changes are nothing other than retreats in our two centuries of progress in the formulation of regular linguistic change and the isolation of the effects of social interaction.

In this sense I have attributed (Hamp 1972:179) the etymon of Slavic *\*bergō* 'slope' and Lith. *birginti* 'to be stingy' together with related forms in the field of 'hill, barrow, bury, hide, save, conserve' to borrowing from a centum source where *\*bhergh-* was the normal outcome of IE *\*bherǵh-* 'increase, grow'.

Within a single Baltic language we find an excellent parallel to this state of affairs. The two divergent developments within a single language clearly call for two separate explanations, two independent derivations. Fortunately,