THE FORMATION OF THE OLD PRUSSIAN PRESENT TENSE

The obvious limitations which the character of the Old Prussian texts imposes on our knowledge of the language have given rise to two lines of investigation. Some authors have interpreted the material chiefly on the basis of evidence from cognate languages (e. g., Bezzenberger, 1907, Trautmann, 1910, Schmalstieg, 1974), while others have tried to start from the forms as they appear in the available material (e. g., Van Wijk, 1918, Schmid, 1963, Levin, 1976). There can be no doubt that I subscribe to the second approach. The two lines of thought are complementary, however, and the difference between them must not be exaggerated. As long as one is willing to take both the texts and the comparative evidence seriously, agreement can often be reached. The main objection to faithful reliance on the comparative evidence is that it automatically leads to a bias in the direction of the cognate languages. The history of Indo-European scholarship can properly be described as a gradual shift away from the languages which served as the primary basis for the reconstruction of the proto-language (cf. Mayrhofer, 1983). Under these circumstances, it would be unwise to base oneself primarily on evidence from cognate languages in the interpretation of the Old Prussian material.

The main piece of evidence for the flexion class of an Old Prussian verb in the present tense is the vowel before the 1st pl. ending -mai. The Enchiridion contains the following 1st pl. forms (cf. Van Wijk, 1918, 133ff):
1. athematic forms in -mai: asmai 'sind', et-skīmai 'auferstehen', per-ēmai 'kommen', wirstmai 'werden'. The attested 2nd pl. forms of these verbs are astai (4x, asti 2x in contiguous lines, estei 1x), wirstai;
2. forms in -ūmai, -ūmaǐ: waitiūmai 'reden', quoitūmai 'wollen', laikumai 'halten', po-lāikumai 'behalten', en-laikūmai 'anhalten' (read -lāiku-). The attested 2nd pl. forms of these verbs are quotēti, imperative laikutei, en-lāikutī;
3. forms in -ē(i)mai: billēmai 'sagen', druweimai 'glauben', seggēmai 'tun', stallemai 'stehen', klausēmai 'hören', au-paickēmai 'abdringen', en-wackēmai 'anrufen', en-wackēimai 'id', waidleimai 'zaubern'. The attested 2nd pl. forms of these
verbs are druweiti, seggêti, stallêti, imperative billîtei, seggêtei (3x, once used as an indicative, seggîta 1x, segjîtei 1x used as an indicative), klausieiti;
(4) forms in -au(i)mai: dinkauimai ‘danken’, dinkauimai ‘id’, 2nd pl. imperative dinkauti (cf. rikauite ‘herrschet’);
(6) forms in -imai. These forms belong to the following categories:
(a) optative turrilimai ‘müsstet’;
(b) preterito-present waidimai ‘wissen’, 2nd pl. waiditi, athematic 2nd sg. waisei, waise, infinitive wais;

It is clear from this list that the regular Ist pl. ending -imai ousted other endings under conditions which remain to be specified. I claim that this ending has a threefold origin. In the following I shall not go into a discussion of the points which have been clarified by Van Wijk (1918).

The forms in -ë(i)mai can be compared with Lith. -ëjame. W. P. Schmid distinguishes between the type seggìt ‘tun’ and the type druwit ‘glauben’, but derives both seggêmai and druweimai from *-ëjamai (1963, 16ff). I think that this is correct. The difference between the two singular paradigms will be discussed below.
Van Wijk reads *au-paickēmai as -*emmai and identifies it with *paikemmai. which is in my view incorrect: the difference can be compared with the one between *en-wackē(i)mai and *per-weckammai. Both of these present tense formations are related to the infinitive wackitwei 'locken' (cf. giwīt, giwammai, per-krantit, per-klan-temmai). The form po-paikā 'betrügt' must not be corrected to *-paikū (Trautmann, 1910, 405) but to *-pāika (Van Wijk, 1918, 135), a view which is unjustly disregarded by Schmid (1963, 30).

As I have argued elsewhere (1974), we must assume final stress in the thematic forms in -*ammai, -*emmai: these verbs belong to the type with Balto-Slavic mobile accentuation (type c of Stang, 1957). The accentual mobility is best preserved in giwīt, giwammai, giwemmai, 2nd sg. giwassi (with final stress) and analogical giwasi, giwu (with 1st sg. ending, cf. Old Russian žīvu, Stang, 1957, 109), 3rd sg. giwa. The retracted stress was generalized in the present tense of kirditi 'hören' and laikūt 'halten', as is clear from 1st pl. kirdimai, läikumai. The 2nd pl. imperative forms kirditi and kirdeiti represent different formations: the former contains the stem of the present tense and the ending of the PIE. optative, whereas the latter is derived from the stem of the infinitive (cf. Kortlandt, 1982, 7). The difference can be compared with the one between 2nd sg. imperative dereis 'siehe' and en-dirīs 'siehe an'.

If the forms in -*ē(i)mai and -*au(i)mai can be derived from *-ējamai and *-au-jamai, it is reasonable to suppose that girrimai 'loben' continues *-jamai (cf. Van Wijk, 1918, 136, Schmid, 1963, 6). Unfortunately, the ja-flexion cannot be identified on the basis of the Old Prussian material alone, and it cannot be excluded that these verbs had joined another flexion class in prehistoric times. In any case we have to assume at least three different flexion types with a 1st pl. form in -*imai which cannot be identified with the ja-flexion.

The verb waist 'wissen' has an athematic flexion in the singular, but the plural forms waidimai, waiditi differ from the athematic plural forms asmai, astai, wirstmai, wirstai. The obvious source of the linking vowel in this paradigm is the 3rd pl. ending *-int, which must be assumed for Balto-Slavic on the basis of the Slavic evidence (cf. Endzelin, 1944, 162). Since the athematic 1st and 2nd pl. forms were preserved in Slavic, the ending *-int must have been preserved in Prussian at a stage which was posterior to the separation between them.

The plural forms turrimai, turriti 'haben, sollen' resemble waidimai, waiditi, not druweimai, druweitei or seggēmai, seggēti. Similarly, the 2nd sg. form tur, which is found in the catechisms I and II, is quite unlike druweše or seggēsei. In the En-chiridion we find the following forms:
1st sg. turri 1x
2nd sg. turri 14x, turei 6x
3rd sg. turri 18x, turei 8x, turrei 1x  
1st pl. turrímai 20x  
2nd pl. turритi  3x  
3rd pl. turri 10x, turei 1x, ture 1x  

On the basis of these forms it seems probable to me that we have to start from a 3rd sg. form turei and a 3rd pl. form turri, the latter of which was in the process of being generalized in historical times. The motivation for this generalization can be found in the ja-flexion, where -i is the expected 3rd person ending both in the singular and in the plural. The analogical introduction of -ei in the ja-flexion is found in 3rd sg. et-wierpei 'vergibt' (infinitive et-wiērpt, 1st pl. et-wiērpmai).

In this connection we may reconsider the paradigms of seggit and druwit in the Enchiridion. The following list does not contain the 2nd pl. imperative forms of seggit (5x, twice used as an indicative).  
1st sg. druwe 6x, dруwe 2x, segge 1x  
2nd sg. druwe 3x, druвеse 2x, seggезei 1x  
3rd sg. druwe 2x, dруwe 2x, segе 1x, segge 4x  
1st pl. druвеmai 1x, seggезmai 2x  
2nd pl. druвеtei 1x, seggэti 1x  
3rd pl. druwe 1x, segге 1x, segge 2x  

I agree with Schmid (1963) that the paradigm of druwit reflects the ēja-flexion, which was at least partly adopted by seggit. The form segge is ambiguous: it may represent either -ē or -ei.

The other verbs which may belong to the same flexion class are even more difficult to interpret. The following forms of the verb billit 'sagen, sprechen' are attested in the Enchiridion:  
1st sg. billi 3x, бille 1x, preterit billai 1x  
2nd sg. blli 1x (read billi)  
3rd sg. billе 4x, bille 2x, billi 2x, billа 3x, billа 1x, preterit billa 4x, billа-ts 4x, billе 1x  
1st pl. billеmai 1x  
3rd pl. billе 2x  

In the other catechisms we find the 3rd sg. preterit forms I bela, bela-ts 2x, II byla, byla-czt, bila-ts. I assume that billа is the regular preterit form, whereas the correct present tense form is billе. The 3rd sg. form billi translates the German subjunctive 'spreche' (2x) and appears to belong to the same paradigm as the 2nd pl. imperative form billitei. Thus, the present tense of this verb does not seem to differ from that of druwit outside the 1st and 2nd sg. forms, which end in -i.

The attested forms of stallit 'stehen' are the following:  
3rd sg. stallа 1x, stallаё 1x, stallе 1x, stale 2x, stalli 1x, per-stallе 1x
1st pl. *stallēmai 1x 
2nd pl. *stallēti 1x 
3rd pl. *stallē 1x, *stalle 1x, *per-stallē 1x, *per-stalle 1x 

Here again, I assume that *stallē represents the preterit and *stalle the regular present tense form. 

We may now reconsider the following paradigm: 

1st sg. *quoi ‘will’ 3x 
2nd sg. *quoi 2x, i-quoi-tu 2x 
3rd sg. *quoi 1x, *quoite 1x, po-quoi-tē-ts 1x 
1st pl. *quoitāmai 1x 
2nd pl. *quoitēti 2x 
3rd pl. *quoite 1x, *quoitā 1x 

The form *quoitā is found in the following context: Kadden Deiws wissan wargan prätin bhe quaïitan lemlai bhe kâmpinna quaï noûmans stan emman Deiwas niswintinaï bhe swaian rikin niquoitā daton perëit käigi stwi ast stëisi pickullas stessei Switas bhe noûson kermenêniskan quäits schlâit schpartina bhe polâiku mans drüktai en swaïäsmu wîrdan bhe Druwien er prei noûson wangañ sta ast swais Etnêiwings labs quäits. „Wenn GOTT allen bösen Rath vnnd willen bricht vnd hindert so vns den Namen Gottes nicht heiligen vnd sein Reich nicht komen lassen wollen Als da ist des Teuffels der Welt vnd vnsers fleisches wille Sondern stercket vnd behelt vns fest in seinem Wort vnd Glauben bis an vnser ende das ist sein gnediger guter wille.“ I think that *quoitā is a preterit form used in the function of a subjunctive. The same can be maintained for the 1st pl. form *quoitāmai. The form *quoitē represents the regular present tense indicative. 

In conclusion, I regard the following forms as regular: 

1st sg. turri, druwe, billi, quoi 
2nd sg. turri, turei, druwe, druweise, quoi 
3rd sg. turri, turei, druwe, billē, stallē, quoi, quoitē,preterit billā, stallā 
1st pl. turrimai druweimai, seggemai, billēmai, stallēmai, preterit quoitāmai 
2nd pl. turriti, seggetti, stallēti, quoitēti 
3rd pl. turri, druwe, seggē, billē, stallē, quoitē, preterit quoitā 

For early Prussian I tentatively reconstruct the following paradigms on the basis of the comparative evidence (cf. Kortlandt, 1979): 

1st sg. *giriä *tur(e)jä *druweïa *esmā 
2nd sg. *girie(s)i *turei(s)eit *druwei(e)sit *essei 
3rd sg. *giri s *turei *druweistei *esti 
1st pl. *giriama *turima *druweiama *esmai 
2nd pl. *giriête *turite *druweiête *esti 
3rd pl. *giria *turi *druweia ?
The paradigm of *turit* appears to reflect an extremely ancient flexion type which underlies the East Baltic and Slavic *i*-flexion.

The remaining verbal class with a 1st pl. ending -*imai* are nasal presents, which have a 2nd pl. ending -*ati*. The verbs *imt* 'nehmen' and *pijst* 'tragen, bringen' appear to belong to the same class. Their flexion is exemplified by the following forms:

1st sg. *imma* 1x, *po-sinna* 4x


2nd pl. *immati* 1x, *er-sinnati* 1x

3rd pl. *po-sinna* 1x, *po-stänai* 1x, *po-stanai* 1x, *po-gäunai* 1x

This type is distinct from the *aja*-flexion:

3rd sg. *peisai* 'schreibt' 1x

3rd pl. *peisai* 1x, *etträi* 'antworten' 1x, *kelsäu* 'lauten' 1x, *kaltzä* 'id' 1x

For early Prussian I tentatively reconstruct the following paradigm:

1st sg. *zinä*

2nd sg. *zinä*(se)i

3rd sg. *zinäi*

1st pl. *zinima* < *zininma*

2nd pl. *zinte* < *zinnte*

3rd pl. *zina* < *zinna*

The difference between the 1st and 2nd pl. forms must have arisen as a result of the different chronological order of syllabification and simplification of the respective consonant clusters. The 2nd pl. form was subsequently remodeled to *zinate* on the basis of the 3rd pl. form. When final long diphthongs were shortened, stem-stressed thematic verbs apparently adopted the paradigm reconstructed here. The frequent *ina*-flexion may have been instrumental in this analogical development. The attested forms of this class are the following:

1st sg. -*inna* 2x, -*inai* 1x, -*inne* 1x

2nd sg. -*inai* 1x, -*inei* 1x

3rd sg. -*inna* 9x, -*ina* 4x, -*inno* 1x, -*inai* 4x, -*innei* 1x, -*inne* 1x

1st pl. -*immimai* 6x

3rd pl. -*inna* 3x, -*ina* 2x, -*inai* 1x, -*inne* 1x

As in the case of *turei* and *turri*, I think that we have to start from 3rd sg. -*inai* and 3rd pl. -*inna*, the latter form being generalized because it could be identified as the bare present tense stem with a zero ending. This generalization evidently did not reach the nasal presents of simple verbs.
The analysis of the Old Prussian material presented here disposes of the identification of the ǎ/ì-alternation with the flexion of the Old Indic 9th present class (e.g., Trautmann, 1910, 280, Van Wijk, 1918, 140), an identification which is incompatible with the laryngeal theory (cf. Stang, 1942, 145). It implies that the ǐna-flexion, like the ǐ-flexion, must have preserved the apophonic alternation in the early Prussian paradigm and that, consequently, the thematic ǐna-flexion of Lithuanian is an innovation. This is in accordance with the fact that the Latvian verbs in -ināt are not thematic. There is no sufficient reason to assume that Latvian and Lithuanian have preserved different flexion types, as Stang proposes (1942, 182; 1966, 369). I rather assume that the 3rd person ending -ina continues the singular in Latvian and the plural in Lithuanian, just as the characteristic vowel of the ǐ-flexion stems from the singular in Slavic and from the plural in East Baltic. Indeed, the different generalization in the ǐna-flexion of Latvian and Lithuanian suggests that the difference between 3rd sg. and 3rd pl. forms was preserved in this flexion type at the time when the East Baltic dialects arose. In the thematic flexion, the difference had disappeared as a consequence of the neutralization between e and a after j (cf. Kortlandt, 1979, 62f). The relation between the ǐna-flexion and nominal n-stems (Fraenkel, 1938) must be due to a secondary development.

In conclusion, it is probable that Prussian preserved an apophonic alternation between singular and plural forms both in the ǐ-flexion and in nasal presents, an alternation which was lost in East Baltic and Slavic in prehistoric times. The reconstructed ǐ-flexion offers a basis from which both the East Baltic and the Slavic paradigms can be derived. The direct identification of the ǐna-flexion with nasal presents of roots in an obstruent allows the derivation of the Latvian and Lithuanian paradigms from a single flexion type. These considerations support the view that the Old Prussian texts are an imperfect representation of a remarkably archaic variety of Balto-Slavic.

REFERENCES

Senosios Lietuvos kanceliarioje vartotose svetimose kalbose, kaip žinoma, aptikta nemaža lietuviškų žodžių. Daugiausia jų prirankiojo K. Jablonskis iš tekstų, rašytų kanceliarine slavų kalba ir lenkiškai¹. Iš lotyniškų tekstų turime aikštėn iškeltų tik vieną kitą lituanizmą. Neseniai Vilniaus universiteto klasikinės filologijos katedros doc. B. Kazlauska bandėcijų autorius dėmesį į lietuvišką žodį *kušlikas* (*kušlėkas?*) 'silpnų akių, žlibas', vartojamą 1690 m. Vilniaus jėzuitų išleistoje lotyniškoje knygelėje „Theatrum Perennantis Gloriae...“ Michaeli Dowmont Siesicki... Anno 1690 Vilnae. Typis Academicis Soc. Iesu“. Jos p. 31 (pažymėtas Gë), eil. 23 rasoma: *Kuszliki...facta Ducis Mavortia pro-
mant ‘kušlikai...karo vado žygius teiskelia’, o eil. 28 — *Kuszlicij sensere graves
‘ziaurūs kušlikai pajuto’. Šio žodžio lietuviškumas nekelia abejonių, plg. *kušlas
‘silpnų akių, žlibas*, *kušlūs, kušlius* ‘kas neprimato, spangys, žabalas’, *kušlinti
‘prisiksišus žiūrėti, žabalineiti’. Panašus žodis (pakitusia reikšme) yra patekęs ir
į baltarusių tarmes: *kūšla, kūšla, kūšlai, kūšlėtės* ‘nevalyvas, netvarkingas;
gauruotas; nevykę, silpnas”². Lotyniško teksto *kušlikui* visiškai tikslaus atitikmens
lietuvių kalbos akademinių žodynų nepateikia, tačiau jame yra *kušlėkas* ‘kas
neprimato, aklys, spangys, žabalas’. Gal *kušlikas* perdirbta iš *kušlėkas?*

Z. Zinkevičius

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¹ Jablonskis K. Lietuviški žodžiai senosios Lietuvos raštinės kalboje. K., 1941.