On the development of nomina collectiva in the Baltic languages

SAULIUS AMBRAZAS
(Vilnius)

Abstract

The following chronological strata of nomina collectiva in the Baltic languages have been established in the present paper: 1. the old nomina collectiva with the derivative ending *-a-, 2. derivatives with the adjective affixes *-no-, *-to-, *(i)jo-, 3. concretized nomina qualitatis.

Nomina collectiva are one of the oldest Indo-European derivative categories. In the Baltic languages the old derivatives of this category have almost disappeared, many of them having acquired the meaning of nomina loci. After the morphological category of number had been formed, nomina collectiva became to a certain extent redundant in the language. In the Baltic languages they are formed by means of derivative affixes which have originated from the derivative ending *-a- and the adjective affixes *-no-, *-to-, *(i)jo-. Some nomina qualitatis have acquired a collective meaning.

The old nomina collectiva with *-a-

In the Old Prussian language there exist quite a number of neuter gender nouns of a collective origin with the derivative ending *-a- which is thought to be the oldest means forming nomina collectiva in the Indo-European languages, e.g. *uusto (Munt) E 89 (cf. OCS *uza 'mouth' and Skt. *uṣṭhaḥ 'lip'), *slayo (Slete) E 307 (cf. Lith. slėjos 'sledge') : slajān (Sletekufte) E 309,
lective origin because in some dialects the names of families or kinsfolk are denoted by the forms with \(-\text{-}ij\)-a of the proper names having (\(i\)) stem and a oxytonic accent (e.g. \(dvij\), \(trej\) D\(\text{d}$$a$$i\), G\(d$$elai\) ‘two, three families of D\(\text{d}$$os, G\(d$$e$$lia\)’). Besides, common nouns with \(-\text{-}ij\)-a, e.g. \(l$$i$$pole; \(l$$ipe$$pole; \(l$$ip$$o$$pole; \(l$$ime$$tree, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

M. L. Palamaitis (1989:126-128) related such forms as Lithuania \(\text{-}ij\)-pole; \(l$$ime$$grove; \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘the tailor’s family: \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailor, \(s$$iu$$ve$$jai ‘tailors,’ in some dialects are found. On this ground Stundzia concludes that the collective plural originated from the old *nomina collective* with \(*\text{-}a\text{/}-o\) once used in the Lithuanian language. Earlier J. Otrebski (1956:28) advanced a similar hypothesis.

*-ā-ā-

The derivative ending *-ā when joined to the *ey/ou/ua stem gave rise to the suffix -(i)ava (Skardžiūnas 1943:381, Mažiulis 1967:39–41) which is used mostly to form hydronyms. In the Lithuanian language, however, some collective place names were formed by it too. Its later variants are -(i)ava and -auja, cf. Lith. broliavas and broliuva 'brothers and sisters', velniuvė and velniuvė 'devils; a devil; devilish job', šunavė and šunavė 'a pack of dogs or a crowd of angry people'.

**DERIVATIVES WITH OTHER ADJECTIVE SUFFIXES**

*-ino-

The adjective suffix *-ino- was used to form nomina collectiva in Baltic, Slavic and partly in Latin (Bruggmann 1906:278, 649; Lohmann 1932:15). The Baltic and Slavic languages are especially close in this respect as the suffix -inas in Lithuanian and the suffix -ina in Slavic (mostly South Slavic) are used to form forest names, cf. Lith. beržynas and Slav. *beržina 'birch grove' (Slawski 1974:121, 123). These suffixes differ only in their form.

There are only a few Lithuanian nomina collectiva with the suffix -yna directly corresponding to the Slavic suffix -ina. A well-known and commonly used derivative sėminąs 'family; household; domestics' corresponds to the Old Prussian derivative of the masculine gender sēmins (Geisinde) III 84 (cf. also OCS sēmins 'belonging to the family; a slave'). There are a few more of them found in the Lithuanian writings of East Prussia, e.g. molyną 'clayey place; loam-pit', pušyną 'pine forest'. Such derivatives are likely to have existed in the Old Prussian language too, cf. the place name Spandyno (Gerulaitis 1922:253).

The ė-stem variant of this suffix is more characteristic of the Lithuanian language. It has been used in the dialect of the West High Lithuanian to form nomina loci from nouns since olden times. For instance, in the XVIIth century dictionary Lexicon Lithuanicum of East Prussia there...
are more derivatives with įgnė (7) than of those with the suffix -ynas (5): įaugalinė ‘oak-wood’ 27, įberginė ‘birch grove’ 18, įdrebulynė ‘asp grove’ 33, įelkynė ‘alder grove’ 30, įkadagynė ‘juniper bushes’ 102a, įklyginė ‘swamp’ 85a, įskrybinė ‘hoarbeam place’ 27. In the East High Lithuanian dictionary by K. Sirvydas we find only one derivative with the suffix įgnė kelminė ‘stubby place’ Sirv. Dict. 51.

In the Low Lithuanian dialect they are also rare. Only five derivatives of this type are found in the dictionary by V. Vitkauskas Šiaurės ryto dūmininkų šnekty žodynas (Vilnius, 1976) alongside with 47 corresponding derivatives with the suffixes -ynas. They are: mausryginė ‘a place overgrown with duckweed’, varpužginė ‘a place overgrown with couch-grass’, žegrinė ‘soil abounding in gravel’, motinynė ‘mother’s household’, kpyginė ‘a place abounding in moulds’. However, the derivative pūtažginė ‘bedding; bed-clothes’ which has retained a collective meaning is widely used in the Low Lithuanian dialect. Besides, the names of foods, especially those of soups, are formed by means of the suffix įgnė in this dialect (e.g.: bulvynė ‘potato-soup’, būrokynė, lapynė ‘beet-root soup’, kiausynė ‘scrambled eggs’, see Lietuvių kalbos atlasis 1977, Map No 29, p. 83–84; 1993, Map No 125, p. 138–139).

So, it is likely that novima collective with the suffix įgnė in Low Lithuanian and High Lithuanian dialects acquired a concrete meaning in different ways. In the High Lithuanian (especially West) dialect they acquired the meaning of novima loci. This could have happened due to the influence of novima loci derived from verbs with the homonymous suffix įgnė (originating, probably, from -inė due to the influence of the verbs with the suffix -ytį, e.g. bradynė ‘mud’, sėrynė ‘a place where animals are fed’ and others, see Ambrasas, forthcoming, §§84, 387). In the Low Lithuanian dialect novima collective with the suffix įgnė acquired the meaning of food.

-ino-/oino-

In the formation of Lettish novima collective the suffix *-i-no/-oi-no- is instead used instead of the related suffix *-i-no-, cf. Lith. eglina and Lett. egiena ‘fire-grove’, Lith. kelminas and Lett. celmivas ‘stubby place’ and also Lett. skaidiena ‘wood scrap yard’ (Endzelins 1951:323–324).

There are only a few of such Lithuanian derivatives, exclusively of a feminine gender, e.g.: ražėnė ‘stubble-field’, merginė ‘girls’ (Tauragnai), molinė ‘clayey place’ (Kernavė). In most cases the suffix -iena is used to form novima loci, indicating a place where one or another kind of crop is grown, e.g. aquolina ‘poppy field’, batolina ‘potato field’, kopštiena ‘cabbage field’ etc. (Skardžius 1943:288; Užutis 1965:400). They can also be of a collective origin.

In the Lettish language novima collective are formed also by means of a variant of the mentioned suffix -ains, -aina, e.g. alksnaina ‘alder grove’, eglaine, dial. aglains ‘fire-grove’ (Endzelins 1951:327). This derivative type is very rare in Lithuanian. The shade of a collective meaning can be discerned only in the following derivatives: dirsažne ‘bread with brome grass’ Juš. Svoth. rėda 39 (cf. the adjective dirsažnis, -ē of brome grass’), ratažne ‘a shed for keeping carts and other things’ (Telsiai).

Collective nouns with the adjectival suffix *-eino-/-eino- existed in the Old Prussian language too. On the one hand, this is proven by the existence of the derivative sejewnis, i.e. sweinis or sveinis (Sewstal) E 229 (cf. Lat. sās, Gk. ἕς and Lett. suvēna ‘sucking pig’, OCS svins ‘for pigs’, see Trautmann 1911:425–426; Endzelins 1943:46, 246; Mašulis 1981:279) and on the other, it is corroborated by the presence of place names, cf. Akėnye, Akėnye and Lith. akas, Lett. ēks, Goth. alks ‘a shrine’, OPru. Zanseymen : sansy (Gans) E 719 (Gerullis 1922:232).

-ino-

In the Lithuanian language there are some collective nouns formed with the adjectival suffix -inis, -in, e.g. kapišnis ‘cemetery’, kopštiniai (Lškava), kopštinė ‘a cabbage patch’ (Notė), kupštinė ‘a place abounding in moulds’ (Rudamina), pūtažginė ‘bedding’ (Marijampolė). However, derivatives with the suffix -inė usually indicate a dish or a room, cf. the derivatives arėnė ‘a sheepfold’, druskinė ‘salt-cellar’ a. o. Nomina loci with similar suffix -(s)inė in the related East or West Slavic languages could have influenced their origin, e. g. Pol. oważarnia ‘a sheepfold’, Russ. konjušaja ‘a stable’ (cf. Bošković 1984:250–266; Slawski 1974:138–139).

-ījo-

In some East and West High Lithuanian dialects nomina collective with the suffix įgūdė denoting the concentration of some things or plants in one place are used, e. g. alksnūlis ‘alder grove’, ūgūlis ‘oak-wood’, kelūlis ‘a stubby place’ and others.
On the basis of such place names as Apsīte, Kelmīte, Zvirgždite and the like, it is supposed that *nomina collectiva* with the suffix -ite existed in the Lettish language as well (Endzēlins 1951:388).

Further such derivatives can be linked with the Germanic derivatives with the suffix -ide (cf. *-iðe*) having a collective meaning, e. g. MHG pfuogide 'a pair of oxen', geveteride 'parents' (Meid 1967:149).

By means of the suffix *-iðe*, common to the Baltic, Slavic and Germanic languages, which had been created by joining the affix *-i* to the suffix -ide, first of all *nomina attributiva* were formed (e. g. Lith. asūgë 'a cap with ear-tabs', Lett. lenītis 'warm southern or eastern wind', South Slav. golī 'a naked, poor man', MHG wingerside 'a finger ring'), and later they acquired other meanings, including a collective one (for more information about it see Ambrasas 1991:18–19). This could have been due to the tendency to form *nomina collectiva* by means of the affix *-i*.

**Concretized nomina qualitatis**

In High Lithuanian *nomina collectiva* are formed by means of the suffix -(i)omenē, whereas in Low Lithuanian and in some High Lithuanian areas it has the variant -(i)omenē, cf. kar(i)omenē and kar(i)omēni 'army', jaunūomenē and jaunūmenē 'young people', didūomenē and didūmenē 'aristocracy, nobility' and others (Vitkauskas 1977:103; Lietuvos kalbos atlasas 1993, Map No 126, p. 139–141).

P. Skardzius (1943:237) supposed that the suffix -(i)omenē originated from the adjectival suffix -uomenē- extended by the suffix -enē. Like K. Bičiu (1959:338), he related the derivative didūomenē to the derivative didūonis 'a noble' recorded in S. Daukantas' writings and presumably derived from the adjectival *diduomnas*. The derivative tikroomenē 'real people' (Gruzdžiai) was related to OPru. stirin-tickrons (eineriger) III 3713. This is, however, questionable as the suffix *-uomenē* seems to have only two derivatives in the Lithuanian language: the referred to didūonis and visūnis 'universal' which are found only in S. Daukantas' writings. Thus, they might be neologisms. Moreover, *nomina collectiva* are not formed by means of the suffix *-enē* in the Lithuanian language.

Much more convincing is J. Endzēlins' (1924:124) hypothesis, according to which the Lithuanian suffix -omenē is traced to *-omenē* (a variant of the suffix *-omen*) and is related to its equivalent in the Old German languages, cf. Goth. dat. sing. aldōmin ‘for old age’ (Gk. orig. γάμης), OE *elledom* ‘respect for the old’. This supposition is substantiated by the fact that some derivatives with the suffix *-omenē* in the East High Lithuanian dialect have retained the collective meaning, e. g. jaunūomenē 'youth', mažūomenē 'childhood, infancy'. Also, alongside with mažūomenē there exists the derivative mažmēnē which, apart from its abstract meaning of 'childhood, infancy', carries a collective meaning of 'small things' (Tauragai). The very suffix *-omenē* is a variant of the suffix *-menē*—by means of the latter suffix not only nomina actionis (Ambrasas, forthcoming, §69) but also nomina qualitatis (cf. Lith. gilmena ‘depth’ Juš. Žod. I 703, gilmė, Lett. dzelmenis, dzelme ‘depth’, OPruss. hydr. Gilmen) which have equivalents in Slavic (Bernstejn 1974:181), Germanic (Meid 1967:129) and, especially, in Sanskrit (Wackernagel, Debrunner 1954:355–356, 754–755) have been formed. Later nomina qualitatis with the suffix *-omenē* acquired a collective meaning in the Lithuanian language.

The tendency to acquire a concrete meaning is characteristic of other Lithuanian nomina qualitatis as well. Thus, the derivative jauniškė does not only denote 'youth' but also has the meaning of 'young people' in the Low Lithuanian dialect and the old writings of East Prussia (e. g. Brestk. Post. I 169:17). It should be noted that the formation of *nomina qualitatis* by means of the adjectival suffix *-isko* is a common Baltic and Germanic innovation. Such derivatives are especially productive in Old Prussian, e. g. deviūiskan (Seligkeyt) III 7522, labbsiku (Gute) 852, acc. sing. ginniskan (Freundschaft) 1252–3 and so on. In the Lithuanian language, apart from the above-mentioned derivative jauniškė, two other derivatives berniškė 'childhood, infancy', vieniškė 'loneliness' are known only from the old writings based on the West High Lithuanian dialect. Such derivatives are rare in Old Germanic languages, e. g. Goth. bernisiski, OSand. bernska 'childhood', fölska 'folly' (Meid 1967:197; Range 1977:128).

There are other Lithuanian nomina qualitatis which have acquired a collective meaning, especially those with the suffix *-mo-*, e.g. jaunimas 'young people', mažiamas 'small children' (Armoniškės) alongside with 'childhood' Dauks. Post. 281, senimas 'old people'. In Old Lithuanian the derivative jaunimas was used in the meaning of 'young people', cf. also dialectal derivatives: tikrumai 'the closest relatives' (Survilikis), žalumas 'grass-plots' (Pažaislis, Kupiskis) and the derivatives with *-uma:* didūuma 'nobility' (Pagėgiai), jaunuma 'the young' (Gervėčiai), senuma 'old things' (Lazūnai). Derivatives jaunumū 'young people' (alongside with 'youth'), mažumū 'poor
people’ (alongside with ‘childhood’) are common in many Lithuanian dialects, cf. a rarer derivative didūmė ‘nobility’ (Lietuvių kalbos atlasas 1993, Map No 126, p. 140). V. Grinaveckis (1977:75–76) maintains that these suffixes were formed when the unstressed vowel e turned into i in a heterosyllabic position with the consonants m, n. However, i in these suffixes might be the reduced grade of vowel–gradation in the corresponding suffixes (Lith. akmuo, akmens and akminas, Lett. akmens and akmins ‘a stone’, OCS kamenij alongside with kamenje ‘stones’ (Brugmann 1906:233–234), also, Lith. édmėné, édmenys ‘food, meal’, Lett. édmenis, édmenis and édminis ‘bait, lure’, Lith. jūsmu, jūsmenys, jūsmenis and jūsminis ‘waist, middle’, Lith. lekmėné, Lett. lekmenis and lekminis ‘quagmire, swamp’, Lith. tešmu, Lett. tesmenis and tesminis ‘an udder’, Lith. želmė, Lett. zelmenis and zelminis ‘fresh grass’ and others (Urbūtis 1981:187).

The derivative categories of nomina qualitatis and nomina collectiva could draw closer to one another during the time of the formation of the Indo-European inflexional stem *-ā-.

CONCLUSIONS

On the basis of the data presented above the following chronological strata of nomina collectiva in the Baltic languages can be established:

1. The oldest nomina collectiva are those which came from the Indo-European parent language and which have the derivative inflexion *-ā-.

2. In Slavic, Germanic, Indo-Iranian nomina collectiva are often formed by means of the adjective suffix *iī-ā-. However, such derivatives are especially rare in the Baltic languages. The adjective suffix *iī-ā- was used to form nomina collectiva in Baltic, Slavic and, partly, Latin. In Proto-Baltic nomina collectiva were formed by means of another suffix *ein-ā/-oin-ā-, originating from the suffix *-no- and preserved particularly in Lettish. Baltic and Germanic nomina collectiva are sometimes formed by means of the suffix *iī-ā- (< *iī-ā- + *iī-ā-).

3. Some nomina qualitatis in Lithuanian acquired a collective meaning, especially those with the suffix *-ūmen- common to both the Baltic and the Germanic languages.

References

Benveniste, E. (1935), Origines de la formation des noms en indo-européen. Paris
On the development of nomina collectiva in Baltic languages

---


Rosinas, A. (1988), Baltų kalbos įvardžių, Vilnius: Mokslos


Schmidt, J. (1889), Die Pluralbildungen der indogermanischen Neutra, Weimar.

Skardalias, P. (1943), Lietuvių kalbos įvardžių darbai, Vilnius.


Tautmann, R. (1911), Die altprussischen Sprachdenkmäler, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Tronskij, I. M. (1946), "K semantike množestvennego časa v Češčem i latinskem jazykach", Učené zapiski LGU. Serija filologických nauk 69, 10, 54-74.


--- (1981), Baltų etnologijos ėtudai, Vilnius: Mokslos


--- (1984), Lietuvių kalbos gramatinė sistema. Gimines kategorija, Vilnius: Mokslos


Zur Herkunft der baltischen Ablautstufe ā

ALFRED BAMMESBERGER
(Eichstätt)

Abstract

Indo-European /oː/ and /aː/ are kept apart in Baltic (in contrast to Slavic), but in a number of instances we find /aː/ where we would expect /oː/ from the historical point of view. Lith. sodantis exhibits /aː/; which in the ablaut pattern of the root IE *sod/ must be an innovation. This innovation is morphologically conditioned. One major reason lies in the fact that the zero grade to roots ending in a laryngeal had the vowel a: /sta/ from IE *sth₂-/ is the zero-grade belonging to /staː/. On the basis of examples like /staː/: /staː/ a new ablaut grade /aː/ could be created even in cases where /aː/ was the reflex of IE /oː/.


2 Zu spr. dā-t- siehe 5.