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THE ORIGIN OF THE OSCAN-UMBRIAN *f*-PERFECT AND THE LATIN *u*-PERFECT

It has generally been assumed that „although the origin of the . . . [Oscan-Umbrian *f*-perfect (e.g. Umbr. 2 sg. fut. perf. *am-prefiuus* 'ambieris', Osc. 3 sg. perf. subj. *sakrafir* 'sacrato')] is not entirely clear, there is little doubt that the *f* is of the same origin as . . . the tense-signs of the L. impf. in *-bam* and fut. in *-bo*; in other words it belongs to a verb-stem from the root **bhewā/bhū-* used as an auxiliary in combination with some form which cannot be precisely identified“ (Poultney 1959: 123). On the other hand, the Latin „perfect in *-vī* or *-uī*“ (e. g. *pāvī* 'I panicked', *monuī* 'I warned') has traditionally been viewed as „a type peculiar to Latin (it is not even Italic),“ with the primary marker of the construction deriving from „a *w*-element“ of uncertain origin (Buck 1933: 294)¹. However, Hamp (1955, 1990) maintains that „the attempts to trace the Italic *f*-perfect to verb phrases with **bhw-* have never seemed . . . very promising“ since „the element 'be' seems not to have had a likely function in forming specifically perfect(ive) inflexions“ and since „it gains no advantage by explaining anything in Latin“ (1990: 211). Therefore, he equates the *f*-perfect of Oscan-Umbrian and the

¹Buck (1933: 294-295) observes that this „*v-* element . . . in some few caes belonged to the root or to an extended form of the root and spread to other roots ending in a long vowel (cf. *flē-vī*, *crē-vī*, *sprē-vī* . . .), also to some disyllabic stems ending in a short vowel (whence *monuī*, etc. . . .), and to the great mass of verb stems in *ā* and *ī* of the first and fourth conjugations. But the more precise starting-point remains uncertain“. More recent scholarship identifies the starting-point of this **-w-* marker as a deictic particle in **u* with 'there and then' signification and, in turn, proposes an etymological relationship between the Latin *w*-perfect formant and certain *u*-elements found in various other Indo-European dialects (cf., e.g. 1 sg. pret. Hitt. *-u(n)*, 1 sg. pres. Lyd. *-u(n)*, 1 sg. pret. Toch. A *-wā*, B *-wa*, 1 and 3 sg. perf. Skt. (*jajñā-*)*u* 'knew'), cf. Markey 1979 and Schmidt 1985. Although this plausible position is endorsed even in Shields forthcoming, it is by no means a necessary assumption. I now simply want to explore an equally plausible explanation of the extant data. Markey (1979: 69-70) is quite accurate when he says that „the origin of the Lat. pft. in *-uī* has, of course, never been satisfactorily [i.e. absolutely] explained“.

w-perfect of Latin, deriving both from an original perfect formant in $*-x^w-$ which itself evolves from the laryngeal geminate $*-çç-$ (stem-final $*-ç$ [i.e. $*-H_2$] plus first person marker in $-ç-ai$), to which another element in $*-w$ was added [i.e. $*-xw-ai > *-x^w-ai$] (1990: 214-215), cf. Skt. 1/3 sg. perf. *jajñāú* 'knew'. Although this explanation is possible, it is not particularly appealing to those who hold a more conservative view of the number of laryngeal consonants in Indo-European, cf. Szemerényi 1967². In this brief paper, I want to provide an alternative non-laryngealist explanation of the common origin of the Oscan-Umbrian *f*-perfect and the Latin *w*-perfect based on some research of mine regarding the history of Indo-European verb morphology.

In a series of recent articles (e.g. Shields 1981a, 1981b, 1982b, 1986a, 1986b, 1988a, 1989) and in my forthcoming book (Shields forthcoming), I have attempted to describe „the origin of a number of inflectional and derivational suffixes attested in the verbal formations of Indo-European dialects by proposing that these elements derive ultimately from enclitic deictic particles affixed to verb forms. In summary, I maintain that when deictics (*X*) were added to third person singular constructions in $*-\emptyset$, two reanalyses were possible:

$$(1) *-\emptyset-x > *-x$$

$$(2) *-\emptyset-x > *-x-\emptyset$$

The first gave rise to inflectional suffixes and the second to formative elements. Because the third person tends to impose its form on other members of its paradigm, cf. Benveniste 1971, such reanalyzed structures were subject to analogical extension“ (Shields 1989: 74-75).

Of course, the notion that deictic particles were enclitically incorporated into verbal constructions is not new. It is generally accepted that a deictic $*i$ with 'here and now' signification is attested in primary verbal endings, cf. Watkins 1962: 102-103 and Seebold 1971: 189. Since, during most of the Indo-European Period, the verbal system was based inflectionally on aspectual oppositions, „deictic markers constituted the formal indication of the grammatical categories expressing time. . .“ (Markey 1979: 65). Only „in late PIE“ did „features of tense become predominant,“ with temporal distinctions being realized inflectionally (Lehmann 1974: 189-190). The original nature of the Indo-European spatio-temporal system was probably binary, marking an opposition between 'here and now' and 'not here and now,' cf. Gonda 1956: 28-29, Neu 1976, and Shields 1988b. Deictic particles with the latter semantic value were frequently reanalyzed as markers with perfect and aorist value when „both of the PIE perfective aspect forms, the aorist and the perfect, were shifted to

²Szemerényi (1967: 95) thus argues that there is „no reason for assuming more than one laryngeal, namely the glottal spirant *h*,“ cf. Burrow 1973: 89.

preterite tense forms as opposed to present-tense forms . . .“ in late Indo-European and the early dialects (Lehmann 1974: 189–190).

Watkins (1962: 90–106, 1969: 49–50) defends the idea that the original marker of the third person singular in Indo-European was $*-\emptyset$. He says: „Der funktionale Status der 3. Person als zéro- oder Nicht-Person hat die allgemeine sprachliche Tendenz zum formalen Ausdruck durch ein zéro-Zeichen zur Folge; das bedeutet, dass in der gegebenen syntaktischen Funktion des Prädikats eine Nominalform als Verbalform mit 3. Sg. ko -Endung \emptyset (zéro) aufgefasst werden kann: Nomen $*nek^{wt} > 3$. Sg. Verb $*nek^{wt}-\emptyset$.“ Erhart (1970: 57–58) lends support to this view when he observes: „In einem kleinen Teil der Fälle sind die Endung der 3 Person Sg. akonsonantisch: anind. *a*, *e*, gr. *ei*, *e*, het. *i*, *a*, *ari*, toch. AB \emptyset , got. \emptyset lit., *a* usw. . . ; als ihre Bausteine sind der thematische Vokal und der Präsensdeterminativ *i* (bzw. *r*) zu erkennen“. Such elements attest to the original use of $*-\emptyset$ as a third person singular desinence. Gradually, other markers, especially $*-t$, began to replace $*-\emptyset$ in third person singular function; but „the rigid paradigmatic structure for the three persons of the singular, $-m(i)$, $-s(i)$, $-t(i)$, belongs to the latest period of Common Indo-European, and was completely achieved only after the separation of the dialects“ (Watkins 1962: 105). (See Toporov 1961: 68–70, Schmalstieg 1977, 1980: 107–108, and Shields 1982a: 16–17 for further details.)

Now Hirt (1927: 12) reconstructs a deictic particle in $*gh^{we}$ for Indo-European, although he admits that ambiguous phonological developments in the dialects make its dialectal reflexes difficult to identify with certainty. For example, he proposes that it is attested „in abg. *že*, gr. *dé* 'aber'. Slaw. *že* steht vielleicht in Abtönung zu *go*“; but he acknowledges that it is also possible to reconstruct the etymon $*g^{we}$ here. Similarly, Brugmann (1916: 1001–1002) acknowledges that a series of „einsilbigen Partikeln mit $g(h)-$ + Vokal zusammen“ must be reconstructed for Indo-European, although „teils ist die ursprüngliche Artikulationsstelle . . . , teils die ursprüngliche Artikulationsart . . . nicht sicher bestimmbar“. However, if one assumes the existence of a deictic particle in $*gh^{we}$ and its enclitic attachment to certain verbal structures which continued to survive into Proto-Italic, then one can posit a common source for the Oscan-Umbrian *f*-perfect and the Latin *w*-perfect—a third person singular verbal structure in $*-\emptyset-gh^{we}$.

Morphologically, $*-\emptyset-gh^{we}$ was reanalyzed as $*-gh^{we}-\emptyset$ and then $*-gh^{we}-$ was subject to extension throughout the verbal paradigm. Such extension was completed in Oscan-Umbrian, but since, as Markey (1979: 70) emphasizes, „*-u-* was initially limited to the 1st and 3rd sg.“ in early Latin texts, this analogical generalization proceeded more slowly in Latin (cf. Ennius [*Trag.* 199]: *nōuī*, *nōsti*, *nōuit*, *nōmus*, *nōstis*, *nōrunt*) A special advantage of the proposal made here

is that the unusual pattern of distribution of the *w*-element attested in early Latin texts is so easily and naturally explained.

Phonologically, it is well known that in Latin **-gh^o* became *-w-* in intervocalic position, cf. Buck 1933: 129; and, indeed, the particular verb-stems with which the *w*-perfect became associated (see note 1) would have required **-gh^o* to be placed in intervocalic position. On the other hand, **gh^o* became *f* in Oscan-Umbrian without regard to context: cf. Buck 1904: 94-95). In Latin the vowel of the original deictic **gh^o* was contracted (cf. Buck 1933: 197-198) with the third person singular ending **-ai*, (cf. Watkins 1969: 156). and probably the first person singular ending **-ai*, (cf. Watkins 1969: 156). Later analogical extensions involved only the consonantal marker, vocalic length being interpreted as a feature of the personal desinence. In Oscan-Umbrian, the presence of **-e-* as part of the deictic makes unnecessary the derivation of the *f*-perfect from „a thematic stem **bhwe/o-*, reflected in Skt. aor. subj. *bhuvat*, etc.“ —a derivation requiring the assumption „that this stem could be used both as an indicative and as a subjunctive similar in formation to the 'short-vowel' subjunctive of Vedic Sanskrit or Homeric Greek, and that the Latin *bo*-future is derived from the latter use and the O.-U. *f*-perfect from the former“ (Poultney 1959: 135).

I want to conclude by emphasizing that this proposal does not totally contradict those which see the marker **-w-* of the Latin *w*-perfect as having its origin in a deictic particle with 'there and then' signification and as having cognates in other dialects (see note 1), cf. Markey 1979 and Schmidt 1985. Although my theory suggests that the phonological correspondence between the Latin marker and other dialectal forms is superficial, it acknowledges that the same morpho-syntactic process (the incorporation of deictics into verbal constructions as a means of specifying time reference) underlies them all.

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