On the Latvian indefinite pronoun *kaūt kas*¹

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The present paper deals with the origin of the Latvian indefinite pronoun *kaūt kas* ‘something’. It is generally recognized that *kaūt kas* is related to the conditional concessive conjunction *kaūt* ‘even if, although’, but the semantic pathway that made such a derivation possible has not been reconstructed so far in a satisfactory way. In this paper, a detailed investigation of the etymology of *kaūt kas* is conducted, with particular attention to the syntactic structures that may have played a role in forming an indefinite pronoun from a conditional concessive conjunction. It can be argued that the evolution suggested above reflects a cross-linguistically widespread pattern, according to which indefinite pronouns may be derived from ‘scalar particles’ (*even, at least*). The derivation of a scalar particle (*even, at least*) from a conditional concessive conjunction (*even if*) is, on the other hand, an areal phenomenon limited to the Baltic area. We may thus assume a two-level evolution: (1) *even if* > *even, at least* (areal pattern); (2) *even, at least someone* > *anyone > someone* (typological pattern).

**Keywords:** indefinite pronouns, Latvian language, conditional concessives, particles, etymology

1. Introduction

Indefinite pronouns are well known for their propensity to undergo lexical change. Within the Indo-European languages, indefiniteness is expressed by so many different formations that the reconstruction of common prototypes appears to be a difficult, if not impossible task. This is probably the reason why in most handbooks indefinite pronouns have not really been paid the attention they deserve. Obviously, there is still much work to do. Another reason which could explain why

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indefinite pronouns are often overlooked in traditional approaches to Indo-European comparative grammar is that their semantic content is in many cases difficult to describe or classify. A basic meaning ‘someone, somebody’ could be supposed for the majority of them, but the position of the so-called free-choice pronouns (‘anyone, anybody, whoever’) and of the so-called universal quantifiers (‘everybody’, ‘everyone’, ‘each one’) is still unclear, even if there are grounds for assuming them to be indefinite pronouns with specific meanings. In a pioneering monograph, Martin Haspelmath (1997, cf. also 2001, 190–192) has tried to solve some of these difficulties and to elaborate in a cross-linguistic perspective a more precise classification of indefinite pronouns according to their meaning and formation.

Within the Baltic languages (Lithuanian, Latvian, Old Prussian), indefinite pronouns display bewildering diversity. While many of them may be traced back ultimately to the PIE indefinite stem *kwos, frequently enlarged by different particles or lexemes, other forms are built on more complex structures, e. g., Lith. kažkàs ‘someone, somebody’ (< kàs žìno kàs ‘who knows who’), Latv. nezin kas or nez kas ‘someone, somebody’ (< nezina kas ‘one does not know who’), Latv. dial. diez kas ‘someone, somebody’ (< dievs zina kas ‘God knows who’), Lith. kàs nè kàs, Latv. kas nekas ‘someone, somebody’ (< ‘somebody not somebody’), Lith. šis tās, Latv. šis tas ‘something’ (< ‘this that’). As a rule, most indefinite pronouns are fairly transparent from an etymological point of view, which is a sign of their late formation. However, some forms remain puzzling and still lack a convincing etymology. The aim of my paper is to try to shed some light on the formation of one of these forms, the Latvian indefinite pronoun kaût kas ‘something’.

2. Kaût kas in Latvian

In the modern Latvian language, kaût kas may be used, alongside kâds and jebkas, jebkurš, as a general, unspecified indefinite pronoun. It refers mainly to inanimates (‘something, anything’); in non-standard Latvian it may also refer to animates (‘someone, anyone’). From a morp-
logical point of view, *kaūt kas* is made of an uninflected particle *kaūt* followed by the interrogative-indefinite stem *kas* ‘who, what’ or its derivatives *kāds* or *kurš* ‘which’, *kā* ‘how, as’, *kur* ‘where’, *kad* ‘when, as’. It is used as a substantive (*kaūt kas* ‘something’), as an adjective (*kaūt kāds vīriētis* ‘some man’, *kaūt kāda siēviête* ‘some woman’, with a slightly negative connotation) or as an adverb (*kaūt kā* ‘somehow’, *kaūt kur* ‘somewhere’, *kaūt kad* ‘at some time’). To illustrate the use of Latvian *kaūt kas*, a few examples can be given from Latvian literature:

1. *Bet kaūt kas viņ-u tomēr noturēja* but *something* nevertheless held.
   *uz viet-as,* *un tas kaūt kas* on place and *this something*
   *bija atmiņ-as par pagājuš-o* remembrance about past.
   ‘But something nevertheless held him on the spot, and this something was the remembrance of the past.’
   Andrejs Upīts (1877‒1970), *Kopoti raksti*, xii (1952, 10, cf. MLLVG 1959, i 524)

2. *Kaut kādam plikadīd-am to jau sen* some poor devil
   *varēju izdot.* ‘I could long ago have given her in marriage to some poor devil.’
   Rūdolfs Blaumanis (1863‒1908), *Kopoti raksti*, v (1949, 62, cf. MLLVG 1959, i 529)

and from modern usage reflected in web discussions (blogs):

3. *Tas būs kaūt kas jaun-s,* this *something* new
   *tas būs kaūt kas citādāk-s* this *something* different
   *un tas būs kaūt kas lab-s.* and this *something* good
   ‘It will be *something new*, it will be *something else* and it will be *something good*.’
(4) **kaut kur** starp debes-im un zem-i.

*somewhere* between heaven-DAT.PL and earth-ACC.SG

‘Somewhere between heaven and earth.’

A reduction of the particle *kaūt* to *kaū’, due to the contact of the final dental *-*t with the following velar *-k-, is attested in various Latvian dialects, e. g., in the Central Latvian dialect of Skrunda⁴. In the Latgalian dialect of Tilža, we encounter kāu kas, kāu ūeids or kāids, kāu kūrs (Ūsele 1998, 38); in Galgauska, we find kou̯ kas, kou̯ koc, kou̯ kurs (Kalnietis & Rūķe-Draviņa 1996, 77). A few examples may be given from dialect descriptions:

(5) *Kūo tu meklē? — Mān* kou̯ kas pazudis.

*something.NOM.SG* get.lost.PPA.NOM.SG.M

‘What are you looking for? — I have lost *something* [Something has been lost to me].’

Dialect of Galgauska (Kalnietis & Rūķe-Draviņa 1996, 77)

(6) *Baba myūžeīgi kāu kū strūdūo.*

Grandma-NOM.SG always *something.ACC.SG* works.PRS.3

‘Grandma is always busy with something.’

Dialect of Tilža (Ūsele 1998, 87)

Dialect geography seems to suggest that *kaūt kas* is an old formation in Latvian, since it is reflected both in Central Latvian and in Latgalian. But historical attestation of the word proves the contrary. According to Dzidra Barbare in LLVMSA (2002, 380), no instance of *kaūt kas* is known before the beginning of the 18th century. Actually, the first example I have found in the written tradition is older. It goes back to a religious book by Georg Manzel (1593–1654):

(7) *Darra / iht‖ ka kaut kafz no dfillu* 

*does.PRS.3 as.if somebody.NOM.SG* from deep.ACC.SG

*Meegu vfmohdennats taptu.*

*sleep.ACC.SG* wake.up.PPP.NOM.SG.M *become.SUBJ.3*

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⁴ Rudzite (1964, 97) gives further examples. See also Endzelin (1923, 398–399).
‘He does the same thing as somebody who had been woken up from a deep sleep.’

Georg Manzel (1593–1654), *Das Haus =, Zucht = vnd Lehrbuch Jesu Syrachs* (1631a, 555.20–21)

A few years later, *kaũt kâds* ‘whichever’ is used for the first time:

(8) Preezigs warru pastai̱gaht / happy.nom.sg be.able.prs.1sg go.for.a.walk.inf fweiks / *kaut kahdâ* Keffâ.
healthy.nom.sg whatever.loc.sg difficulty.loc.sg

‘I can go for a walk, happy, healthy, in whatever difficulty.’

*Lettische geistliche Lieder und Collecten* (1685, 125.19–20)

Apart from these early instances, the first occurrences of *kaũt kas* go back to the second part of the 18th century. In the *Neue volständigere lettische Grammatik* (1761) by Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1714–1796), we find the following instance:

(9) Jrgendswo kur, jeb kur, *kaut kur*

‘Somewhere, wherever’

Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1714–1796), *Neue volständigere lettische Grammatik* (1761, 140)

A few years later, we encounter an occurrence of *kaũt kâds* ‘some’ in a book by Martin Gottlieb Agapetus Loder (1739–1806):

(10) Kad fcheitan par *kaut kahdhu* apbehdinatu || when here about some.acc.sg afflict.ppp.acc.sg luhtgs tohp, tad gribbetu pray.ppp.nom.sg.m become.prs.3 then want.subj.2sg tahdu pehz tawas || fchehlastitas atpeštīht.
such.acc.sg after your.gen.sg.f mercy.gen.sg save.inf

‘When here a prayer is said for some afflicted man, then would You save such a man according to Your mercy.’ Martin Gottlieb Agapetus Loder (1739–1806), *Śpreddīķis pee Efwehti-fchanas tahs Ahdaschu Pahwil Pehtera bafnizas* (1775, 19.20–22)

The same form is also used in a series of legal texts at the end of the 18th century, the *Skohlas = Likkumi ‘School rules’* (1789):
(11) Kad kahds Skohlasbehns no Skohlas
when some.NOM.SG.M schoolboy.NOM.SG from school.GEN.SG
gribb || atftaht, tad wiņņam to ne
want.PRS.3 leave.INF then 3.DAT.SG.M that.ACC.SG NEG
buhs pehz fawas Pa=||tikfschanas kaut kahdā
be.FUT.3 after his.GEN.SG.F pleasure.GEN.SG any-LOC.SG
Laikā darriht.
time.LOC.SG do.INF

‘When some schoolboy wants to leave the school, then
he will not be allowed to do this at any time as he likes.’
Skohlas = Likkumi (1789, 13₁₇₋₁₉)

(12) Ja brihʃcham schwefchi Kungi no
if sometimes foreign.NOM.PL.M gentlemen.NOM.PL from
kaut kahdā || Kahrtas Skohlâ
some.GEN.SG.F estate.GEN.SG school.LOC.SG
nahktu, tad buhs Skohlnée||keem pee
come.SUBJ.3 then be.FUT.3 schoolboy.DAT.PL at
wiņņ-u Atnahkfchan-as tudalin zeltees.
3-GEN.PL arrival-GEN.SG immediately stand.up.INF

‘If at any time strangers of whatever rank come to the
school, the schoolboys will have to stand up immediately
at their arrival.’
Ibid. (1789, 15₃₋₅)

At the same time, another occurrence of kaut kâds is found in the
Mafa Bihbele, Tas irr Swehti ftahfti (1790) by Gotthard Friedrich Stender,
whose name was already mentioned above:

(13) Kad kaut kahdu fwefchu
when some.ACC.SG belonging.to.others.ACC.SG
leetu kur atrohn, tad buhf to
thing.ACC.SG somewhere find.PRS.3 then be.FUT.3 it.ACC.SG
atdoht.
give.back.INF

‘When one finds somewhere something belonging to others,
one will have to give it back.’
Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1714–1796), Mafa Bihbele, Tas
irr Swehti ftahfti (1790, 8₃₋₁₆,₁₇)
In the works of his son, Alexander Johann Stender (1744‒1819), *kaüt kâds* is used several times:

(14) **Kaut kahdu** blehdibu darrija.  
*some.ACC.SG* cheating.**ACC.SG** do.**PST.3**  
‘They did some cheating.’

Alexander Johann Stender (1744‒1819), *Lustefspehle no Semmneeka kas par Muischneku tappe pahrwehrs un weena Pařakka no Drauga Lizzepura* (1790, 66‒)

(15) **Muischas** meitu tà aplam,  
manor.**GEN.SG** daughter.**ACC.SG** so foolishly  
**kaut kahdam** fwe∥fchineekam ne isdohf.  
*some.DAT.SG* foreigner.**DAT.SG** not give.**FUT.3**  
‘He will not so foolishly give a squire’s daughter to some foreigner.’

*Ibid.* (1790, 70, 18, 19)

(16) **Katrs** dſehrejs, kas pats  
every.**NOM.SG** drinker.**NOM.SG** who.**NOM.SG** himself.**NOM.SG**  
peedʃefraks jeb zit∥tu peerunnajis,  
get.drunk.**PRS.3** or other.**ACC.SG** persuade.**PPA.NOM.SG.M**  
kad kaut kahda fuhfʃefchana ∥ nahk,  
when **some.NOM.SG** complaint.**NOM.SG** come.**PRS.3SG**  
buhtu labbi kulfams.  
be.**SUBJ.3** well thrash.**PPR.P.NOM.SG.M**  
‘Every drunkard who gets drunk himself or persuades somebody else [to drink] deserves a sound thrashing if some complaint is made.’ *Ibid.* (1790, 88, 22, 23)

(17) **Bet taggd war ‖ weens femmneeks**  
but now be.able.**PRS.3** one.**NOM.SG.M** peasant.**NOM.SG**  
kaut kahds negantneeks buht.  
**some.NOM.SG.M** brute.**NOM.SG** be.**INF**  
‘But nowadays a farmer can be some brute.’

*Ibid.* (1790, 88, 21, 23)

(18) **Weegldak bij wiņņam tizzeht un par**  
easier be.**PST.3** 3.**DAT.SG.M** believe.**INF** and as  
pa∥teefibu peņemt, ko kaut kahds  
truth.**ACC.SG** accept.**INF** what.**ACC** **some.NOM.SG.M**  
mahns jeb mul∥kis daudfinaja.  
charlatan.**NOM.SG** or idiot.**NOM.SG** say.**PST.3**
'It was easier for him to believe and to accept as a truth what some charlatan or idiot kept repeating.'

Dseefmas, Stahstú = dseefmas, Pafakkas (1805, 73₅₋₈)

More instances may be found in 19th century literature, e. g., in the works of Gustav Brasche (1802‒1883) or Andrejs Pumpurs (1841‒1902), etc. But the diffusion of kaút kas within the Latvian language seems to have been a progressive innovation, since some lexicographical or grammatical descriptions were for a long time reluctant to consider its forms as regular. No instance of kaút kas or kaút kâds is attested in early dictionaries of the Latvian language, not even in the Volstândiges Deûtsch-lettisches und Lettisch-deûtsches Lexicon by Jacob Lange (1777, ii 147). As far as I know, the first occurrence of kaút kas in a dictionary is found in the Lettisches Lexikon by Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1789), in which two entries are given:

(19) **kaút kas, kaut kahds**, gleichviel wer, der erste der beste ‘**whoever**’

**kaút kà**, gleichviel wie ‘**however**’

Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1714‒1796), *Lettisches Lexikon* (1789, ii 103)

In a discussion on Stenders’ *Deutsch-lettisches Lexikon*, written in 1790, but published by Arnold Wellig in 1828, Christoph Harder (1747‒1818) mentions the following forms:

(20) **irgend einer, kaut kas, kaut kà, kaut kur**.

‘**whoever, however, wherever**’

Christoph Harder (1747‒1818), *Einige Berichtigungen und Zusätze zu Stender’s deutsch = lettischem Lexikon*, edited by Arnold Wellig, *Beiträge zur lettischen Sprachkunde* (1828, 150)

Similar indications are given in later grammars and dictionaries throughout the 19th century:

(21) 2) **mit kaut : kautkas, kautkahds, kautkurfch, gleichviel welcher, der erste der beste**

‘2) with **kaut : kautkas, kautkahds, kautkurfch, whoever**’

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Otto Benjamin Gottfried Rosenberger (1769‒1856), Formenlehre der lettischen Sprache (1830, 70‒71)

(22) 2) mit kaut: dohd mannim drahnu kautkahdu gieb mir || ein Tuch von welcher Art es sey, no fchihm grahma-||tahm pafneedf weenu, kautkurru gieb eins von diesen || Büchern, welches du willst (gleichviel welches), kaut-||kurru dohfi, buhfschu ar meeru welches du auch geben magst, ich werde zufrieden seyn. ‘2) with kaut: give me a piece of sheet whatever kind it may be, give one of these books whichever you want (whatever), whatever you can give, I will be happy.’

Heinrich Hesselberg (1792‒1848), Lettische Sprachlehre (1841, 108₄₋₉)

(23) káut-kas (subst.), káut-ku’ršch, káut-kads (adj.), irgend einer, welcher es auch sei, der erste beste ‘whoever’

August Bielenstein (1826‒1907), Lettische Grammatik (1863, 102)

(24) káut kas, k. káhds, wer immer, wer es auch sey; káut kà, wer immer ‘whoever, however’

Carl Christian Ulmann (1793‒1871), Lettisches Wörterbuch (1872, 105)

(25) kautkas, kautkahds, kautkurfch ‘whoever, however’

Karl Mühlenbach (1853‒1916) and Jan Endzelin (1873‒1961), Latweefchu walodas mahniba (1907, § 76)

It must be noted, however, that several sources still do not mention kāut kas until the last decades of the 19th century, as though it were still felt as a newcomer in the Latvian language. No mention of kāut kas is made in the Latvian dictionary by Gustav Brasche (1802‒1883), Kurzgefaßtes lettisch-deutsch und deutsch-lettisches Lexikon (1875, 43). This is quite surprising, since the same Brasche uses kāut kas quite often in his writings. Be that as it may, there are grounds for assuming that, at least since mid-century, kāut kas was regular in the Latvian language.

Whatever confidence one places in the value of the examples produced so far, the almost complete absence of kāut kas in the early literature and the scarcity of its forms until the middle of the 19th century

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6 See also p. 103 (káut-kas), 104 (káut-kur irgendwo, káut-kur irgendwohin, káut-kad irgendwann) and 340‒341. See also Bielenstein (1863‒1864, ii 98).
are remarkable. In all probability, they suggest that the development of *kaût kas* is a recent feature of the Latvian language. Moreover, the facts just reviewed make it clear that, in its first occurrences, *kaût kas* was often used with the function of a free-choice pronoun. Its extension to the function of a general indefinite pronoun becomes regular during the 19th century. Our task, therefore, is not primarily to establish an etymology involving PIE prototypes, but to show how *kaût kas* has developed as an indefinite pronoun within the history of Latvian.

3. Indefiniteness and concession: *kaût kas* and *kaût*

It was shown in the previous section that *kaût kas* must be a recent creation in Latvian. It must be based on some already existing form or analogical model. There is, in fact, still synchronically an obvious link of *kaût kas* to the concessive conjunction *kaût* ‘although, though, even if’. This link is self-evident for every speaker of Latvian and has long been noticed: for example, in the *Lettisch-deutsches Wörterbuch* (1923‒1925, ii 179) by Karl Mühlenbach (1853‒1916) and Jan Endzelin (1873‒1961), *kaût kas* is described under the same entry as *kaût*, which implies the assumption of a common origin. Yet, the precise nature of their relationship has not been accounted for so far in the literature. To put it concisely, how can a part of an indefinite pronoun be cognate with (or even derived from) a concessive conjunction? Only in-depth research on the philological data is, to my mind, likely to open new tracks towards a proper understanding of the origin of *kaût kas*.

It is well known that the linguistic notion of ‘concession’ covers a considerable array of pragmatic and semantic effects. Various explanatory models have been proposed to account for this diversity. Thirty years ago, Robert Martin (1982) distinguished three types of concessive clauses:

1. Simple concessive clauses (*concessives simples*): e. g., Fr. *Bien qu’il pleuve, il sort.* ‘Although it rains, he goes out.’

2. Complex concessive clauses, with the following sub-types:
   (2a) Concessive conditional clauses (*concessives conditionnelles*): e. g., Fr. *Même s’il s’excusait, je ne lui pardonnerais pas.* ‘Even if he apologized, I would not forgive him.’
   (2b) Scalar concessive clauses (*concessives scalaires*): e. g., Fr. *Si intelligent soit-il, il risque de ne pas réussir.* ‘However clever he may be, he may well not succeed.’
(2c) Extensional concessive clauses (*concessives extensionnelles*): e. g., Fr. *Quoi qu’il arrive, je t’aimerai toujours.* ‘Whatever may happen, I will love you forever.’

(2d) Negative concessive clauses (*concessives négatives*): e. g., Fr. *Il l’a fait sans qu’on le lui ait demandé.* ‘He did so without having been asked.’

(3) Restrictive concessive clauses (*concessives restrictives*): e. g., Fr. *Rien de ce qui pousse à la révolte n’est définitivement dangereux—encore que la révolte puisse fausser le caractère.* ‘Nothing that leads to revolt can be forever dangerous—even if revolt may distort the character.’

More recently, Ekkehard König (1985, 1986, 1988) and Martin Haspelmath & Ekkehard König (1998) have put forward a slightly different classification with two fundamental types of concessive clauses (Haspelmath & König 1998, 563):

1. Concessive clauses proper: e. g., *Although it is not hot, there are many people in the streets.*

2. Concessive conditional clauses, with the following sub-types:
   1. Scalar concessive conditionals: e. g., *Even if we do not get any financial support, we will go ahead with our project.*
   2. Alternative concessive conditionals: e. g., *Whether we get any financial support or not, we will go ahead with our project.*
   3. Universal concessive conditionals: e. g., *No matter how much (/However much) financial support we get, we will go ahead with our project.*

Both classifications have much in common, not only the basic assumption of a conventional implicature (*although* p, q = normally if p, then non-q), but also the distinction between concessive clauses proper (*although*) and concessive conditional clauses (*even if*), and—last but not least—the notion of scalarity (*whoever, whatever, however*). According to both models, concessive conditional clauses (*even if*) are distinguished from concessive clauses proper (*although*) by their distance from reality: in concessive conditional clauses there is a contradiction between two clauses that are seen as purely hypothetical, in concessive clauses proper between two clauses that are seen as equally real.

With this typological framework in mind, let us now return to the Latvian particle *kaūt*. Since its very first occurrences in the middle of the 17th century, this particle is attested with four different meanings:
(1) Concessive conditional particle: even if.
(2) Concessive particle: although.
(3) Conditional particle: if.
(4) Wish marker: if only!

3.1. Kaût ‘even if’

As far as I know, the earliest instances of kaût are found in the works of Georg Manzel (1593–1654), the very first time in his religious book Das Haus=, Zucht= vnd Lehrbuch Jesu Syrachs (1631a). In many of its early occurrences, kaût is used as a concessive conditional particle (even if). Examples are quite numerous throughout the 17th century and since:

(26) Launeemsnhe palledf nheneekekaut
bad.DAT.PL.M NEG profit.PRS.3 nothing.GEN even.if
|| tee arriedfan wiffas Rohkas falicktu.
3-NOM.PL.M also all.ACC.PL hands.ACC.PL join.SUBJ.3 ‘Nothing will profit the wicked, even if they all join hands.’
Georg Manzel (1593‒1654), Die Sprüche Salomonis in die lettische Sprache gebracht (1637, 35_12-13)

(27) Nhe weens to Nahwuiifbehgt
nobody.NOM.SG.M def.ACC.SG death.ACC.SG escape.INF
warr/ kaut taf Zillwähx
be.able.PRS.3 even.if def-NOM.SG.M man.NOM.SG
irr wifrauxtaku Kallnu
also on highest.ACC.SG mountain.ACC.SG
kahp-is buh-tu.
‘Nobody can escape from death, even if man would have climbed to the top of the highest mountain.’
Georg Manzel (1593–1654), Lang=gewünschte Lettische Postill (1654, i 216₂₆₋₂₇)

(28) Kaut kam labbam buhtu wiffa
even.if someone-DAT.SG be.SUBJ.3 all.NOM.SG.F
Pafaule/fudrabsin Selts/in
world.NOM.SG silver.NOM.SG and gold.NOM.SG and
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wiffa Nuda / Tomehr buhs
all.nom.sg.f money.nom.sg nevertheless be.fut.3
tam nomirt.
3.dat.sg.m die.inf
‘Even if one possessed the whole world, silver and gold, and all the money, nevertheless one will have to die.’
Lettische geistliche Lieder vnd Collecten (1685, 12715-17)
(29) Ne klaufa tee Mofu un
neg hear.prs.3 3-nom.pl.m Moses.acc.sg and
tohs Pra||weechus / tad tee arri ne
def.-acc.pl.m prophets.acc.pl then 3-nom.pl.m also neg
tizhehs / || kaut ir kas no
believe.fut.3 even.if also someone.nom.sg from
Mirroneem aug||fcham zeltohs.
dead.dat.pl up rise.subj.3
‘If they don’t hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, even if someone will rise from the dead.’
Tas Jauns Testaments (1685, Lk 1631)

Some features of kaüt as a concessive conditional conjunction are to be noted. First of all, in this meaning, kaüt is often reinforced by additive or emphatic particles, such as aridsan ‘also’ (me i 141), ir ‘and, also’ (me i 708), jel(e) ‘though, however’ (me ii 109) or gan ‘enough, however’ (me i 598-599). Kaut ... aridsan and kaut ... ir are probably loan-translations built on the model of German wenn ... auch ‘even if’.

In this meaning, kaüt is usually followed by a verbal form in the conditional mood (ending -tu), cf. examples (26), (27), (28) and (29). There are, however, exceptions in which kaüt is followed by a participle or an indicative. Examples with a participle are sporadically attested in Old Latvian. Their meaning is the same as with the conditional mood (‘even if’):
(30) **Kaut gan addijis, wiņnas ne || weens even.if knit.ppa.nom.sg.m 3.gen.sg.f nobody.nom.sg.m warr peeddhiht.**

be.able.prs.3 knit.inf

‘Even if one knits enough (literally: even if having knitted enough), one cannot knit it from start to finish.’

(Germ. *Man || knüte (so viel man wolle) gleich || genug, so kan man ihn doch ô k[n]ütten.*)

Christophor Fürecker (ca 1615–1684 or 1685), *Lettisches vnd Teutsches Wörterbuch* (1650, 17₃₋₆)

(31) **Manni ne=dſell, kaut man gan**

1sg.acc neg-sting.prs.2sg even.if 1sg.dat enough dſeſefs.

sting.ppa.nom.sg.m

‘You do not sting me, even if you stung me enough (literally: even if having stung me enough).’

(Germ. || mich bré̈nst nicht, ob du mich || gleich genug schreuest.)

*Ibid.* (1650, 65₁₃₋₁₅)

(32) **Śchis wihrs, kas, kaut**

this.nom.sg.m man.nom.sg who.nom.sg even.if dſehrejs buhdams, || tatfchu kà gohdigs drunkard.nom.sg be.cvb.sg.m yet as honest.nom.sg.m zilweks finnams irr.

man.nom.sg known.nom.sg.m be.prs.3

‘This man who, even if he is a drunkard, is well-known as an honourable man.’

Alexander Johann Stender (1744–1819), *Luſtesẜpehle no Semmneeka kas par Muifchneeku tappe pahrwehrfts un weena Pafakka no Drauga Lizzepura* (1790, 48₁₇₋₁₈)

The use of *kaут* with participles might be due to the model of another concessive conjunction *jeb* ‘although, even if’, which is frequently followed by a participle. In the case of *jeb*, this could be an archaic feature, comparable to the same construction in Lithuanian *jéib* ‘if’, e. g., OLith. *jeib Christus ne keles / Swiets butu prapules* ‘if Christ had not risen from the dead, the world would have been lost’ (Martynas Mažvydas 1570, 256₈₋₉). For a precise analysis of this construction, one may refer to the explanation given by Christian S. Stang some
On the Latvian indefinite pronoun kaūt kas

decades ago (1970, 153–159 [1958])\(^\text{11}\): Stang has convincingly shown that the final consonant -b reflects an old optative form of the verb ‘to be’ (*bi) used in a periphrastic construction ‘to be + participle’, parallel to the type Christus esti keles ‘Christ has risen from the dead’ (Martynas Mažvydas 1570, 256₃). In any case, it is more than likely that this construction was originally not characteristic of kaūt.

Examples of kaūt with the indicative are more numerous. Their meaning seems to be a different one and to correspond to that of a simple concessive conjunction (‘although’). This will be briefly presented in the following section.

### 3.2. Kaūt ‘although’

In the writings of Alexander Johann Stender (1744–1819), we find the following instances, in which a basic meaning ‘although’ is obvious:

\[(33) \text{Vn kaut ar} \parallel \text{us pahru deenahm atnahk,} \]

and although also for couple.ACC day.DAT.PL come.PRS.3

\[\text{tad wiņņu retti dabbu } \parallel \text{redfeht.} \]

‘And, although he comes sometimes for a few days, one seldom has an occasion to see him!’

Alexander Johann Stender (1744–1819), Luftespehle no Semmneeka kas par Muiſchneeku tappe pahrwehrfts un weena Pafakka no Drauga Lizzepura (1790, 47₃₋₅)

\[(34) \text{Ak, paldeews, paldees zeenigam Kun} \parallel \text{gam,} \]

ah thanks thanks gracious.DAT.SG.M lord.DAT.SG

\[\text{kaunt es to gan ne warru} \]

though 1SG.NOM that.ACC.SG PCLE NEG be.ABLE.PRS.1SG

\[\text{fapraft.} \]

understand.INF

‘Ah! Thank you, thank you, gracious Lord, although I cannot understand it.’

Ibid. (1790, 53\text{₂₁₋₂₂})

\(^{11}\) Cf. a brief overview in Holvoet (2010, 80), Ostrowski (2010, 147), Petit (2010, 273).
(35) **Kaut** tu arri no pafau||les ne
although **2SG.NOM PCLE by** world.gen **NEG**
tohpi gohdinahts, **2SG.DAT then**
tad **become.PRS.2SG honour.PPP.NOM.SG.M**
ja finna; **Deews irr.**
**DEB-KNOW ONE.NOM.SG.M** God.NOM.sg **be.PRS.3**
‘**Although you are not honoured by the world, you must**
**know it: There is one God.’
**Ibid.** (1790, 93₂₁₋₂₃)

In the same function, Stenders uses the form **kautschu** (1790, 7₆, 55₅, 55₇, 55₈, 55₁₀), made on the model of the correlative **tatschu** ‘however’ (Modern Latvian **taču**).

Judging from the examples produced above, it is clear that **kaut** with the indicative does not show any conditional meaning (‘even if’), but functions as a simple concessive conjunction (‘although’): in each instance, the facts introduced by the particle **kaut** are contextually seen as real, though contradictory to the facts described in the main clause. There is, thus, a correlation between the complexity of the meanings (‘even if’ / ‘although’) and the choice of the verbal moods (conditional / indicative).

In order to explain this evidence in a satisfactory way, two lines of thought are possible. One could argue that **kaut** was originally simply concessive (‘although’) and received as an additional feature the meaning [+conditional] (‘even if’) when it was associated with the conditional mood. Or one could assume that **kaut** was originally concessive conditional (‘even if’) and lost the feature [+conditional] when it was associated with the indicative mood. On the whole, the first scenario cannot be completely ruled out, but, keeping in mind that **kaut** ‘even if’ (+conditional) is much older and much more widely attested than **kaut** ‘although’ (+indicative), I prefer to think that the basic meaning of **kaut** was concessive conditional. The extension of **kaut** to the basic notion of concession should probably be thought of as an innovation. It is now firmly established in standard Latvian.
3.3. Kaūt ‘if’

Further arguments plead in favour of this scenario. Besides the concessive conditional meaning, kaūt is sometimes used with a general conditional meaning ‘if’. The first example I have been able to find goes back to an anonymous Latvian-German dictionary probably put together during the last decade of the 17th century, the Manuale Lettico-Germanicum:

\[(36) \textbf{Kaut} \text{ Deews } \text{ dohtu } \text{ pahriiht } \text{ buhtu } \text{ labbi.} \]
\[\text{if} \quad \text{God.nom.sg give.subj.3 rain.inf be.subj.3 good} \]

‘If God would make the rain fall, it would be good.’

\[\text{(Germ. Wenn Gott einen gnâdi = gen Regen gâbe, das wäre gut.)} \]

\[\text{Manuale Lettico-Germanicum} \quad \text{(ca 1690, 205)} \]

According to Fennell (2001, 205), this example was taken by the Manuale Lettico-Germanicum from the Lettisch-Deutsches Lexicon by Johannes Langius (1685), which is not available to me. Obviously, there is no contradiction between the two assumptions described in the sentence: the fact that God makes the rain fall is not supposed to preclude the conclusion that this is something good. On the contrary, what we face here is a simple conditional clause with a conventional implicature (if \( p \), then \( q \)). Such cases are exceptional in Latvian; Mühlenbach and Endzelin provide us with only one couple of examples in which kaūt means simply ‘if’ (me ii 179, under the entry 2) kondizional — wenn, falls). This can be explained by the fact that there is already a usual conditional conjunction in Latvian ja ‘if’. Attested since the 16th century, ja was never really challenged by kaūt for the expression of hypothetical clauses.

Kaūt ‘if’ must therefore be seen as the result of a recent innovation. It presupposes a model in which a conditional meaning was already present at the beginning, probably mixed with other semantic features. If kaūt was originally a concessive proper (‘although’), one could hardly see how it would have occasionally developed a conditional meaning (‘if’). If, on the contrary, its basic meaning was concessive conditional (‘even if’), it would be easy to understand how it could acquire a concessive meaning on the one hand (‘although’) and a conditional meaning on the other hand (‘if’), because both meanings were present in the original use.
3.4. Kaût ‘if only!’

Last but not least, kaût is also frequently used as an optative marker, expressing the speaker’s wish or regret, most often with a connotation of irrealis (if only!). In this meaning, kaût competes with the most common wish particle laî (< laîst ‘to let’). This use of kaût is attested in Latvian since the 17th century. Examples from the earliest writings onwards:

(37) Vn kaut juhs buhtut waldiju||fchi /
and if.only 2pl.nom be.subj.2pl reign.ppa.nom.pl.m
ka arrīdsan mehs ar jums || warretum
that also 1pl.nom with 2pl.dat could.subj.1pl
lihf α waldiht.
together reign.inf
‘And I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign
with you!’
Tas Jauns Testaments (1685, 1Kor 4₈)

(38) Ar kaut juhs maķkeniht || griibbetat
also if.only 2pl.nom a.little want.subj.2pl
man eekfch || Nefaprafchanas pa||nest.
1sg.dat in folly.gen bear.inf
‘Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly!’
Ibid. (1685, 2Cor 11₁)

(39) Es finnu Tawus Darbus / || ka
1sg.nom know.prs.1sg your.acc.pl.m work.acc.pl that
tu nedf aukfts effi nedf
2sg.nom neither cold.nom.sg.m be.prs.2sg nor
karfts: || kaut tu buhtu jeb
hot.nom.sg.m if.only 2sg.nom be.subj.2pl either
aukfts jeb karfts.
cold.nom.sg.m or hot.nom.sg.m
‘I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would
thou wert cold or hot!’
Ibid. (1685, Atk 3₁₅)

(40) Kaut fchis eefahkums pee wiffeem
if.only this.nom.sg.m beginning.nom.sg with all.dat.pl.m
apftehhtihts || buhtu!
blessed.ppp.nom.sg.m be.subj.3
'May this beginning be blessed to us all!' Martin Gottlieb Agapetus Loder (1739–1806), Špreddikis pee Eefwehtifchanas taho Ahdaschhu Pahwil Pehtera bašnizas (1775, 4₁₋₂)

In this meaning, kaūt is often preceded by interjections such as ak (< German ach) or its by-form a:

(41) Ock kaut efz warrähtu Atfzlägu
ah if.only 1sg.nom be.able.subj.1sg lock.acc.sg
vs mannas Muttes lickt.
on my.gen.sg.f mouth.gen.sg put.inf
‘Would I were able to put a lock onto my mouth!’
Georg Manzel (1593–1654), Das Haus =, Zucht = vnd Lehrbuch Jesu Syrachs (1631a, 557₆)

(42) O kaut manna dšiewiba tawas
ah if.only my.nom.sg.f life.nom your.gen.sg.f
Taifz nibas ar wiffu Sirrdi / turrätu.
truth.gen with whole.acc.sg heart.acc.sg hold.subj.3
‘May my life hold Your truth within its whole heart!’
Georg Manzel (1593–1654), Lettische geistliche Lieder und Psalmen (1631b, 429₂₁₋₂₂)

(43) Ock kaut mannas Atzis [...] par man‖neem
ah if.only my.nom.pl.f eye.nom.pl over my.dat.pl.m
Ghrākeem raudaht warrähtu.
sins.dat.pl weep.inf be.able.subj.3
‘Would that my eyes [...] could weep over my sins!’
Georg Manzel (1593–1654), Lang = gewünschte Lettische Postill (1654, iii 75₁₆₋₁₈)

(44) Ok kaut mehs buhtum to
ah if.only 1sg.nom be.subj.1pl that.acc
finnajufchi.
know.ppa.nom.pl.m
‘Would that we had known this before!’
(Germ. Ach hätten wir das gewust.)
Manuale Lettico-Germanicum (ca 1690, 346)

12 Cf. also Manzel (1638, 133): O das / ock kaut.
As an optative marker, *kaút* may also be reinforced by particles such as *arīdzan* ‘also’\(^{13}\) or *jel(e)* ‘though, however’\(^{14}\). All this speaks in favour of a common identity of *kaút* in its different functions.

It should be noted that this optative meaning shares several common properties with the other uses of *kaút*, in particular as a concessive conditional conjunction. It is regularly followed by a conditional mood. Examples with a participle are, however, occasionally attested:

\[(45) \text{Kaut} \parallel \text{jelle pahreijus.} \]
\[\text{if. only} \quad \text{though come. home. PPRA.NOM.SG.M} \]

‘Would that he came home!’ (Germ. *weñ er doch möchte || zu hause komen*)

Christophor Fürecker (ca 1615–1684 or 1685), *Lettisches und Teutsches Wörterbuch* (1650, 67\(^{15-17}\))

The use of *kaút* as a wish marker is preserved in Modern Latvian and regularly described in grammars and dictionaries throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Examples:

\[(46) \text{Kaut Deews ſchoreif manni atlaiſtu!} \]
\[\text{if only} \quad \text{God-NOM this.time 1SG.ACC let.SUBJ.3} \]

‘Would that God would let me live this time!’

(Germ. *möchte mich Gott diesmal leben lassen!*)

\[(47) \text{Káut es bútu weſſels!} \]
\[\text{if only} \quad 1SG.NOM be.SUBJ.1SG healthy.NOM.SG.M \]

‘Would that I were healthy!’

(Germ. *wenn ich doch gesund wäre!*)

August Bielenstein (1826–1907), *Lettische Grammatik* (1863, 359)

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\(^{13}\) Cf. *kaut ... arīdzan* (*Tas Jauns Testaments* 1685, Gal 51\(^2\)). See also *kaut arri ...* in *Tas Jauns Testaments* (1685: Lk 19\(^{42}\)).

\(^{14}\) Cf. *kaut ... jelle* (Fürecker 1650, 67\(^{15-17}\), A. Stender 1790, 11\(^2\)).
On the Latvian indefinite pronoun kaüt kas

(48) Kaüt viņ-u ne mûžam nebû-tu
if.only 3-ACC NEG ever be-SUBJ.1SG
redzēj-is!
see-PPA.NOM.SG.M
‘Would that I had never seen him!’
(Germ. möchte ich doch ihn nie gesehen haben!)
Jan Endzelin (1873–1961), Lettische Grammatik (1923, 755)

(49) Kaut es bū-tu bagāt-s!
if.only 1SG.NOM be-SUBJ.1SG rich-NOM.SG.M
‘Would that I were rich!’
Berthold Forssman, Lettische Grammatik (2001, 328 § 511)

In order to explain this use of kaüt, we should notice that the same optative meaning appears in subordinate clauses. Let us have a look at the following example dating from the end of the 18th century:

(50) Ak kaüt jel zeenigs Kungs
ah if.only PCLE gracious.NOM.SG.M Lord.NOM.SG
jun∥kuru pee deewiņeem welleem aisdſihtu!
squire.LOC.sg to nine.DAT.PL devil.DAT.PL chase.SUBJ.3

tad es ‖ preezatohs.
then 1SG.NOM rejoice.SUBJ.1SG
‘Would that the gracious Lord would send this squire to the Nine Devils! Then I would be happy.’
Alexander Johann Stender (1744‒1819), Luftespehle no Semmneeka kas par Muiſchneeku tappe pahrwehrfts un weena Pafakka no Drauga Lizzepura (1790, 11₂₋₄)

At first glance, this seems to be only a further instance of kaüt as a wish marker; the association ak kaüt is the same as in (41–44). But it is striking that the independent clause introduced by ak kaüt is followed by a second independent clause introduced by tad ‘then, in this case’. One cannot refrain from the impression that both clauses are linked together in a kind of correlative structure kaüt..., tad... ‘if only..., then, in that case...’, with the two elements of a ‘diptyque normal’ (in the sense of A. Minard 1936). The syntactic structure is nearly identical to that of the following instance, in which, instead of two independent clauses, a subordinate clause (protasis) is followed by a main clause (apodosis):
Despite the difference in the verbal form (in the last instance the indicative future), (50) and (51) are parallel instances of a similar structure: the paratactic interpretation of (50) is no more justified than the hypotactic interpretation of (51). To put it differently, it is quite arbitrary to decide that both clauses in (50) are on the same level, whereas they are hierarchically structured in (51). In such cases, the distinction of juxtaposition and subordination is not so straightforward. At least, it could be argued that in both cases the first clause is orientated towards the second clause as towards an expected complement.

This ambivalent syntactic reading admits of two different interpretations.

(a) According to the first interpretation, the use of *kaût* in independent clauses is primary. Keeping in mind that conditional markers often go back to independent particles (e.g., Gr. εἰ ‘if’ < ‘then, in that case’, cf. εἶτα ‘then, afterwards’), it could be argued that *kaût* was first used in independent clauses as a wish marker, its connection with a following apodosis being a secondary development. This would mean that a clause like [50], in which *kaût* is a non-subordinating wish marker, would reflect an older construction than [51], where it is strongly connected to a following clause.

(b) According to the second interpretation, the use of *kaût* as a wish marker (*if only!*) is due to the reanalysis of a conditional conjunction (*if only..., then...*) in elliptic contexts in which the second part, expressing the result expected by the wish, is simply omitted. To be sure, the notion of ‘ellipsis’ is notoriously dangerous in syntactic studies, since it might be used in an improper way for cases in which a segmental structure is arbitrarily traced back to a more complete deep structure. In this case, however, the possibility of explaining the independent wish marker *kaût* ‘if only’ as resulting from an elliptic subordination
‘if only..., then...’ sounds quite convincing. It is well known that wish markers are often derived from conditional conjunctions:

(52) Εἰ δὴ ὁμοφρονέοις
    if pcle feel.the.same.way.opt.prs.2sg
‘If only you could feel as I do!’ (cf. εἰ ‘if’, see also εἰθε, εἰ γάρ)
Homer, Odyssey, 1 456

(53) Si nunc se nobis ille aure-us
    if now refl 1pl.dat that.nom.sg.m golden-nom.sg.m
    arbor-e ram-us ‖ ostend-at nemor-e
    tree-abl.sg bough-nom.sg show-subj.prs.3sg wood-abl.sg
    in tant-o!
in such-abl.sg.m
‘O if now that golden bough would show itself to us on the tree in the deep wood!’ (cf. sī ‘if’)
Verg., Aen., 6, 188

This is a classical problem in historical syntax: we can either operate with a fully-constructed grammar in which complex structures may produce simpler structures by means of ellipsis or stick to an evolutionary model which presupposes parataxis as a starting point before the development of hypotaxis. In my opinion, neither model is to be followed blindly: primacy must be given to philological evidence. In the case of kaūt, the existence of a wide range of subordinating uses (‘even if’, ‘although’, ‘if’) pleads in favour of the second scenario, according to which kaūt would have been originally a conditional conjunction, reanalyzed as a wish marker in elliptic contexts. Taking all this evidence into account, one may assume that the basic meaning of kaūt was conditional (± ‘if’), probably with additional semantic features which distinguished it from the usual conditional conjunction ja ‘if’. From this original meaning (which admittedly still needs to be defined more precisely) one could derive both the concessive conditional meaning (‘even if’) and the use as a wish marker (‘if only!’):

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15 See also Holvoet (2010, 79). On the contrary, there are grounds for assuming that the particle laî, which functions in contexts that are partly comparable to those of kaūt, is originally a wish particle and only secondarily developed a subordinating use. See Holvoet (2001, 63‒81).
It is worth emphasizing that the use of kaût as a conditional particle ‘if’ described above does not necessarily reflect the original meaning, but more likely must be seen as a weakening of the concessive conditional meaning. I have already pointed out that the original meaning of kaût cannot have been exclusively conditional (‘if’) since condition is usually expressed with the inherited conjunction ja ‘if’; it must contain further semantic features from which both historically attested meanings ‘even if’ and ‘if only’ can be derived. This procedure, of course, is not exempt from risk: semantic reconstruction is not only a compromise between diverging pieces of evidence. Be that as it may, the only feature that could be common to ‘even if’ and to ‘if only’ could be the existence of a counterfactual condition, implying a contradiction, a disjunction, with the factual world. Both meanings ‘even if’ and ‘if only’ express a statement that is seen as not real, because it corresponds either to the most unlikely possibility (‘even if’) or to a condition that is not fulfilled (‘if only’); both presuppose a conventional implicature ‘it is not the case’. I would thus reconstruct the basic meaning of kaût as follows: ‘if however, if contrary to reality’.

4. Kaût and kaût kas: etymology

Keeping in mind the discussion undertaken in the previous section, we may now tackle the etymology of the conjunction kaût and of the indefinite pronoun kaût kas.
4.1. The etymology of kaūt

According to Karl Mühlenbach (1898, 101), kaūt is a loanword from Russian xot’ ‘although’. As rightly pointed out by Endzelīns (pī i 94 [1899]), this is unlikely from a phonetic point of view. One would probably expect something like *kat, *kač in the case of an old borrowing (cf. Latv. dial. karūogs ‘flag’ mē iī 165 < ORuss. xorugy) or *kot, *koč in the case of a more recent borrowing16, but certainly not kaūt, and not with a broken tone.

Another view was advanced by Konstantīns Karulis in the only existing etymological dictionary of the Latvian language (1992, ²2001, 394–395). Karulis proposes for kaūt a segmentation kaû- + -t and suggests to trace back *kaû- to a verb meaning ‘to want, to desire’ from a PIE root *keu- ‘to give attention, to feel’, ‘to wish’ (‘pievērst uzmanību, just’, ‘vēlēties’, ɪᴇᴡ 587). According to Karulis, there is an argument that seems to tip the scales in favour of this etymology: the parallel with Russian, whose concessive conjunction xot’, xotja ‘although’ derives from the verb xotet’ ‘to want’. This would apply to Latvian as well: *kau- ‘to want’ → ‘although’, like Russ. xotet’ ‘to want’ → xot’, xotja ‘although’. One could add Lithuanian nòrs ‘although’, obviously derived from the verb noréti ‘to want’.

This etymology raises different problems, but I think the most important point is that we must be aware of the right direction to take. What we have to explain is not how an indefinite pronoun (especially a free-choice indefinite pronoun) may go back to a verb of volition (‘someone’ < ‘to want’). Although this can be proved to be a trivial evolution17, it cannot apply to the case of Latv. kaūt kas, since this indefinite pronoun is not supposed to go back directly to a verb ‘to want’, but first to a concessive conjunction ‘even if, although’, which itself is supposed to go back to a verb ‘to want’. Our goal is thus quite different. We have to show (1) how a concessive conjunction may go

16 A loanword koč is actually attested in the Latgalian dialects (< from Byeloruss. xoc’ ‘although’). Cf. Endzelīns (pī i 94 [1899]).

17 E. g., Lat. quisus, quilibet ‘whoever’ (< ‘the one you want, the one you like’), Alb. kushdo ‘whoever’ (< ‘whom one wants’), Russ. ljuboj ‘whoever, no matter who’ (< ljubit’ ‘to love’), Germ. beliebig ‘whoever’ (< lieben ‘to love’), Hung. akdr + pronoun ‘any’ (< akar ‘to want’). Cf. Haiman (1974, 347–348), Haspelmath (1997, 133sq.).
back to a volitive expression (‘although’ < ‘to want’?) and (2) how an indefinite pronoun may go back to a concessive conjunction (‘some’ < ‘although’?).

As to the first question, it is from a typological point of view not surprising to find a connection between concession and volition. The proximity of the two notions has already been observed by many scholars in the past (e. g., by Haiman 1974, 348) and is reflected in numerous languages, notably in Latin, in some Slavic languages and—last but not least—in Lithuanian. In order to understand the precise nature of this proximity, let us first have a look at the use of the Latin conjunction *quamuis* ‘although’, which seems to be a good illustration of such a link between the two notions. The original meaning of *quamuis* must have been ‘as much as you want’ (< *quām* ‘as much as’, *uīs* ‘you want’). In Classical Latin it functions as a concessive conjunction, quite often with a scalar meaning:

\[(54) \textbf{Quamuis} \ sordid-a \ res \ et \ \textbf{however} \ sordid-nom.sg.F \ \text{thing.nom.sg} \ \text{and} \ \text{invenust-a} \ est, \ \text{non} \ \text{cred-is} \ \text{unattractive-nom.sg.F} \ \text{be-prs.3sg not believe-prs.2sg} \ \text{mihi?} \ 1\text{sg.dat} \]

‘However sordid and unattractive this thing is, do you not believe me?’

Catullus, Carmina, 12, 5–6

There are grounds for assuming that *quamuis* was originally not a conjunction, but an adverbal locution (‘as much as you want, very much’) added to an independent clause, which had with the following clause only an anaphoric relationship\(^{18}\): ‘this thing is as sordid and unattractive as you want, [however] do you not believe me?’. It is well known that concession may be expressed not only by subordinate clauses, but also by anaphoric parallelism between two independent clauses. Originally, the function of *quamuis* might have been quite similar to that of the French concessive construction with the locution *avoir beau*, as in (55) and (56), two examples found on the web:

On the Latvian indefinite pronoun *kaū't kas*

(55) *L’économie a beau*
   
def. economy *have.prs.3sg beautiful*
   
se développer, le chômage progresse.
   refl develop.inf def unemployment grow.prs.3sg
   ‘Even if the economy does develop, unemployment is still growing.’

(56) *J’ ai beau étudier cette langue,*
   
1 sg *have.prs.1sg beautiful study.inf this language,*
   
je ne la parle pas.
   1 sg neg it speak.prs.1sg neg
   ‘Although I study this language, I don’t speak it.’

Adverbial uses of *quamuis* with the meaning ‘as much as you want’ are still attested in Latin, even in the classical language, as in (57) and (58):

(57) *Expect-ate facin-us quam uultis*
   
expect-imp.2pl crime-acc.sg as.much.as want-prs.2pl
   
improb-um: uinc-am tamen expectation-em
   infamous-acc.sg outdo-fut.1sg however expectation-acc
   omnium.
   all.gen.pl
   ‘Expect then to hear of some crime as infamous as you please; but I will outdo all your expectations.’
   Cicero, Verr., ii, 5, 11 (note the plural *quam uultis*)

(58) *Praeterit-a enim aetas quamuis long-a,*
   
past-nom.sg.f in.fact time.nom however long-nom.sg.f
   
cum effluxisset, null-a
   once slip.away.subj.ipf.3sg not.any-abl.sg.f
   consolation-e permulcere posset
   consolation-abl.sg soothe.inf be.able.subj.ipf.3sg
   stult-am senectut-em.
   foolish-abl.sg.f old.age-acc.sg
   ‘In fact, no lapse of time, however long, once it had slipped away, could solace or soothe a foolish old age.’
   Cicero, *De Senectute*, 4 (tr. William A. Falconer)

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The change of adverbial *quamuīs* into a concessive conjunction is a typical instance of syntactic reanalysis. As a result of this reanalysis, characteristic features of concessive subordination appeared, such as initial position and the use of the subjunctive mood.

The case is similar with Russian *xot’, xotja* and Lithuanian *nòrs* (Old and dial. Lith. *nórint*) ‘although’, both from a verb meaning ‘to want’ (Russian *xotet’, resp. Lith. *norët’*).

In Russian, *xotja* is attested as a concessive conjunction since at least the 12th century. In the earliest documents, we find instances in which it might still be interpreted as an adverb (‘willingly, readily, if one wants’), according to its etymology:

(59) *i za kormilicju xotę si* and for wet.nurse.ACC.SG **even.if** 3-NOM.SG.F
*budi** roba.*
be.IMP.3SG serf.NOM.SG
‘... and for a wet nurse as well, **even if** she is a serf (literally: would she be a serf, if one wants).’
*Russkaja Pravda*, 616v, end of the 12th century / beginning of the 13th century (example given by Le Feuvre 2007, 102)

The concessive meaning is here expressed by the imperative *budi*, whereas *xotę* may be seen as an adverb ‘willingly, readily, if one wants’. According to C. Le Feuvre (2007, 102), it is still a ‘tour paratactique’. It should be noted, however, that grammaticalization of *xotę* must have already taken place, at least to some extent, since anaphoric concession usually requires preposing the concessive condition: ‘it might be the case that X, [however] it is the case that Y’, whereas postposition of X, as in (59), is only possible with a fully-developed concessive conjunction.

In a treaty between Smolensk, Riga and Gotland, which dates from 1229, we find the modern use already attested:

(60) *zaplatiti nemčinu pûrvěje, xotę by* pay.INF German.DAT.SG first **even.if** AUX.3SG
*îsnu* komu vinovatb
other.DAT.SG.M someone.DAT endebted.NOM.SG.M
*bylb rusinu.*
be.PPA.NOM.SG.M Russian.DAT.SG
'He must first pay the German, **even if** he would be in someone else’s debt, to a Russian.'

Smolensk, 1229 (example given by Le Feuvre 2007, 102)

In this occurrence, *xotja* is grammaticalized as a concessive conjunction (‘although, even if’). Word order (main clause + subordinate clause) shows that an adverbial reading, i.e., something like ‘he might be as much as you want in someone else’s debt, [however] he must first pay the German’, can hardly be supposed for this instance. In Modern Russian, *xotja* is regular as a concessive conjunction (‘although’); the short form *xot’* is mostly limited to frozen phraseologisms and to the construction *xot’ by ‘even if, if only’. A similar development took place in Polish. In Modern Polish, *choć, chociaż (< chcieć ‘to want’) is the usual concessive conjunction ‘although’; it is attested since the 15th century²⁰. It is clear that this concessive conjunction must have arisen through syntactic reanalysis from an original adverbial apposition in the gerundive (‘willingly, readily’).

The picture is similar with the Lithuanian concessive conjunction *nórs* ‘although’ (Old and dial. Lith. *nórint*). Its use was thoroughly described in a paper by Rosemarie Lühr (1998). Both forms *nórs* and *nórint* may be traced back to participial forms of the verb *norėti* ‘to want’ in apposition to a main verb, the first one (*nórs*) as a frozen masculine present participle *nórįs* (< *nórint-s*), the second one (*nórint*) as a gerundive (< dative *nórint-i*). *Nórint* predominates in the oldest documents of the Lithuanian language. In some cases, it may still preserve its originally adverbial meaning ‘willingly, readily, as much as you want’, e.g.,

(61) **Norint** daug ira wardû ||
**although** many be-prs.3 names-gen.

_W. Christaus raszté szwentamę: Bet’_

Christ-gen scripture.loc.sg holy.loc.sg.m however

tassái wienas yra tikrassis

this.nom.sg.m one.nom.sg.m be-prs.3 right-nom.sg.m

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²⁰ In Old Church Slavic, the gerundive *xotę* ‘willingly’ was grammaticalized in a different way, as a final conjunction (‘in order to’), e.g., *napadaaxǫ emь: xotęšte prikosnǫti sę emь* ‘they pressed upon him for to touch him’ (Mk 3:10).
Although there are many names of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Scriptures, however only this one is His right name.’

Mikolajus Daukša (ca 1527 or 1538‒1613), _Postilla Catholicka_ (1599, 56₁₋₂)

The subordinate clause here might easily be traced back to an older paratactic structure: ‘there may be as much as one wants many names of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Scriptures; however only this one is His right name’. The adverbial meaning of nórint is also reflected in an archaic construction attested in Old Lithuanian, in which it is used as a marker of an alternative, e. g.,

(62) Târnáš || tâwás esmi asz / servant.nom your.nom.sg be.prs.1sg 1sg.nom
nórint pi = ||ktas ir nêwêrtás / wienók ||
albeit bad-nom.sg.m and unworthy.nom.sg.m however
kokiů nórint esmi / bûk pi = ||ktas / bûk
such.as-ins.sg.m pcle be.prs.1sg either bad.nom.sg.m or
gêras / wissadós || tâwas esmi.
good.nom.sg.m always your.nom.sg.m be.prs.1sg
‘I am your servant and your slave, _albeit_ bad and worthless, however such as I am, either bad or good, always yours.’

Mikolajus Daukša (ca 1527 or 1538‒1613), _Kathechismas_ (1595, 136₁₀₋₁₅)

In this instance also, we may reconstruct an original adverbial meaning: ‘if you want bad and worthless, however such as I am’. The development of nórs, nórint into a concessive conjunction is thus identical to the development of xot’, xotja in Russian. It has been argued by some scholars that it might represent in Lithuanian a loan-translation from Russian, but Lühr (1998, 279) rightly dismisses this assumption.

To sum up, in most cases concessive conjunctions deriving from
verbs of volition are based on the reanalysis of appositional verbal forms (‘willingly’) in paratactic constructions. Originally, we are dealing with adverbial locutions (e. g., Lat. *quamuīs* or gerundives (e. g., Russ. *xot’*, *xotja*, Lith. *nórs*, *nórint*). Our task now is to determine whether this could apply to the Latvian concessive conjunction *kaūt* ‘even if’.

The possibility of explaining *kaūt* as derived from a verb of volition comes up against the problem of which formation could be hidden behind *kaūt*. According to Karulis’ etymology the ending -t is a secondary particle, as in *net* ‘because, for’. This leaves us with a ‘stem’ *kaû-,* the explanation of which given by Karulis is no more than a root etymology (< PIE *keu-*). No attempt is made by Karulis to account for the vocalism *aû* (with a broken tone), nor for the morphology of the word.

A PIE root *keu-* ‘worauf achten (beobachten, schauen)’, ‘hören, fühlen, merken’ is reconstructed by Pokorny (*IEW* 587–588) on the basis of various cognates, among which one could mention the following forms:


*keu-s-* (with enlargement -s-) > Gr. *ἀκοῦω* ‘to hear’; Goth. *hausjan* ‘to hear’

*s-keu-* (with s mobile) > Gr. *θυοσκόος* ‘sacrificing priest’; OHG *scouwōn* ‘to see’, OEngl. *scēawian* ‘to show’; OPr. *au-schauditwei* ‘to trust’.

Given their variability of form and their plasticity of meaning, such far-distant comparisons are practically all worthless. There is no point in discussing them in detail. Moreover, none of the forms mentioned by Pokorny directly displays the meaning ‘to like, to want’ that would be the necessary starting point for the development of the Latvian concessive conjunction *kaūt*. We may conclude that, despite the typological parallels discussed above, there are no grounds for deriving *kaūt* from a verb of volition: Karulis’ etymology is simply mistaken.

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21 Cf. also Trautmann (*bsw* 132).
Keeping in mind that *kaût* was reconstructed above as a marker of counterfactual condition (‘if however, if contrary to reality, if only’), one might explore a wholly different track to account for its etymology. My claim is that *kaût* is based on a conditional conjunction (‘if’), expanded by a disjunctive particle (‘however, yet’). There are in Latvian other conjunctions sharing some similarities with *kaût* both from a morphological and a syntactic point of view. According to Mühlenbach and Endzelin (ME ii 131), a conjunction *kad*, mostly used as a temporal conjunction ‘when, as’, also displays some common meanings with *kaût*, especially as a conditional conjunction, or even as a wish marker. Examples from the *Manuale Lettico-Germanicum*:

(63) **Kad** *tas Pehrcona Gaif ne*  
    if this-NOM.SG.M storm.GEN.SG light.NOM.SG NEG  
    buhtu, gan tu dźirdetu kah=dus  
    be.SUBJ.3 PCLE 2SG.NOM hear.SUBJ.2SG some-ACC.PL.M  
    Wahrdus.  
    words-ACC.PL  
    ‘If it hadn’t been for that thunderstorm, I would have lectured you.’  
    (Germ. *Wurde kein Ungewitter seyn, so wolte ich dir schon etwa in den bart werffen.*)  
    *Manuale Lettico-Germanicum* (ca 1690, 356)

(64) **Kad** *Deews dohtu us=fniht.*  
    if God-NOM give.SUBJ.3 snow.INF  
    ‘If only God would make the snow fall!’  
    (Germ. *Wenn Gott wolte Schnee drauf geben.*)  
    *Ibid.* (ca 1690, 539‒540)

To be sure, the model of German *wenn* is likely to have played a role in the polysemy of *kad* in Latvian. Nevertheless, it is striking that *kaût* and *kad* are parallel formations with at least partly shared semantic contents. One could go one step further by assuming that *kaût*, like *kad*, belongs to the conjunctive stem *ka*-, which goes back to the well known PIE relative stem *k"o*-.

This new etymology not only enables us to account for the predominance of the subordinating uses of *kaût*, but also opens an unsuspected possibility for explaining its morphology. It is well known that conditional conjunctions may be close to conjunctions of manner.
On the Latvian indefinite pronoun kaūt kas

This is shown, e.g., by Hittite mān both ‘just as, as, how, like’ and ‘if’ (cf. Cluw. mān ‘if, whenever’, Lyc. mē ‘as, so, likewise’)\(^2\). In some cases, the conjunction of manner seems to be primary, the conditional conjunction secondary, as in Ukr. jak ‘how’ → jakščo ‘if’, but the opposite situation may occur as well, as in Estonian kui ‘if’ → kuidas ‘how’. Within a different context, one could also mention Latin sī ‘if’ compared with sīc ‘so, this way’. A semantic proximity between the formal expression of manner and that of concession seems also to be suggested by examples such as Engl. how → however and German wie ‘how, as’ → wiewohl ‘although’.

Taking this evidence into account, I tentatively suggest that kaūt is derived from the same basis as the comparative conjunction kā ‘how, like, as’. Both conjunctions kaūt and kā could be traced back to a common source *kā- (< PIE *kʷeh₂-), followed by different particles. In the case of kā, Endzelin (1923, 467) supposes either an adverbial ending *kāi (as in OPr. kai ‘how’) or a locative ending *kā-je (as in the Lithuanian feminine locative -oje); both solutions are questionable, but a common prototype *kā- is more than likely. As to the ending of kaūt, it could be suggested that it reflects a disjunctive particle *u-te, which would find a perfect match, at least formally, in Old Indic utá ‘and, also’ (e.g., pitáras ... utá deví ‘the fathers and the two goddesses’ RV 1, 106, 3); for the semantics, see Germ. wie ... auch ... (e.g., wie dem auch sei ‘be that as it may’). In Old Indic, the particle utá is cognate with the basic particle u, mostly attested with a disjunctive meaning ‘now, already, soon’. The relationship of utá and u implies the existence of an independent particle -ta probably going back to PIE *-te; such a particle could have existed in Baltic as well (see Forssman 2003, 95). Indo-European comparanda are too numerous to be listed here in detail, but it is striking that some of them are involved in the formation of concessive conjunctions or adverbs. A special mention must be made of Germanic *þau-h (possibly < PIE *tā-u- + *kʷe), both adverb (‘but, nevertheless’, Goth. þau(h), Olcel. pó, Germ. doch) and conjunction (‘though, although’, OEngl. ðéah, Engl. though, although), and of Balto-Slavic *jau- ‘already’ (Lith. jaũ, Latv. ġau, Pol. juž, possibly < PIE *yā-u-, as to the semantics cf. the disjunctive use of Germ. schon ‘already’ and cf. Germ. obschon). The picture we would get would be

that of a correlative system opposing *tā-u-, vs. *yā-u-, vs. *kʷā-u-. Further cognates could be the Greek disjunctive particle αὖτε ‘again, furthermore, on the other hand, on the contrary’ and especially the Greek conjunction ἦτε ‘as, like as’ (< ἦϝέ ‘or’ + *-υτε). It would certainly be unwise to reconstruct a fully coherent system on so slender a basis, and even the assumption that all these forms might go back to Proto-Indo-European could well be excessive. As everybody knows, the etymology of particles is a difficult field of research, because, when dealing with particles, we are often compelled to operate with monosyllabic units characterized by a vague meaning.

Be that as it may, a prototype *kʷā-ute ‘if + however’ could account for the origin of Latvian kaūt in a satisfactory way both from a formal and from a semantic point of view. Besides, it would also have the advantage of directly explaining the broken tone of kaūt, provided that one assumed a long acute diphthong and a final stress (*kʷā-uté, cf. OInd. utable).

4.2. The etymology of kaūt kas

Let us now turn to our initial issue, the origin of the indefinite pronoun kaūt kas. As already said, the philological data make it likely that it derives from the concessive conditional conjunction kaūt ‘even if’. The question is how their connection has to be understood.

To begin with, the proximity of the indefinite pronoun kaūt kas and of the concessive conjunction kaūt in Latvian is not exceptional from a typological point of view. Parallels may be found, especially around the Baltic area:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indefinite Pronoun</th>
<th>Concessive Conjunction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Russian xot’ kto</td>
<td>xot’ ‘although’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish byle kto</td>
<td>byle ‘although, even if, if only’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish vaikka kuka</td>
<td>vaikka ‘although’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanian kās nórs</td>
<td>nórs ‘although’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yiddish abi ver</td>
<td>abi ‘if only’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

23 I owe to Johan van der Auwera the reference to the Yiddish data.
Obviously, we are dealing here with an areal feature of the Baltic region; this does not preclude, of course, the possibility of the same feature occurring in other languages of the world. A loan-translation from Russian (xot’ kto) or Polish (byle kto) into Latvian (kaút kas) could be thought of, but such an assumption cannot be considered as firmly established, as long as the etymological connection of indefinite pronouns and concessive conjunctions is not accounted for.

In order to shed some light on this issue, one may note that, in many languages, concessive conjunctions may be used as scalar focus particles meaning ‘even’, ‘at least’. The semantic value of such focus particles is to place an event on a pragmatic scale, either at the highest or at the lowest position. ‘Even’ expresses the inclusion of every member of a given set without leaving aside any single item, it reaches the highest position ever accessible; on the contrary, ‘at least’ expresses the exclusion of every item except for one, it reaches the lowest position ever accessible. Both focus particles represent extreme positions on a scale that covers the whole range between minimal and maximal inclusion. Cross-linguistically, this function is most often expressed by adverbs (e.g., Engl. even, Germ. sogar, Fr. même), but some languages make use of concessive conjunctions for this purpose. Consider the following Russian examples:

(65) Skaž-ite xot’ slovo.
    say-imp.2pl at.least word-acc.sg
    ‘Say at least a word.’
    On-a gotov-a xot’ v pustynj-u
    3-nom.sg.f ready-nom.sg.f even into desert-acc.sg
    bežat’ so mnoj.
    run.inf with 1sg.ins
    ‘She is ready to run away even into a desert with me.’
    (examples given by Haspelmath 1997, 158)

The identity of xot’ in both functions (‘although’ and ‘at least, even’) is uncontroversial. The same feature is attested in other languages of the same area, especially Polish:\footnote{Cf. also Pol. choćby ‘even’ (= nawet).}
(66) *Uskrom* **choć** rózg-*q* twoj-*q*  
subjugate-IMP.2SG **at.least** rod-INS.SG your-INS.SG.F  
ciał-*o* zaślepion-*e*!  
body-ACC.SG blinded-ACC.SG  
‘Subjugate the blinded body **at least** with your rod!’  
Old Polish, M. Sęp-Szarzyński, 1601 (example given by Bańkowski 2000, 140)

(67) *Daj* **mi** **choć** trzy!  
give.IMP.2SG 1SG.DAT **at.least** three-ACC  
‘Give me **at least** three of them!’  
Modern Polish (example given by Bańkowski 2000, 140)

Lithuanian:

(68) *Oy* tankikete brolei sesele /  
oh visit.IMP.2PL brothers.VOC.PL sister.ACC.SG  
norent žimos kelelu.  
even winter.GEN.SG path.INS.SG  
‘Oh! brothers! visit your sister, **even** down the path of winter!’  
Simonas Stanevičius (1799–1848), *Daynas Žemayciu* (1829, 2115–16)

(69) *Kad* aš užmigčiau / **Nors** vašndėlé.  
that 1SG.NOM fall.asleep.SBJ.1SG **at.least** hour.ACC.SG  
‘If only I could fall asleep, **at least** for one hour!’  
Antanas Juška (1819–1880), *Liėtūviškos dájnos užrašytos par Antáną Juškévicię* (1880, I 723,4)

or Finnish:

go.FUT.1SG **even** right.now  
‘I will go **even** now.’  
(example given by Kudzinowski 1988, i 1115)

An adverbial use of **kaût** is also attested in Latvian. Examples:

(71) *Māj-as* arī tad paliek māj-*as*,  
home-NOM.PL also then remain-PRS.3 home-NOM.PL  
ja tu tur esi dzimis  
if 2SG.NOM there AUX.PRS.2SG be.born-PPA.NOM.SG.M
un iegriezies kaut reizi gadā.

‘Your home remains your home, provided you are born there and come back at least once in a year.’

Miervaldis Birze (1921–2000), Smilšu pulkstenis (1964, 47)

(72) Būtu iedevis kaut rubli.

‘He might have given at least a rouble.’ Modern Latvian (cf. LVV 1987, 373)

The use of a concessive conjunction as a focus particle could be accounted for by assuming that it reflects the reduction of a whole subordinate concessive structure (‘although, even if, if only’) with ellipsis of the verb. Consider once again the example given in (68). One may reconstruct a full structure: ‘visit your sister, even if [you have to go] down the path of winter’, reduced by ellipsis to ‘even if down the path of winter’. A similar view was advocated by Haspelmath (1997, 157), who speaks of a ‘reduction of concessive conditionals’.

Having this point in mind, one may now observe that, in many languages, indefinite pronouns, especially free-choice pronouns, may be built on focus particles meaning ‘even’ or ‘at least’ added to non-derived indefinite pronouns. Haspelmath (1997, 158 and 159) provides us with a list of examples, in which the Latvian data are duly mentioned:

(a) with a focus particle ‘even’

Hindi/Urdu koii bhii ‘anybody’ koii + bhii ‘someone’ + ‘also, even’

Dutch ook maar iemand ‘anybody’ iemand + ook maar ‘someone’ + ‘even, at least’

(b) with a focus particle ‘at least’

Russian xot’ kto ‘anyone’ xot’ ‘at least’

Finnish vaikka kuka ‘anyone’ vaikka ‘at least’

Modern Greek kan-énas ‘anyone’ kan ‘at least’

Latvian kaut kas ‘something’ kaut ‘at least’

Hungarian akár-ki ‘anybody’ akár ‘at least’

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Nenets  xibja-xart ‘nobody’ -xart ‘at least’
Lezgian  wuž ťajit’ani ‘anybody’ ťajit’ani ‘at least’
Kannada  yaar-aadaruu ‘anybody’ -aadaruu ‘at least’
West Greenlandic  suna-luunniit ‘anything’ -luunniit ‘at least’
Yakut  kim eme ‘somebody’ eme ‘at least’

The distinction of (a) and (b) is often irrelevant, since the same particle (e. g., Russ. xot’) may convey both meanings (‘even’ / ‘at least’). The point is that indefinite pronouns may derive from scalar focus particles. Semantically, this is not an accident. Indefinite pronouns, especially free-choice indefinites, express a scalar meaning in the same way as scalar focus particles do; they denote the extreme endpoint on a scale. As Haspelmath puts it (1997, 164):

“Free-choice indefinites must be understood as denoting the low point on a pragmatic scale. But this is precisely the function of scalar focus particles: expressing an extreme point on some scale.”

In the discussion undertaken above, I have tried to argue for a diachronic pathway that could explain the etymological connection of the indefinite pronoun kaút kas and the concessive conditional conjunction kaút in Latvian. My claim is that the creation of kaút kas is based on the use of the conjunction kaút as a scalar particle ‘at least, even’:

Concessive conditional conjunction kaút ‘even if, if however, if contrary to reality’

Scalar particle kaút ‘at least, even’

Scalar particle kaút ‘at least, even’ + non-derived indefinite pronoun kas ‘something’

Free-choice indefinite pronoun kaút kas ‘anything’

Indefinite pronoun kaút kas ‘something’
There is thus no need to look for a verb meaning ‘to want’ as a source of the Latvian indefinite *kaūt kas*: it is derived from the use of the conjunction *kaūt* as a scalar particle. We are now able, I think, to re-assess the possibly areal status of the formation of *kaūt kas* as an indefinite pronoun in Latvian.

As we have seen above, the formation of free-choice indefinite pronouns from scalar particles is a widespread phenomenon in the world’s languages; it is by no means restricted to the Baltic area. On the other hand—unless I am mistaken—the use of concessive conjunctions as scalar particles seems to be much more limited: I have found no instances outside the Baltic area. Whatever its historical starting point might be, it must probably be seen as an areal feature. It would certainly be excessive to consider that Latvian *kaūt kas*, taken as a fully-developed indefinite pronoun, is a loan-translation from Russian *xot’ kto* or from Polish *byle kto*. From a typological point of view, a derivational pathway *kaūt* (scalar particle) $\rightarrow$ *kaūt kas* (free-choice pronoun) is too trivial to be necessarily ascribed to a foreign influence. But the use of *kaūt* ‘even if’ as a scalar particle ‘even, at least’ might be due to an areal influence, and this time a Russian (or Polish) model cannot be completely ruled out, even if, as is often the case with areal convergences, the concrete source of the shared feature is difficult to identify beyond any doubt.

4.3. Latvian *kaūt kas* and Lithuanian *kàs nórs*

There is still one point that needs further investigation. The case of Latvian *kaūt kas* is apparently parallel to that of Lith. *kàs nórs* (OLith. *kàs nórint*) ‘someone, somebody’ compared with *nórs* (OLith. *nórint*) ‘although’. The question is whether the explanation given for Latv. *kaūt kas* could adequately apply to Lith. *kàs nórs* as well. A brief discussion must therefore be opened on this question, before we conclude.26

The Lithuanian indefinite pronoun *kàs nórs* (OLith. *kàs nórint*) is attested since the end of the 16th century. A large number of instances is already found in the *Postilla Catholicka* of Mikalojus Daukša (1599), e. g.:

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26 For more detail see a discussion in Rosinas (2001, 98).
(73) *Ką nórint, iumus*  
`whatever-ACC PCLE 2PL.DAT`  
`taris / tatái darikite /`  
`say.FUT.3 that-ACC do.IMP.2PL`  

‘Whatever you want, she says, do it!’

(Pol. *Cokolwiek czyńcę, to czyńcę.*)

Mikolajus Daukša (ca 1527 or 1538–1613), *Postilla Catholicka*  
(1599, 72₂₆)

(74) *Darîkite wasiús gaiłéiimo. Ne*  
`do.IMP.2PL fruit.ACC.PL mercy-GEN NEG`  
`kokiūš nor waysiús / bet wërtūs`  
`any-ACC.PL.M PCLE fruits-ACC.PL but worthy-ACC.PL.M gaileïimo.`  

mercy-GEN.SG

‘Make fruits of mercy. Not any fruits, but some worthy of mercy.’

(Pol. *Cżyńcie godne owoce pokuty. Nie ledá owoce / ále godne owoce pokuty*)

*Ibid.* (1599, 25₁₋₂)

(75) *Nes’ kuris nór|rint daríς wálă*  
`for whoever.NOM.SG.M PCLE do-FUT.3 will-ACC.SG`  
`Téwo máno / kursái yra`  
`Father-GEN my-GEN who-NOM be-PRS.3`  
`daguië / tassái yra brôlu`  
`heaven-LOC this-NOM.SG.M be-PRS.3 brother.INS.SG`  
`ir šešëri|mí ir mótna manâië. and sister.INS.SG and mother.INS.SG my.INS.SG.F`

‘For whoever will do the will of my father who is in heavens, this one is my brother, my sister and my mother.’

(Pol. *Bo ktorykolwiek bedzie cżynil wola Oycá mego ktory iest w niebie, ten iest brá-tem y šiostra / y mátka moią.*)


(76) *Papeikemia wissús tūς kurié*  
`blame-PRS.1PL all-ACC.PL.M those-ACC.PL.M who-NOM.PL.M`  
`kokiū nór|rint budú / [...]`  
`whenever-INS.SG.M PCLE manner-INS.SG`  
`ne kaiż reîkia / žmônes surinkinéia. not as it.must.be-PRS.3 people-ACC.PL gathered-PRS.3`
‘Let us blame those who in whatever way gather people not as they should have done!’
(Pol. Pohańbiamy wszystkich tych / ktorzy iákim-kolwiek objycáiem / [...] nie iáko potrze-bá / ludzie zgromadzária.)
Ibid. (1599, 588₉₋₁₂)

In the Dictionarium trium linguarum by Konstantynas Sirvydas (17th century), we find:

(77) Cokolwiek / aliquid, quodcunq̅, quoduis, quodlibet. kasnorint.
Konstantynas Sirvydas (ca 1578 or 1581–1631), Dictionarium trium linguarum (ca 1620, i 15)
(78) Ktokołwiek / quícunq̅. kasnorint.
Ibid. (ca 1620, i 67)
(79) Ktkolwiek / ktoszkolwiek / quicú; quispiam, aliquis, kasnor / kiekwienas / wienas kurisgi kiaikas.
Ktorykolwiek / Quicunq̅; quisquis est ille, quilibet, kasnor / kurisnor / kurisnoris.
Ktorykolwiek, wrzedźie / Quotuscunq̅; kielintasnoris.
Ktorykolwiek ze dwu / Vterlibet. Katrasnor.
Ibid. (1643, iii 139)

In the modern Lithuanian language, kàs nórs is the general, unspeci-fied indefinite pronoun (‘someone, somebody’), clearly distinct from the specific unknown kažkàs ‘someone, somebody, one does not know who’. But the examples produced above suggest that its original meaning could have been that of a free-choice indefinite pronoun (‘anyone, anyobdy, whoever’). A shift may thus have taken place between Old Lithuanian and Modern Lithuanian from a system opposing three terms (kàs unspecified indefinite pronoun, kažkàs specific unknown and kàs nórs free-choice pronoun) to a new system opposing three terms (kàs nórs unspecified indefinite pronoun, kažkàs specific unknown and bèt kàs free-choice pronoun), leaving aside kàs for limited contexts (e. g., after jéigu ‘if’ or after modality adverbs, as in retaĩ kàs ‘seldom anyone’, gål kàs ‘perhaps someone’). The assumption that kàs nórs was originally a free-choice indefinite pronoun speaks in favour of a structural comparison with Latvian kaút kàs, which originally had the same primary function. Both forms seem to be derived in a similar way from a concessive conjunction, kàs nórs from nórs ‘although’, kaút
kas from kaût ‘although, even if’. But there is a crucial difference that must be seriously taken into account, the different word order: kâs nórs seems to represent an order [indefinite + concessive], kaût kas an order [concessive + indefinite]. To be true, alongside kâs nórs, some Lithuanian dialects attest the reverse word order *nórs kâs. Rosinas (2001, 330) mentions a form nûr kas in the dialect of Leleikós. But this seems to be a recent innovation, based on a model that could well be of Slavic origin (Russian xot’ kto or Polish byle kto).

It could be tempting to take the Lithuanian indefinite pronoun kâs nórs ‘someone, somebody’ at face value, as a formation derived from the verb norë́ti ‘to want’, for which a parallel would be provided by Lat. quîlibet ‘anyone, whomever you like’ (from quî ‘who’ + libet ‘it is pleasing’). This would imply two fundamental requirements. First of all, this would require us to see the pronoun kâs as a relative pronoun (‘who’) followed by a verbal form (‘it is pleasing, one likes’). Only this analysis could account for the word order in a satisfactory way, since kâs as an indefinite pronoun is known to be unable to stand in initial position: although accented, it presents the typical behaviour of a clitic form. The second requirement implied by this explanation would be to see nórs as a conjugated form (‘it is pleasing, one likes, one wants’). The problem is that it can hardly be interpreted as such: (kâs) nórs and O Lith. (kâs) nórint are identical to the concessive conjunction, nórs, nórint, which, as was shown above, goes back to a gerundive form (‘willingly’) of norë́ti ‘to want’. The function of a gerundive form in a relative structure would be incomprehensible: kâs ‘who’ + gerundive nórs, nórint ‘willingly’ does not make any sense. A comparison with Old Russian relative clauses in which the main verb is a gerundive could be thought of27, but there would be no other trace of such a construction in Baltic. A compromise solution could be to argue that the original construction was *kâs nóř (with *nóř < nóři 3rd person present indicative: ‘one wants’) and that it was reshaped as kâs nórs, kâs nórint analogically to the concessive conjunction nórs, nórint. This would, however, remain unconvincing, as long as the ground for this analogy is not explained.

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27 E. g., Old Russian: kudy kto vid’a ‘wherever one may see’ (Novgorod Chronicle, i, Mss. Synodal 103v, s. a. 1228), with the gerundive vid’a. I owe this example to Claire Le Feuvre (Paris).
On the Latvian indefinite pronoun *kaūt kas*

Alternatively, one could prefer a wholly different analysis. One could assume that (kās) nórs, (kās) nórint really contains the concessive conjunction ‘although, even if’, used as a scalar particle in an elliptic context: ‘although, even if someone, somebody’ > ‘even / at least someone, somebody’ > ‘anyone, anybody, whoever’. Occurrences of nórs, nórint as a scalar particle ‘even, at least’ are well attested in Lithuanian, and it is striking that some of them may be associated with a non-derived indefinite pronoun kās ‘someone, somebody’, e. g.,

(80)  
\[
\text{Turiu nór kuo kiaules} \\
\text{have.prs.1sg at.least something.ins pig.acc.pl} \\
\text{šert.} \\
\text{feed.inf} \\
\text{‘I have to feed the pigs at least with something (i. e., with anything, with whatever food).’} \\
\text{Dialect of Prienai (ltž viii 857)}
\]

This example could be a good illustration of the same pathway that led to the creation of *kaūt kas* in Latvian; a translation into Latvian would certainly use *kaūt kas* in this context.

But, as already said above, the problem is with the order of the constituents in Lith. kās nórs, kās nórint. A scalar particle modifying an indefinite pronoun would certainly stand before it (as in Latv. *kaūt kas*), and, moreover, it is a general feature of kās as a non-derived indefinite pronoun to stand in Wackernagel’s position (P2), as a semi-clitic form. Since there is no ground for assuming that the dialectal forms of the type nórs kās reflect the most archaic stage (and indeed they are rather to be seen as late imitations of Russian *xot’ kto* or Polish *byle kto*), it is necessary to consider the order kās + nórs as genuine in Lithuanian. As a result, kās (in kās nórs) must be seen not as an indefinite pronoun, but as an interrogative or relative pronoun.

A solution could appear by taking into account the existence of indefinite pronouns derived from the addition of focus particles to interrogative pronouns, as in the following examples given by Haspelmath (1997, 157–158):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Particle</th>
<th>Pronoun</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serbian/Croatian</td>
<td><em>i-ko</em></td>
<td>‘anyone’</td>
<td>‘and, also, even’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian</td>
<td><em>siapa-pun</em></td>
<td>‘anyone’</td>
<td>‘also, even’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The derivational pathway can be reconstructed as follows. Interrogative pronouns (who) are often used as non-specific relative pronouns (who + ever). And, on the other hand, free-choice indefinite pronouns (whoever) are often identical to, or even derived from, non-specific relative pronouns: the structure of Engl. whoever is strikingly similar to that of Lith. kàs nòrs, and there are grounds for believing that both forms may have followed the same evolution. Admittedly, the issue would deserve a more complete investigation, but already this first approximation makes it likely that the formation of Lith. kàs nòrs is fundamentally different from that of Latv. kaût kas: their outward proximity could well be accidental.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to shed light on the origin of the Latvian indefinite pronoun kaût kas ‘something’. The philological data suggest that kaût kas is a recent creation of the Latvian language derived from the concessive conjunction kaût ‘although, even if’, and it was argued in this paper that this evolution is based on the use of the conjunction kaût as a scalar particle (‘even, at least’), this probably being an areal feature of the Baltic region. This invalidates the view according to which kaût and kaût kas go back to a verbal root meaning ‘to want’. All too often, etymology is seen as a mere projection of a single word into the most remote prehistory, without taking into account the semantic and syntactic context in which this word was used at each stage of
its development. Only a thorough description of all the parameters involved in the pragmatic use of a word may provide a faithful picture of what it originally was and to which source it might be traced back.

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GRAMMATICAL ABBREVIATIONS

abl — ablative, acc — accusative, aux — auxiliary, cvb — con-

verb, dat — dative, deb — debitive, def — definite, f — feminine,

fut — future, gen — genitive, imp — imperative, inf — infinitive,

ins — instrumental, ipf — imperfect, loc — locative, m — masculine,

neg — negative, nom — nominative, opt — optative, pcle — part-

cle, pl — plural, ppa — past active participle, ppp — past passive participle, ppia — present active participle, prpp — present passive participle, prs — present, pst — past, refl — reflexive, sg — singular, subj — subjunctive

OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

bsw = Trautmann 1923.

dw = Baron & Wissendorff 1894–1915.


dk = Daukša 1595.

dp = Daukša 1599.

di = Sirvydas ca 1620.

di³ = Sirvydas 1643.

ew = Pokorny 1959.


llvmsa = Latviešu literārās valodas morfologiskās sistēmas attīstība,

2002.
Some of my Old Latvian examples were taken from the electronic corpus of early written Latvian texts (Latviešu valodas seno tekstu korpuss) on the website <http://www.korpuss.lv/senie/>.

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Skohlas = Likkumi. Riga: Müller, 1789.


