

OLD PRUSSIAN VERB CLASSES RECONSIDERED

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1. Following Van Wijk (1918), I have classified the attested 1st pl. forms in the following way (1987, 1999):

(1) athematic forms in *-mai*: *asmai*, *-skīmai*, *-ēimai*, *wīrstmai*, 2nd pl. *astai*, *wīrstai*;

(2) forms in *-āmai*, *-ūmai*: *waitiāmai*, *quoitāmai*, *lāikumai*, 2nd pl. *quoitēti*, ipv. *lāikutei*, 3rd pl. *peisāi*, *ettrāi*, *kelsāi* may also belong here (cf. Kortlandt 1987: 109), as does 3rd sg. *-bānda*;

(3) forms in *-ē(i)mai*: *billēmai*, *druwēmai*, *seggēmai*, *stallēmai*, *klausēmai*, *-paickēmai*, *-wackē(i)mai*, *waidleimai*, 2nd pl. *druwētei*, *seggēti*, *stallēti*, ipv. *billētei*, *seggētei*, *klausieiti*;

(4) forms in *-au(i)mai*: *dīnkau(i)mai*, 2nd pl. ipv. *dīnkauti*, *rikauite*;

(5) thematic forms in *-ammai*, *-emmai*: *-weckammai*, *giwammai*, *giwemmai*, *klantemmai*, *paikemmai*, *-prestemmai*, *wertemmai*;

(6) forms in *-imai*, viz.

(a) optative *turrīlimai*;

(b) perfect present *waidimai*, 2nd pl. *waiditi*;

(c) verbs in *-īt*: *kīrdimai*, *mēntimai*, *-nertimai*, *turrimai*, 2nd pl. *turriti*, ipv. *kīrdeiti*, *crixteiti*, *kirdijti*, *laukijti*, *milijti*;

(d) loan words: *grīkimai*, *madlimai*, *schlūsimai*, *massimai*, *-schpāndimai*, 2nd pl. *schlūsiti*, ipv. *madliti*;

(e) simple verbs: *galbimai*, *girrimai*, *gunnimai*, *immimai*, *pīdimai*, *-rīpimai*, *-wērpimai*, 2nd pl. *immati*, ipv. *immaiti*, *rīpaiti*, *-wiērp̄tei*;

(f) nasal presents: *-gaunimai*, *-stānimai*, *-sinnimai*, 2nd pl. *-sinnati*;

(g) forms in *-innimai*: *bebinnimai*, *brewinnimai*, *mukinnimai*, *-stattinnimai*, *tickinnimai*, 2nd pl. ipv. *-in(n)aiti*, *-in(n)eiti*.

Classes (3), (4), (5) are thematic, classes (6b), (6c), (6f), (6g) have an alternating present stem, and classes (2) and (6e) are heterogeneous. I have argued that the 2nd pl. imperatives in *-aiti*, *-eiti* represent the original present optative while the forms in *-(ī)tei*, *-ijti* reflect an original aorist subjunctive (Kortlandt 1982: 7), the corresponding 2nd sg. endings being *-ais*, *-eis* and *-(ī)s*. For the preterit, I start from the following classification (Kortlandt 1998a: 144):

(i) *-migē*, *weddē*, *-traūki*;

- (ii) *bēi*;
- (iii) *-deirā, billā-, stallā, quoitā, -glabū, teikū, dīnkau-*, I/II *belā/byla, prowela*, I *lima-*, *dinkowa-*, II *lymu-*, *dinkau-*;
- (iv) *dai, driāudai, -stāi, widdai, -liei-, poūi-* (cf. Kortlandt 1998a: 147 and 1998b: 124f.), I/II *dai-*;
- (v) I *ymmi-*, II *ymmei-* < **imī*.

When we look at the infinitives and participles, it appears that the present stem gave rise to an *ā*-aorist in *laikūt, (per)bānda-*, EV. *maysotan*, Lith. *laikýti, bandýti, maišýti* (cf. Kortlandt 1989: 110). I therefore think that class (2) must be subdivided into (2a) athematic presents such as *lāiku* and *perbānda* and (2b) thematic presents such as *peisāi, ettrāi, kelsāi*, also *signā-, maitā-*, and *waitiā-* in view of the participle acc.pl. *waitiaintins*. Class (6e) can be subdivided into a class (6e1) with the same present flexion as (6c) and perhaps (6d), e.g. *etwiērpī*, 3rd sg. *etwiērpei*, 1st pl. *etwērpimai*, ipv. *etwerpeis*, also 3rd sg. *perlānkei, perlānki*, 3rd pl. *gēide, giēidi*, probably also *pogalbton, galbimai, girtwei, girrimai, pokūnst, (po)kūnti*, ipv. *pokuntieis, tiēnstwei*, ipv. *tenseiti*, 2nd sg. *etwēre*, ipv. *etwerreis*, 3rd sg. *trinie, kniēipe, lise*, and a class (6e2) with the same present flexion as (6f) and perhaps (6g), viz. *īmt*, 1st sg. *imma*, 1st pl. *immimai*, 2nd pl. *immati*, ipv. *immais, immaiti*, also *pijst*, 3rd sg. *pīdai*, 1st pl. *pīdimai, serrīpimai*, ipv. *rīpaiti*, 3rd sg. *aupallai*, and probably *guntwei*, 1st pl. *gunnimai*. I have compared this classification with the ones proposed by Trautmann (1910), Schmalstieg (1970), Ostrowski (1994) and Kaukienė (1998). Here I shall compare it with the classification put forward by Smoczyński (2005).

2. Smoczyński distinguishes five types of “primary” (I.1-5) and nine types of “secondary” (II.1-9) present stems (2005: 436-462). These fourteen types correspond with my fourteen classes listed above (1, 2a, 2b, 3-5, 6a-d, 6e1, 6e2, 6f, 6g) as follows. For simplicity’s sake I shall limit myself to present tense indicative forms and leave imperatives and other flexional categories out of consideration here.

- I.1. athematic presents = (1) *ast, dāst, ēit*;
- I.2. thematic **-a-* = (5) *ertreppa, senrīnka*, (6e1) *?galbimai, ?girrimai*, (6e2) *imma, immimai*, (6f) *posinna, posinnimai*;
- I.3. nasal infix **-n-* = (5) *polīnka*;
- I.4. **-sta-*, **-na-* = (1) *wīrst*, (5) *poprestemmai*, (6f) *pogaunimai, postānimai*;
- I.5. **-ja-* = (2b) *?ettrāi*, (6e1) *?girrimai*;
- II.1. **-ija-* = (1) *etskīmai*, (2b) *enwaitia*, (3) *aupaickēmai, auschaudē, billē, budē, dergē, druwē, klausēmai, milē, paskulē, quoitē, seggē, stallē, waidleimai, enwackē, wargē*, (5) *(per)klantemmai, paikemmai, wertemmai*, (6b) *waidimai*, (6c) *ernertimai, kīrdimai, crixtia, -luke, mēntimai, turri*, (6d) *auschpāndimai* (where Smoczyński omits the macron), *grīkimai, madli, massi, schlūsi*, (6e1) *?galbimai, etwiērpei, etwērpimai*,

perlānkei, perlānki, gēide, giēidi, sengijdi, erlāngi, (po)kūnti, līse, polijcki, trinie, (6e2) serrīpimai, gunnimai, also preterit (i) weddē;

II.2. *-āja- = (2a) *perbānda, islāika* (where Smoczyński omits the macron, read -u), (2b) *?etrāi, kelsāi, maitā, peisāi, signai, ebs[i]gnā, (5) popaikā* (read *popāika*, cf. Van Wijk 1918: 135), *perweddā* (read -a), *giwa, giwammai, (6b) bia, (6e2) aupallai, ebimmai, imma, (per)pīdai, podingai, (6f) pogāunai, postānai, ersinnati, also preterits (iii) billā, endeirā, quoitā, stallā, (iv) widdai;*

II.3. *-ūja- = (2a) *lāiku, tlāku, (2b) dwigubbū, (5) gīwu* (read -a), also preterits (iii) *poglabū, teikū;*

II.4. *-ina- = (6g) *bebinnimai, brewinnimai, and forms in -ina, -inna, 3x ?-inne;*

II.5. *-ināja- = (6g) forms in *-inai;*

II.6. *-inīja- = (6g) *powaidinnei, sātuinei, 3x ?-inne;*

II.7. *-ijāja- = imperatives in *-iei-* (cf. Kortlandt 1982: 8);

II.8. *-auja- = (4) *dīnkaumai, dīnkaumai, and forms in -awie, -awi, -aui, etc.;*

II.9. *-uja- = inf. *etwinūt.*

3. The main differences between Smoczyński's classification and mine can be summarized as follows. The central issue is that Smoczyński disregards the apophonic alternations which I have established for *i*-verbs and nasal presents (1987), e.g. 3rd sg. *turei, postānai*, 3rd pl. *turri, posinna*, and for *ā*-presents (1989), e.g. *lāiku, Lith. laikyti*. As a result, he has to assume a whole series of phonetic developments which are based on verbal forms only and effectively eliminate the Prussian evidence and bring the attested forms into line with what we find in East Baltic (2005: 417ff.): "Aus dem Vergleich mit dem Lit.-Lett. erweist sich deutlich, daß die apr. Form der 3.P. des thematischen Verb verschiedene Umgestaltungen, vorwiegend lautlichen Charakters, erfahren haben müßte. [...] Der Hauptfaktor, der für die Lautgestalt der 3.P.-Form verantwortlich ist, scheint Apokopierung eines Endvokals bzw. eines ganzen Ausgangs -ja zu sein. Die Folgen der Kürzung durch Apokope werden durch einige anschließende Lautwandel kompliziert", viz. shortening of *-ā, *-ū, *-āi, *-ūi to -a, -u, -ai, -ui, lowering of *-ij to -ei, and reduction of the thematic vowel -a- to [ə], which could be written *e* or *i*. Smoczyński presents a list of 52 verbs where the alleged endings *-ija and *-ijā are reflected as -i, -ij, -y, -ī, -ei, -ē, -e and a list of 51 verbs where the alleged endings *-āja and *-ājā are reflected as -a, -u, -ai, -ā, -ū, -e (2005: 429-433). The same reflexes are found in the alleged endings *-inīja and *-ināja, which are not included in the lists. It seems to me that the absence of an explanation for the actual distribution of the attested endings effectively discredits Smoczyński's reconstructions.

Smoczyński's classification lumps together forms which exhibit different flexion types and separates forms which belong to the same flexion type and even to the same paradigm. Thus, 1st pl. *wīrstmai* and 2nd pl. *wīrstai*

show that *wīrst* is an athematic present, not a *sta*-present, unlike *poprestemmai*, which belongs with *(per)klantemmai*, *paikemmai*, *wertemmai* to the simple thematic flexion, not to the *ija*-presents, which are a heterogeneous category. Similarly, *etskīmai* belongs to the athematic presents while *waidimai*, *waiditi* and 3rd pl. *bia* belong to the athematic perfect presents, cf. 2nd sg. *waisei*, and *enwaitia* is not an *ija*-present but an *āja*-present, as is clear from the participle acc.pl. *watiaintins*, unlike *giwa*, *giwammai*, where the double consonant clearly shows that this verb belongs to the simple thematic flexion. Forms in *-ē*, *-ēmai*, *-eimai* are attributed to the *ija*-presents together with forms in *-ei*, *-i*, *-imai* even if the latter have alternating forms in *-a*, *-ai*, which are attributed to the simple thematic flexion or to the *āja*-presents, e.g. *imma*, *immimai*, *serrīpimai*, *ebimmai*, 2nd pl. *immati*, ipv. *immati*, *rīpaiti*, and forms with a paradigmatic alternation between *-a*- and *-i*- are distributed over different flexion types, e.g. *posinna*, *posinnimai*, *ersinnimai*, *ersinnati*, *pogāunai*, *postānai*, *pogaunimai*, *postānimai*, similarly the forms in *-ina*, *-inna*, *-inai*, *-inei*, *-innei*, *-inne*, which allegedly belong to three different formations. It appears that especially the *i*-presents remained underanalyzed while the nasal presents were overanalyzed.

I conclude that Smoczyński, like Schmalstieg (1970) and Ostrowski (1994) before him, relies heavily on the comparative evidence of the East Baltic languages, especially Lithuanian, and on preconceived ideas about the flexional system which are not based on the Prussian evidence itself. This methodology precludes an independent role of the Prussian evidence in the reconstruction of Proto-Baltic. The present author rather agrees with Van Wijk (1918) that we must first establish the linguistic system behind the Prussian texts before embarking upon a comparison with data from other languages. The latter approach leads to the conclusion that “the Old Prussian texts are an imperfect representation of a remarkably archaic variety of Balto-Slavic” (Kortlandt 1987: 110) and to a quite different reconstruction of Proto-Baltic and Proto-Balto-Slavic with a considerable number of athematic formations.

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