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On the Latvian indefinite pronoun *kaût kas*¹

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The present paper deals with the origin of the Latvian indefinite pronoun *kaût kas* ‘something’. It is generally recognized that *kaût kas* is related to the conditional concessive conjunction *kaût* ‘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 *kaût 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 diversity². While many of them may be traced back ultimately to the PIE indefinite stem **k^wos*, frequently enlarged by different particles or lexemes, other forms are built on more complex structures, e. g., Lith. *kažkàs* ‘someone, somebody’ (< *kàs žino 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 tàs*, 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 language³, *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 morpho-

² See, e. g., Kozhanov (2011, 109–140) for an overview of the Lithuanian indefinite pronouns. On Latvian see Gätters (1993, 238–239).

³ MLLVG (1959, i 524–525, 527, 529), Forssman (2001, 280, § 380).

logical point of view, *kaût kas* is made of an uninflected particle *kaût* followed by the interrogative-indefinite stem *kas* ‘who, what’ or its derivatives *kâds* or *kurš* ‘which’, *kâ* ‘how, as’, *kur* ‘where’, *kad* ‘when, as’. It is used as a substantive (*kaût kas* ‘something’), as an adjective (*kaût kâds vīriētis* ‘some man’, *kaût kâda siēviēte* ‘some woman’, with a slightly negative connotation) or as an adverb (*kaût kâ* ‘somehow’, *kaût kur* ‘somewhere’, *kaût kad* ‘at some time’). To illustrate the use of Latvian *kaût kas*, a few examples can be given from Latvian literature:

- (1) *Bet kaut kas viņ-u tomēr noturēja*
 but **something.NOM** 3-ACC.SG nevertheless hold.PST.3
uz viet-as, un tas kaut kas
 on place-GEN.SG and this.NOM.SG.M **something.NOM**
bija atmiņ-as par pagājuš-o
 be.PST.3 remembrance-NOM.PL about past-ACC.SG
piektdien-u.

Friday-ACC.SG

‘But **something** nevertheless held him on the spot, and this **something** was the remembrance of the past Friday.’
 Andrejs Upīts (1877–1970), *Kopoti raksti*, xii (1952, 10, cf. MLLVG 1959, i 524)

- (2) *Kaut kādam plikadīd-am to jau sen*
some-DAT.SG.M poor.devil-DAT.SG 3.ACC.SG already long
varēju izdot.
 be.able.PST.1SG give.INF

‘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 kaut kas jaun-s,*
 this.NOM.SG be.FUT.3 **something.NOM.SG** new-NOM.SG.M
tas būs kaut kas citādāk-s
 this.NOM.SG be.FUT.3 **something.NOM.SG** different-NOM.SG.M
un tas būs kaut kas lab-s.
 and this.NOM.SG be.FUT.3 **something.NOM.SG** good-NOM.SG.M
 ‘It will be **something new**, it will be **something else** and it will be **something good**.’

- (4) *kaut kur* *starp* *debes-īm* *un* *zem-i*
somewhere between heaven-DAT.PL and earth-ACC.SG
 ‘Somewhere between heaven and earth.’

A reduction of the particle *kaût* to *kaû*, 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 *kàu kas*, *kàu kéids* or *kaïds*, *kàu kùrs* (Ūsele 1998, 38); in Galgauska, we find *koṷ kas*, *koṷ koc*, *koṷ kurs* (Kalnietis & Rūķe-Draviņa 1996, 77). A few examples may be given from dialect descriptions:

- (5) *Kùo* *tu* *meklē ?* — *Màn*
 what.ACC 2SG.NOM look.for.PRS.2SG 1SG.DAT
koṷ 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* *myûžēģi* *kàu kù* *strùodùo*.
 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 *kaût 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 *kaût 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

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, 555₂₀₋₂₁)

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

- (8) *Preezigs warru paftai||gaht /*
 happy.NOM.SG.M be.able.PRS.1SG go.for.a.walk.INF
fweiks / kaut kahdâ Keffâ.
 healthy.NOM.SG.M **whatever.LOC.SG** difficulty.LOC.SG
 ‘I can go for a walk, happy, healthy, in **whatever** difficulty.’
Lettische geistliche Lieder und Collecten (1685, 125₁₉₋₂₀)

Apart from these early instances, the first occurrences of *kaût kas* go back to the second part of the 18th century. In the *Neue volståndigere 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 volståndigere lettische Grammatik* (1761, 140)

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

- (10) *Kad fcheitan par kaut kahdu apbehdinatu ||*
 when here about **some.ACC.SG** afflict.PPP.ACC.SG
luhgts tohp, tad gribbetu
 pray.PPP.NOM.SG.M become.PRS.3 then want.SUBJ.2SG
tahdu pehz tawas || fchehlastibas atpestiht.
 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), *Špreddikis pee Eefwehtifchanas tahs Ahdafchu Pahwil Pehtera bafnizas* (1775, 19₂₀₋₂₂)

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 Skohlasbehrns no Skohlas*
 when some.NOM.SG.M schoolboy.NOM.SG from school.GEN.SG
gribb || atftaht, tad wiṅnam to ne
 want.PRS.3 leave.INF then 3.DAT.SG.M that.ACC.SG NEG
buhs pehz fawas Pa = ||tikfchanas kaut kahdâ
 be.FUT.3 after his.GEN.SG.F pleasure.GEN.SG **any-LOC.SG**
Laikâ 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 brihfcham fchwefchi Kungi no*
 if sometimes foreign.NOM.PL.M gentlemen.NOM.PL from
kaut kahdas || *Kahrtas Skohlâ*
some.GEN.SG.F estate.GEN.SG school.LOC.SG
nahktu, tad buhs Skohlnee||keem pee
 come.SUBJ.3 then be.FUT.3 schoolboy.DAT.PL at
wiṅ-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 *kaût 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, 83₁₆₋₁₇)

In the works of his son, Alexander Johann Stender (1744–1819), *kaût 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 Muifschneeku tappe pahrwehrfts un weena Pafakka no Drauga Lizzepura* (1790, 66₇)
- (15) *Muifchas 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, 70₁₈₋₁₉)
- (16) *Katrs dfehrejs, kas pats*
 every.NOM.SG drinker.NOM.SG who.NOM.SG himself.NOM.SG
peedferahs jeb zit||tu peerunnajis,
 get.drunk.PRS.3 or other.ACC.SG persuade.PPA.NOM.SG.M
kad kaut kahda fuhdfefchana || nahk,
 when **some.NOM.SG** complaint.NOM.SG come.PRS.3SG
buhtu labbi kullams.
 be.SUBJ.3 well thrash.PPRP.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, 88₂₂₋₂₃)
- (17) *Bet taggad 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, 88₂₁₋₂₃)
- (18) *Weeglak bij wiņnam tizzeht un par*
 easier be.PST.3 3.DAT.SG.M believe.INF and as
pa||teefibu peeņemt, 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, Stahftu = 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), etc⁵. But the diffusion of *kaût 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 *kaût kas* or *kaût kâds* is attested in early dictionaries of the Latvian language, not even in the *Volständiges Deütsch-lettisches und Lettisch-deütsches Lexicon* by Jacob Lange (1777, ii 147). As far as I know, the first occurrence of *kaût kas* in a dictionary is found in the *Lettisches Lexikon* by Gotthard Friedrich Stender (1789), in which two entries are given:

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

kaut kâ, 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 kâ, 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***’

⁵ Cf. LLVMSA (2002, 380–381).

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, buhfchu 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, 108_{4,9})

- (23) *káut-kas* (subst.), *káut-ku’rsch*, *káut-kads* (adj.), *irgend einer, welcher es auch sei, der erste beste ‘whoever’*
August Bielenstein (1826–1907), *Lettische Grammatik* (1863, 102)⁶
- (24) *káut kas*, k. *káhd*s, 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 mahziba* (1907, § 76)

It must be noted, however, that several sources still do not mention *kaût 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 *kaût 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 *kaût kas* quite often in his writings. Be that as it may, there are grounds for assuming that, at least since mid-century, *kaût 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 *kaût kas* in the early literature and the scarcity of its forms until the middle of the 19th century

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 Mühlentach (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:
- (2a) Scalar concessive conditionals: e. g., *Even if we do not get any financial support, we will go ahead with our project*.
- (2b) Alternative concessive conditionals: e. g., *Whether we get any financial support or not, we will go ahead with our project*.
- (2c) 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 *kaût*. 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) *Launeems* *nhe* *palliedf* *nheneeke* / ***kaut***
 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, 35₁₂₋₁₃)
- (27) *Nhe weens* *to* *Nahwu* / *ifbehgt* ||
 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 *wirf* *auxtaku* *Kallnu*
 also on highest.ACC.SG mountain.ACC.SG
kahp-is *buh-tu*.
 climb-PPA.NOM.SG.M be-SUBJ.3.
 ‘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 / *fudrabs* *in* *Selts* / *in*
 world.NOM.SG silver.NOM.SG and gold.NOM.SG and

wiffa *Nauda /* *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||weefchus / tad tee arri ne
 def.-ACC.PL.M prophets.ACC.PL then 3.NOM.PL.M also NEG
tizzehs / || kaut ir kas no
 believe.FUT.3 **even.if** also someone.NOM.SG from
Mirroneem aug||fcham zeltos.
 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 *kaût* as a concessive conditional conjunction are to be noted. First of all, in this meaning, *kaût* is often reinforced by additive or emphatic particles, such as *arīdzan* ‘also’ (ME i 141)⁷, *ir* ‘and, also’ (ME i 708)⁸, *jel(e)* ‘though, however’ (ME ii 109)⁹ or *gan* ‘enough, however’ (ME i 598-599)¹⁰. *Kaut ... arīdzan* and *kaut ... ir* are probably loan-translations built on the model of German *wenn ... auch* ‘even if’.

In this meaning, *kaût* 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 *kaût* 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’):

⁷ Cf. *kaut ... arīdzan* (Manzel 1637, 35₁₂, 1654, ii 17₈).

⁸ Cf. *kaut ... ir* (Manzel 1654, i 216₂₆₋₂₇), *kaut ir...* (*Tas jauns Testaments* 1685, Lk 16₃₁).

⁹ Cf. *kaut ... jelle* (Fürecker 1650, 2₇).

¹⁰ Cf. *kaut gan* (Fürecker 1650, 17₃, 65₁₃).

- (30) *Kaut gan addijis, wiņņas ne || weens*
even.if knit.PPA.NOM.SG.M 3.GEN.SG.F nobody.NOM.SG.M
warr peeaddiht.
 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 || knütte (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 = dfell, kaut man gan*
 1SG.ACC NEG-sting.PRS.2SG **even.if** 1SG.DAT enough
dfeldejs.
 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 breñst nicht, ob du mich || gleich genug schreuest.*)
Ibid. (1650, 65₁₃₋₁₅)
- (32) *Šchis wihrs, kas, kaut*
 this.NOM.SG.M man.NOM.SG who.NOM.SG **even.if**
dfehrejs buhdams, || tatfchu kà gohdigs
 drunkard.NOM.SG be.CV.B.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), *Luftesfpehle no Semneeka kas par Muifschneeku tappe pahrwehrfts un weena Pafakka no Drauga Lizzepura* (1790, 48₁₇₋₁₈)

The use of *kaût* 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 *jėib* ‘if’, e. g., OLith. *jeib Kristus 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

decades ago (1970, 153–159 [1958])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, 256₅). In any case, it is more than likely that this construction was originally not characteristic of *kaût*.

Examples of *kaût* 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. *Kaût* ‘although’

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

- (33) *Vn kaut ar || us pahru deenahm atnahk,*
and **although** also for couple.ACC day.DAT.PL come.PRS.3
tad wiņņu retti dabbu || redfeht.
then 3.ACC.SG seldom get.PRS.3SG see.INF
‘And, **although** he comes sometimes for a few days, one seldom has an occasion to see him!’
Alexander Johann Stender (1744–1819), *Luftesfpehle no Semmneeka kas par Muischneeku tappe pahrwehrfts un weena Pafakka no Drauga Lizzepura* (1790, 47₃₋₅)
- (34) *Ak, paldeews, paldees zeenigam Kun||gam,*
ah thanks thanks gracious.DAT.SG.M lord.DAT.SG
kaut es to gan ne warru
though 1SG.NOM that.ACC.SG PCLE NEG be.able.PRS.1SG
fapraft.
understand.INF
‘Ah! Thank you, thank you, gracious Lord, **although** I cannot understand it.’
Ibid. (1790, 53₂₁₋₂₂)

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, tad tew
 become.PRS.2SG honour.PPP.NOM.SG.M then 2SG.DAT
ja finna; weens || 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 *kaût* 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 *kaût* 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 *kaût* 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 *kaût* 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 *kaût* ‘even if’ (+ conditional) is much older and much more widely attested than *kaût* ‘although’ (+ indicative), I prefer to think that the basic meaning of *kaût* was concessive conditional. The extension of *kaût* to the basic notion of concession should probably be thought of as an innovation. It is now firmly established in standard Latvian.

3.3. *Kaût* ‘if’

Further arguments plead in favour of this scenario. Besides the concessive conditional meaning, *kaût* 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) ***Kaut*** *Deews dohtu pahrliht buhtu labbi.*
 if God.NOM.SG give.SUBJ.3 rain.INF be.SUBJ.3 good
 ‘If God would make the rain fall, it would be good.’
 (Germ. *Wenn Gott einen gnâdi = gen Regen gäbe, das wäre gut.*)
Manuale Lettico-Germanicum (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 *kaût* 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 *kaût* for the expression of hypothetical clauses.

Kaût ‘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 *kaût* 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 arridfan mehs ar jums || warretum
 that also 1PL.NOM with 2PL.DAT could.SUBJ.1PL
lihdj 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 maķķeniht || gribbetat*
 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 auksts 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.2SG either
auksts 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
apfwehtihts || buhtu!
 blessed.PPP.NOM.SG.M be.SUBJ.3

‘**May** this beginning be blessed to us all!’

Martin Gottlieb Agapetus Loder (1739–1806), *Špreddiķis pee Eefwehtifchanas tahs Ahdafchu Pahwil Pehtera bafnizas* (1775, 4₁₋₂)

In this meaning, *kaût* is often preceded by interjections such as *ak* (< German *ach*)¹² 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 dfiewiba tawas*
ah if.only my.NOM.SG.F life.NOM your.GEN.SG.F
Taifznibas 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
Ghråkeem 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
fīnnaufchi.
 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, *kaût* 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 *kaût* in its different functions.

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

- (45) **Kaut** || *jelle pahreijus*.
if.only though come.home.PPRA.NOM.SG.M
 ‘**Would that** he came home!’ (Germ. *wēn er doch möchte* || *zu hause komen*)
 Christophor Fürecker (ca 1615–1684 or 1685), *Lettisches und Teutsches Wörterbuch* (1650, 67₁₅₋₁₇)

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

- (46) **Kaut** *Deews fhoreif manni atlaiftu!*
if only 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!*)
Kaut jelle filts paliktu.
if.only PCLE warm.NOM become.SUBJ.3
 ‘**Would that** it could grow warm!’
 (Germ. *möchte es doch einmal warm werden!*)
 Heinrich Hesselberg (1792–1848), *Lettische Sprachlehre* (1841, 145 § 336)
- (47) **Káut es bútu weffels!**
if.only 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)

¹³ Cf. *kaut ... arīdzan* (*Tas Jauns Testaments* 1685, Gal 51₂). See also *kaut arri ...* in *Tas Jauns Testaments* (1685: Lk 19₄₂).

¹⁴ Cf. *kaut ... jelle* (Fürecker 1650, 67₁₅₋₁₇, A. Stender 1790, 11₂).

- (48) **Kaût** *viņ-u ne mûžam nebū-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 *kaût*, 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 kaut** *jel zeenigs Kungs*
ah if.only PCLE gracious.NOM.SG.M Lord.NOM.SG
jun||kuru pee deewiņeem welleem aisdfihtu!
 squire.ACC.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), *Luftesfpehle no Semnneeka 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 *kaût* as a wish marker; the association *ak kaût* is the same as in (41–44). But it is striking that the independent clause introduced by *ak kaût* 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 *kaût...*, *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):

- (51) *Kaut* *es* *ween warrefchu* *wiṛ||ṇa*
if.only 1SG.NOM only be.able.FUT.1SG 3.GEN.SG.M
Drehbhes *aiskahrt / tad tapfchu* *es*
 garment.ACC.PL touch.INF then become.FUT.1SG 1SG.NOM
weffela.
 whole.NOM.SG.F
 ‘**If only** I may touch his garment, then I shall be whole.’
Tas Jauns Testaments (1685, Mt 9:21)

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.

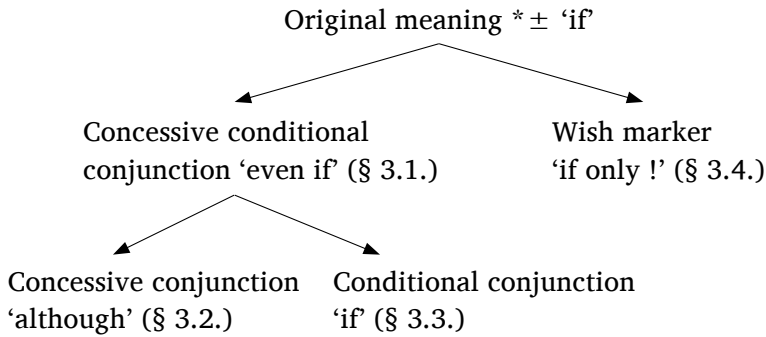
(b) According to the second interpretation, the use of *kaût* as a wish marker (*if only!*) is due to the reanalysis of a conditional conjunction (*if only..., then...*) in elliptic contexts in which the second part, expressing the result expected by the wish, is simply omitted. To be sure, the notion 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 εἴθε, εἰ γάρ)
 Homer, *Odyssea*, ι 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 *kaût*, the existence of a wide range of subordinating uses (‘even if’, ‘although’, ‘if’) pleads in favour of the second scenario, according to which *kaût* would have been originally a conditional conjunction, reanalyzed as a wish marker in elliptic contexts¹⁵. Taking all this evidence into account, one may assume that the basic meaning of *kaût* was conditional (\pm ‘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!’):

¹⁵ See also Holvoet (2010, 79). On the contrary, there are grounds for assuming that the particle *laĩ*, which functions in contexts that are partly comparable to those of *kaût*, 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 *kaût*

According to Karl Mühlenbach (1898, 101), *kaût* is a loanword from Russian *xot'* 'although'. As rightly pointed out by Endzelīns (DI 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. *karuōgs* 'flag' ME ii 165 < ORuss. *xorugy*) or **kot*, **koč* in the case of a more recent borrowing¹⁶, but certainly not *kaût*, 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 *kaût* 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', IEW 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 *nórs* 'although', obviously derived from the verb *norėti* '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. *kaût 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 (DI i 94 [1899]).

¹⁷ E. g., Lat. *quiuīs, 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. *akár* + 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', *uis* 'you want'). In Classical Latin it functions as a concessive conjunction, quite often with a scalar meaning:

- (54) *Quamuis sordid-a res et
 however sordid-NOM.SG.F thing.NOM.SG and
 invenust-a est, non cred-is
 unattractive-NOM.SG.F be-PRS.3SG not believe-PRS.2SG
 mihi?
 1SG.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 adverbial locution ('as much as you want, very much') added to an independent clause, which had with the following clause only an anaphoric relationship¹⁸: '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:

¹⁸ Cf. Bennett (1910, 270), Bertocchi (2002, 40), Spevak (2005, 79).

- (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 *quamvis* with the meaning 'as much as you want' are still attested in Latin, even in the classical language, as in (57) and (58)¹⁹:

- (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 quamvis 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-ACC.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)

¹⁹ Cf. Spevak (2005, 75).

The change of adverbial *quamuis* 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 *nórs* (Old and dial. Lith. *nórint*) ‘although’, both from a verb meaning ‘to want’ (Russian *xotet'*, resp. Lith. *norėti*).

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 pьrvęje, xotę by*
 pay.INF German.DAT.SG first **even.if** AUX.3SG
inъmu komu vinovatъ
 other.DAT.SG.M someone.DAT indebted.NOM.SG.M
bylъ 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 *nóris* (< *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* *wardų* ||
although many be-PRS.3 names-GEN.
W. Christaus rasztė *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

²⁰ In Old Church Slavonic, the gerundive *xoteŕ* ‘willingly’ was grammaticalized in a different way, as a final conjunction (‘in order to’), e. g., *napadaaxo emъ: xotešte prikosoŕti se emъ* ‘they pressed upon him for to touch him’ (Mk 3:10).

wârdas *io*.

name-NOM.SG 3-GEN.SG.M

‘**Although** there are many names of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Holy Scriptures, however only this one is His right name.’

(Pol. *Acz wiele iest Jmion Páná || Chrystusowych w piśmie świętym / ale to samo iest własne imie iego.*)

Mikolajus Daukša (ca 1527 or 1538–1613), *Postilla Catholica* (1599, 56_{1,2})

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) *Tárnás* || *tâwás* *esmi* *asz* /
 servant.NOM your.NOM.SG.M be.PRS.1SG 1SG.NOM
nórint *pi* = || *ktas* *ir* *nęwertás* / *wienók* ||
albeit bad-NOM.SG.M and unworthy.NOM.SG.M however
kokiū *nórint* *esmi* / *būk* *pi* = || *ktas* / *būk*
 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.’
 (Pol. *Slugá y niewolnik twoy iestem / ácz zły y niegodny wszákże iakimkolwiek iest / badź zły / badź dobry / zawsze twoy iestem.*)
 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. *quamuis*) 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 *kaût* 'even if'.

The possibility of explaining *kaût* as derived from a verb of volition comes up against the problem of which formation could be hidden behind *kaût*. 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 forms²¹:

**keu-* > OInd. *kaví-* 'smart, wise, poet', *kavārí-* 'penurious', *á-kava-* 'not stingy', *ā-kúvate* 'to plan', *ā-kūta-* (n.), *ā-kūti-* 'intention'; Avest. *čavišī* 'I hoped'; Gr. *κοέω* 'to hear'; Lat. *caueō* 'to take care'; Latv. *kavēt* 'to hesitate'; OCS *čuti* 'to feel'; OCS *čudo* 'miracle' (cf. Gr. *κῦδος*)

**keu-s-* (with enlargement *-s-*) > Gr. *ἀκούω* 'to hear'; Goth. *hausjan* 'to hear'

**s-keu-* (with *s* mobile) > Gr. *θυοσκοός* '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 *kaût*. We may conclude that, despite the typological parallels discussed above, there are no grounds for deriving *kaût* from a verb of volition: Karulis' etymology is simply mistaken.

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* *Pehrkona* *Gaiš* *ne*
 if this-NOM.SG.M storm.GEN.SG light.NOM.SG NEG
buhtu, *gan tu* *dfirdetu* *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 = fnigt.*
 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^wo-*.

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.

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’)²². 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 *kaût* is derived from the same basis as the comparative conjunction *kâ* ‘how, like, as’. Both conjunctions *kaût* and *kâ* could be traced back to a common source **kâ-* (< PIE **k^weh₂-*), followed by different particles. In the case of *kâ*, Endzelin (1923, 467) supposes either an adverbial ending **kâi* (as in OPr. *kai* ‘how’) or a locative ending **kâ-je* (as in the Lithuanian feminine locative *-oje*); both solutions are questionable, but a common prototype **kâ-* is more than likely. As to the ending of *kaût*, 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-* + **k^we*), both adverb (‘but, nevertheless’, Goth. *þau(h)*, OIcel. *þó*, Germ. *doch*) and conjunction (‘though, although’, OEngl. *ðeah*, Engl. *though, although*), and of Balto-Slavic **jau-* ‘already’ (Lith. *jaũ*, Latv. *jâu*, Pol. *już*, 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

²² Cf. Kloekhorst (2008, 552).

that of a correlative system opposing **tā-u-*, vs. **yā-u-*, vs. **k^wā-u-*. Further cognates could be the Greek disjunctive particle $\alpha\tilde{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon$ ‘again, furthermore, on the other hand, on the contrary’ and especially the Greek conjunction $\eta\tilde{\upsilon}\tau\epsilon$ ‘as, like as’ (< $\eta\tilde{\phi}\acute{\epsilon}$ ‘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 **k^wā-ute* ‘if + however’ could account for the origin of Latvian *kaût* 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 *kaût*, provided that one assumed a long acute diphthong and a final stress (**k^wā-uté*, cf. OInd. *utá*).

4.2. The etymology of *kaût kas*

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

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

	indefinite pronoun		concessive conjunction	
Russian	<i>xot kto</i>	‘anyone’	<i>xot</i>	‘although’
Polish	<i>byle kto</i>	‘anyone’	<i>byle</i>	‘although, even if, if only’
Finnish	<i>vaikka kuka</i>	‘anyone’	<i>vaikka</i>	‘although’
Lithuanian	<i>kàs nórs</i>	‘someone’	<i>nórs</i>	‘although’
Yiddish	<i>abi ver</i>	‘no matter who’	<i>abi</i>	‘if only’ ²³

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 (*kaût 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 Polish²⁴:

²⁴ Cf. also Pol. *choćby* 'even' (= *nawet*).

- (66) *Uskrom* **choć** *różg-q* *twoj-q*
 subjugate-IMP.2SG **at.least** rod-INS.SG your-INS.SG.F
ciał-o *zaślepi-o-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* *łankikete* *broley* *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 Žemaycziu* (1829, 21₁₅₋₁₆)
- (69) *Kad* *aš* *užmigčiau* / **Nors** *valandėlę*.
 that 1SG.NOM fall.asleep.SUBJ.1SG **at.least** hour.ACC.SG
 ‘If only I could fall asleep, **at least** for one hour!’
 Antanas Juška (1819–1880), *Liėtūviškos dājnos užrašytos par Antaną Juškėvičę* (1880, I 72₃₋₄)

or Finnish:

- (70) *Lähden* **vaikka** *heti* (= Pol. *Pójdę, choćby zaraz*).
 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.
 and come.back.PRS.2SG **at.least** time-ACC.SG year-LOC.SG
 ‘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 iedēvis kaut rubli.*
 be-SUBJ.3 give-PPA.NOM.SG.M **at.least** rouble-ACC.SG
 ‘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 mentioned²⁵:

(a) with a focus particle ‘even’

Hindi/Urdu	<i>koii bhii</i>	‘anybody’	<i>koii + bhii</i>	‘someone’ + ‘also, even’
Dutch	<i>ook maar iemand</i>	‘anybody’	<i>iemand + ook maar</i>	‘someone’ + ‘even, at least’

(b) with a focus particle ‘at least’

Russian	<i>xot’ kto</i>	‘anyone’	<i>xot’</i>	‘at least’
Finnish	<i>vaikka kuka</i>	‘anyone’	<i>vaikka</i>	‘at least’
Modern Greek	<i>kan-énas</i>	‘anyone’	<i>kan</i>	‘at least’
Latvian	<i>kaut kas</i>	‘something’	<i>kaut</i>	‘at least’
Hungarian	<i>akár-ki</i>	‘anybody’	<i>akár</i>	‘at least’

²⁵ But the explanation of Lith. *bêt kàs* ‘anyone’ as **bent kas* (with *bent* ‘at least’), proposed by Haspelmath (1997, 275), faces serious formal problems and must certainly be dismissed. Cf. Kozhanov (2011, 116).

Nenets	<i>xibja-xart</i>	‘nobody’	<i>-xart</i>	‘at least’
Lezgian	<i>wuž xajit’ani</i>	‘anybody’	<i>xajit’ani</i>	‘at least’
Kannada	<i>yaar-aadaruu</i>	‘anybody’	<i>-aadaruu</i>	‘at least’
West Greenlandic	<i>suna-luunniit</i>	‘anything’	<i>-luunniit</i>	‘at least’
Yakut	<i>kim eme</i>	‘somebody’	<i>eme</i>	‘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 *kaût kas* and the concessive conditional conjunction *kaût* in Latvian. My claim is that the creation of *kaût kas* is based on the use of the conjunction *kaût* as a scalar particle ‘at least, even’:

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



Scalar particle *kaût* ‘at least, even’



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



Free-choice indefinite pronoun *kaût kas* ‘anything’



Indefinite pronoun *kaût kas* ‘something’

There is thus no need to look for a verb meaning ‘to want’ as a source of the Latvian indefinite *kaût kas*: it is derived from the use of the conjunction *kaût* as a scalar particle. We are now able, I think, to re-assess the possibly areal status of the formation of *kaût 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 *kaût 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 *kaût* (scalar particle) → *kaût kas* (free-choice pronoun) is too trivial to be necessarily ascribed to a foreign influence. But the use of *kaût* ‘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 *kaût kas* and Lithuanian *kàs nòrs*

There is still one point that needs further investigation. The case of Latvian *kaût kas* is apparently parallel to that of Lith. *kàs nòrs* (OLith. *kàs nòrint*) ‘someone, somebody’ compared with *nòrs* (OLith. *nòrint*) ‘although’. The question is whether the explanation given for Latv. *kaût kas* could adequately apply to Lith. *kàs nòrs* as well. A brief discussion must therefore be opened on this question, before we conclude²⁶.

The Lithuanian indefinite pronoun *kàs nòrs* (*kàs nòrint*) 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.:

²⁶ For more detail see a discussion in Rosinas (2001, 98).

- (73) *Ka* *nórint, iumus*
whatever-ACC PCLE 2PL.DAT
taris / tatái daríkite /
 say.FUT.3 that-ACC do.IMP.2PL
 ‘**Whatever** you want, she says, do it!’
 (Pol. *Cokolwiekci wam rzecze, to czyńcie.*)
 Mikolajus Daukša (ca 1527 or 1538–1613), *Postilla Catholica*
 (1599, 72₂₆)
- (74) *Daríkite waisiús gailéimo. Nė*
 do.IMP.2PL fruit.ACC.PL mercy-GEN NEG
kokiúš nor waisiús / bet || wértús
any-ACC.PL.M PCLE fruits-ACC.PL but worthy-ACC.PL.M
gailéimo.
 mercy-GEN.SG
 ‘Make fruits of mercy. Not **any** fruits, but some worthy of
 mercy.’
 (Pol. *Czyńcie godne owoce pokuty. Nie ledá owoce / ále godne*
owoce pokuty)
Ibid. (1599, 25₁₋₂)
- (75) *Nes’ kuris nó||rint darís wála*
 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
dağuię / tassái yra brôlu
 heaven-LOC this-NOM.SG.M be-PRS.3 brother.INS.SG
ir sęsęri||mi ir mótina manđię.
 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 czynil wola Oycá mego ktory iest*
w niebie, ten iest brá-||tem y siostra / y mátką moią.)
Ibid. (1599, 72₁₈₋₂₀).
- (76) *Papeikemia wissús tús || kurié*
 blame-PRS.1PL all-ACC.PL.M those-ACC.PL.M who-NOM.PL.M
kokiúš nórint budú / [...]
whatever-INS.SG.M PCLE manner-INS.SG
ne || kaiþ rėikia / žmônes surinkinėia.
 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. *Poháníbiamy wszystkich tych / którzy íákim-kolwiek oby-
cáiem / [...] nie íáko potrze-||bá / ludzie zgromadzáia.*)

Ibid. (1599, 588_{9,12})

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

(77) **Cokolwiek** / *aliquid, quodcunq̄, quoduis, quodlibet. kasnorint.*
Konstantynas Sirvydas (ca 1578 or 1581–1631), *Dictionarium
trium linguarum* (ca 1620, i 15)

(78) **Ktokolwiek** / *quicunq̄. kasnorint.*
Ibid. (ca 1620, i 67)

(79) **Ktokolwiek** / **ktoszkolwiek** / *quicū; quispiam, aliquis, kasnor /
kiekwienas / wienas kurisgi kaiakas.*

Ktorykolwiek / *Quicunq̄; quisquis est ille, quilibet, kasnor /
kurisnor / kurisnoris.*

Ktorykolwiek, wrzedzie / *Quotuscunq̄; kielintasnoris.*

Ktorykolwiek ze dwu / *Vterlibet. Katrasnor.*

Ibid. (1643, iii 139)

In the modern Lithuanian language, *kàs nòrs* is the general, unspecified 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, anybody, 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 nòrs* free-choice pronoun) to a new system opposing three terms (*kàs nòrs* 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’, *gál kàs* ‘perhaps someone’). The assumption that *kàs nòrs* was originally a free-choice indefinite pronoun speaks in favour of a structural comparison with Latvian *kaût kàs*, which originally had the same primary function. Both forms seem to be derived in a similar way from a concessive conjunction, *kàs nòrs* from *nòrs* ‘although’, *kaût*

kas from *kaût* ‘although, even if’. But there is a crucial difference that must be seriously taken into account, the different word order: *kàs nòrs* seems to represent an order [indefinite + concessive], *kaût kas* an order [concessive + indefinite]. To be true, alongside *kàs nòrs*, some Lithuanian dialects attest the reverse word order **nòrs kàs*. Rosinas (2001, 330) mentions a form *nâr kas* in the dialect of Leleikos. 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 *kàs nòrs* ‘someone, somebody’ at face value, as a formation derived from the verb *noréti* ‘to want’, for which a parallel would be provided by Lat. *quilibet* ‘anyone, whomever you like’ (from *quī* ‘who’ + *libet* ‘it is pleasing’). This would imply two fundamental requirements. First of all, this would require us to see the pronoun *kàs* 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 *kàs* 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 *nòrs* as a conjugated form (‘it is pleasing, one likes, one wants’). The problem is that it can hardly be interpreted as such: (*kàs*) *nòrs* and OLith. (*kàs*) *nórint* are identical to the concessive conjunction, *nòrs*, *nórint*, which, as was shown above, goes back to a gerundive form (‘willingly’) of *noréti* ‘to want’. The function of a gerundive form in a relative structure would be incomprehensible: *kàs* ‘who’ + gerundive *nòrs*, *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 **kàs nór* (with **nór* < *nóri* 3rd person present indicative: ‘one wants’) and that it was reshaped as *kàs nòrs*, *kàs nórint* analogically to the concessive conjunction *nòrs*, *nórint*. This would, however, remain unconvincing, as long as the ground for this analogy is not explained.

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).

Alternatively, one could prefer a wholly different analysis. One could assume that *(kàs) nòrs*, *(kàs) nòrint* 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 *nòrs*, *nòrint* 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 *kàs* ‘someone, somebody’, e. g.,

- (80) *Turiu nòr kuo kiaules*
 have.PRS.1SG **at.least something**.INS pig.ACC.PL
šert.
 feed.INF
 ‘I have to feed the pigs **at least with something** (i. e., with anything, with whatever food).’
 Dialect of Prienai (LKŽ viii 857)

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

But, as already said above, the problem is with the order of the constituents in Lith. *kàs nòrs*, *kàs nòrint*. A scalar particle modifying an indefinite pronoun would certainly stand before it (as in Latv. *kaût kas*), and, moreover, it is a general feature of *kàs* 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 *nòrs kàs* 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 *kàs + nòrs* as genuine in Lithuanian. As a result, *kàs* (in *kàs nòrs*) 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):

Serbian/Croatian	<i>i-ko</i>	‘anyone’	<i>i</i>	‘and, also, even’
Indonesian	<i>siapa-pun</i>	‘anyone’	<i>-pun</i>	‘also, even’

Tagalog	<i>kahit na sino</i>	‘anyone’	<i>kahit (na)</i>	‘even’
Hittite	<i>kuiš-ki</i>	‘someone’	<i>-ki</i>	‘and, also’
Even	<i>ŋi-de</i>	‘someone’	<i>-da/-de</i>	‘and, also’
Kannada	<i>yaar-uu</i>	‘anyone’	<i>-uu</i>	‘and, also’
Ancash Quechua	<i>ima-pis</i>	‘anything’	<i>-pis</i>	‘also, even’
Selkup	<i>ämtä kuty</i>	‘nobody’	<i>ämtä</i>	‘even’
Nivkh	<i>aŋ-hagin</i>	‘nobody’	<i>hagin</i>	‘even’
Gooniyandi	<i>ngoorn-doo-</i> <i>ngaddaya</i>	‘someone’	<i>-ngaddaya</i>	‘also’
Sanskrit	<i>kas cana</i>	‘anyone’	<i>cana</i>	‘even’
Japanese	<i>nani-mo</i>	‘nothing’	<i>-mo</i>	‘also’
	<i>nan-demo</i>	‘anything’	<i>-demo</i>	‘even’

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 — converb, 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 — particle, PL — plural, PPA — past active participle, PPP — past passive participle, PPRA — present active participle, PPRP — present passive participle, PRS — present, PST — past, REFL — reflexive, SG — singular, SUBJ — subjunctive

OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

BSW = Trautmann 1923.
BW = Baron & Wissendorff 1894–1915.
DI = Endzelins 1971–1982.
DK = Daukša 1595.
DP = Daukša 1599.
DTL¹ = Sirvydas ca 1620.
DTL³ = Sirvydas 1643.
IEW = Pokorny 1959.
LKŽ = *Lietuvių kalbos žodynas*, 1941–2001.
LLVMSA = *Latviešu literārās valodas morfoloģiskās sistēmas attīstība*, 2002.

LVV = *Latviešu valodas vārdnīca*, 1987.

ME = Mühlenbach & Endzelin 1923–1932.

MLLVG = *Mūsdienu latviešu literārās valodas gramatika*, 1959–1962.

MŽ = Mažvydas 1547–1570.

RV = *Rig-Veda*.

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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