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From conjoined to particle comparative in Lithuanian

1. This paper aims to display the source of the Lithuanian comparative suffix *-iau*. I will advance the thesis that *-iaũ* (OLith. *-iau-s*, e.g. *geriaus* 'better') goes back to the postponed focus particle *-jaũ* functioning as a marker of EMPHATIC ASSERTION OF IDENTITY (König 1991; Ostrowski *forthcoming*), cf. Germ. *eben*, Eng. *exactly*. Grammaticalization of *-jau* has taken place in sentences consisting of juxtaposed and contrasted clauses, i.e. so called *conjoined comparative* in Stassen's terms (Stassen 1985: 38, 44), cf.:

(1) *Kaw-ohr nah Waraka, kaw naha Kaywerye* (Hixkaryana)
tall-no he-is Waraka tall he-is Kaywerye
'Kaywerye is taller than Waraka.'

2. In Old Lithuanian texts (XVIth cent.) *-jaũ* is combined with anaphoric words *tas* 'this, that', *toks* 'of this kind', cf. (2) from Dauksza's *Postilla* (1599):

(2) *Bat' tof-iaũ ne-gédz-ios âk-is / (...) tie pát-is*
but that:N.PL.F-FOC NEG-shy:N.PL.F eye:NOM.PL the same
o ne kit-í pa-két-s kancz-iq (...)
and NEG other:N.PL.M PRV-experience:FUT3 torture:ACC.SG

'But **exactly those** shameless eyes (...), the same, not other ones will experience the torture (...).'

A final consonant */-s/* in *-iaũ-s* is an etymologically heterogeneous element, appearing optionally in such lexemes as e.g. Lith. dial. *nèt-s* 'even' : *nèt* 'even'. The primary contrastive function of the suffix *-iau-s* can be compared to Old Greek *-τερος*, e.g. *δεξι(τερος)* 'right(-hand)', emphatic non-*σκαίος* 'left(-hand)', cf. *atgal-iau-s* (3) (1579):

(3) *A Herod-as (...) ir siunt-e ghy atgal-iaus Piloto-p.*
and Herod:N.SG and send:PST3 he:ACC.SG.M back:COMP Pilate:ALL.SG
'(...) and sent him back to Pilate' (Luke 23, 11)

literally: 'Herod (...) sent Jesus **back** to Pilate (although he could have let Jesus stay at his court).'

3. While analyzing Old Lithuanian texts we may note that the Lith. comparative *-iau-s* betrays a strong predilection for the comparative constructions with connectives containing negation, e.g. *nei-g* 'than' (4):

(4) *Bet esch daug-iaus dirb-a-u / neig kurs-ai isch yũ* (VEE 102: 16-17)
but I a lot:CMPR labour:PST-1SG than anyone-PRT from you:GEN.PL
'but I laboured more abundantly than they all' (1 Corinthians 15:10)

Some of the connectives have been recorded in the function of sentence negation, e.g. OLith. *neig* 'than' (4), resulting from conflation of *nei* 'and not, nor' and FOCUS PARTICLE *-gi*, appears in (5) in a juxtaposed clause expressing contrast to the preceding one (1579):

- (5) *Saka-u* *yumus* *tas-ai* *nu-eja*
tell:1SG you:DAT.PL this:PRT PRV-go down:PST3
- ap-teisin-t-as* *nam-ūsna* *sawa* ***nei-g*** *anas.*
PRV-justified:PTC.PST.PASS.-NOM.SG.M house:ILL.PL his NEG-FOC other
- 'I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other' (Luke 18:14)

C o n c l u s i o n . The comparative suffix *-iau* has been grammaticalized in sentences consisting of juxtaposed and contrasted clauses. The primary state of affair can be noted in (6):

- (6) *Ne-im-k* *milt-ų* *iš* *virš-aus,*
NEG-take:IMP.2SG flour:GEN.PL from top:GEN.SG
- im-k* ***duob-iaũ*** (...) (Ulvydas 1971: 479)
take:IMP.2SG hollow:CMP
- 'Do not take flour from above, take from more below (...)'

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