

# The simple thematic present ending in 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular in East Baltic

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This talk will address an old problem of the historical origin of the Baltic simple thematic present ending in 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular. The 2sg. ending of Indo-European verbs usually supports the reconstruction of the primary *\*-si* and secondary *\*-s*. In the simple thematic conjugation, the ending is basically preceded by the thematic vowel, thus reconstructed as *\*-e-si* (primary). However, the East Baltic simple thematic ending in 2sg. presents some anomalies, most notably the absence of the *\*-s-*, as attested in Lith. 2sg. pres. *vedī* ‘you lead’ (inf. *vèsti*, 1sg. *vedù*), *nešī* (inf. *nèšti*, 1sg. *nešù*) ‘you carry’, refl. *nešiesi*, Latv. *miřsti* ‘you die’, *sitiēs* (refl.) ‘beat yourself’ < PEB *\*-ē* (< PBS *\*-ēi* with a mechanic reconstruction, cf. Stang 1966: 407). Old Prussian does not provide clear data of the simple thematic ending in 2sg. The absence of *\*-s-* in the thematic ending appears further enigmatic when it is compared with the Baltic athematic ending *\*-sai* as attested in OLith. 2sg. *essī*, *essiegu*, OPru. *assai* ‘you are’, OLatv. *ese* /*iesi*/ ‘you go’. However, opinions still vary concerning the origin of the East Baltic ending 2sg. *\*-ē*. Endzelīns (1923: 546) suggested that this points to the “original” PIE 2sg. thematic ending *\*-ēi*. Beekes (1995: 259–260) chose a similar line of approach, assuming that together with 2sg. Gk.  $-\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , PBS *\*-ēi* would point to PIE *\*-ēi* or *\*-eh<sub>1</sub>i*. Zinkevičius (1966: 370–373) pointed out the clear tendency in the Dieveniškės dialects for the optative ending *-i* / *-ie* (PB *\*-eis* < PIE *\*-oih<sub>1</sub>-s*) to be identical to the indicative ending in 2sg., suggesting their connection. Hill & Fries (2020: 21ff.) suggest a univerbation of the ending with a particle *\*-ai* ‘if, whether’ in 2sg. Brugmann (1889: 1344) and Rasmussen (1999[1987]: 118–122; also Petit 2010: 243) proposed that the Baltic thematic 2sg ending could be a result of the inner Baltic reinterpretation of the ending in (*\*es-si* → *\*es-i* ‘you are’, which eventually spread to the thematic ending: *dúosi* → *dúod-i* ‘you give’ (Brugmann) or *\*veje-si* → *\*veje-i* ‘you blow’ (Rasmussen). In this talk, this proposal of Brugmann and Rasmussen will be revisited. It will be claimed that this could be further supported by assuming the same process in the future forms (e.g., *\*dōs-si* → *\*dōs-i* ‘you will give’). Note that most verbs form the future stem in Baltic. The use of the same sets of personal endings in Baltic for all the tenses could have facilitated the spread of this new ending to other tense paradigms, including the simple thematic present paradigm, through the following four-part analogy:

- 1) PB 2sg. *\*dōs-i* : 3sg./pl. *\*dōs-∅* = 2sg. *x* : 3sg./pl. *\*ved-a-∅*,  
where *x* = *\*ved-a-i* (> Lith. *vedī*).
- 2) PB 2sg. *\*ve(d)s-i* : 3sg./pl. *\*ve(d)s-∅* = [*ē*-pret.] 2sg. *x* : 3sg./pl. *\*ved-ē-∅*,  
where *x* = *\*ved-ē-i* (> *\*vedēi* > Lith. *vedēi* ‘you led’).

Mentioning the possibility that Proto-Baltic inherited several types of the future stem formations (cf. Lith. *būsiqs*, Latv. *būšuōt* in the *\*-syē/o-* stem), a few possible scenarios of the loss of *\*-s-* in the simple thematic ending in 2sg. will be examined.

## References

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