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THE LANGUAGE OF THE OLD PRUSSIAN CATECHISMS*

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Elsewhere I have presented a comparative analysis of the three Old Prussian catechisms (1998). I first put together the three texts which translate the same German original. The collation will be reproduced here for the sake of reference.

I (1545)	II (1545)	E (1561)
Staey dessempts Pallapsaey.	Staey dessimpts Pallapsaey.	Stai Dessimton Pallaipsai.
Pirmas.	Pirmois.	<i>Stas</i> Pirmois <i>Pallaips.</i>
Thou ni tur kittans deiwan tur- rettwey.	Tou ni tur kittans deiwan tur- ryetwey.	Tou niturri kittans Deiwan <i>pagâr</i> <i>mien</i> turrîtwei.
Anters.	Anters.	<i>Stas</i> Antars <i>Pallaips.</i>
Thou <i>ny</i> tur schan emnen twaise deiwas <i>ny</i> anterpinsquan menentwey	Tou <i>ni</i> tur sten emnen twayse dey- was nienbâenden westwey.	Tou turri stan Emnan twaisei Dei- was ni enbândan westwei.
Tirts.	Tirtis.	<i>Stas</i> Tîrts <i>Pallaips.</i>
Thou tur schan lanken deinan swintintwey.	Tou tur stan lankinan deynan swyntintwey.	Tou turri stan Lânkinan Deinan Swintint.

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Ketwerts.

Thou tur twaian
thawan bha mut-
tin somonentwey.

Penckts.

Thou ny tur
gallintwey.

Wuschts.

Thou ny tur
pattiniskun
lembtwey

Sepmas.

Thou ny tur
rancktwey.

Asmus.

Thou ny tur
falsch widekausnan
waitiatun preiken
twaien tawischen

Newints.

Thou ny tur
pallapsittwey
twaisei tawischis
buttan.

Ketwirtz.

Tou tur twayien
thawan bhæ mutien
smunintwey.

Pyienkts.

Tou ni tur
gallintwey.

Vsts.

Tou ni tur
salobisquan
limtwey.

Septmas.

Tou ni tur
ranktwey.

Asmus.

Tou ni tur
reddi weydikausnan
waytiaton preyken
twayien tau-
wyschen.

Newyntz.

Tou ni tur
pallapsitwey
twaysis tauwyschis
butten.

Stas Kettwirts

Pallaips.

Tou turri twaian
Tâwan bhe Mûtien
smûnint.

Stas Piêncts

Pallaips.

Tou niturri
gallintwei.

Stas Vschts

Pallaips.

Tou niturri
Sallûbanlimtwei.

Stas Septmas

Pallaips.

Tou niturri
Rânctwei.

Stas Asmus

Pallaips.

Tou niturri
reddewijdikausnan
dâtwei prijki
twaian tawischan.

Stas Newînts

Pallaips.

Tou ni turri
Pallaipsitwei,
twaisei ta-
wischas buttan.

Dessimts.

Thou ny tur
pallapsittwey
twaisei tawischis
gennan,
waikan, merg-
wan, pecku, ader
katanassen asch.

Dessympts.

Tou ni tur
pallapsitwey
twaysis tau-
wyschies, gennan,
waykan, merg-
wan, pecku, adder
katanæssen hest.

Stas Dessîmts

Pallaips.

Tou niturri
pallapsitwei
twaise Tawi-
schas Gannan,
Waikan, Mêrgan,
Peckan, adder
ka tennêison ast.

Stas Dröffs.

AS drowe an Deiuan,
Thawan wismosing,
kas ast
taykowuns dangon
bah semmin,
Bah an Je-
sum Christû
swaian ainan
Sunun nusun
rekian, Kas
patickots ast
assastan swintan
naseilen, Gem-
mons assastan
jungkfrawen Ma-
rian. Stenuns po
Pontio Pylato,
scrisits, aulawns
bah encops. Sam-
may lesuns
preipekollin,
Tirtin deinam
att skiwuns assa
gallans. Vnsey
gobuns andangon,
Sin-
dats preitickray
Deiwas wismo-
singis Thawas,

Stan Druwin.

ES drowy en Deywan,
Thawan wissemokin,
kas est
tykynnons dæn-
gon bhe semmien.
Bhæ en Jesum
Christum
swaien aynen
Sounon nouson
reykyen, Kas
pagauts æst
hæse swyntan
naseylien. Gemmons
æsestan
jungprawan Marian.
Styienuns po
Pontio Pylato,
skresitzt, aulauns
bhe enquoptyt.
Semmay lysons
prey pykullien,
An tirtien deynan
etskyuns hæse
gallans. Vnsei
gubons nadengon.
Syndens
preytickaray
deywas wysen
mukis thawas,

*Stas Swints Cri-
stiâniskas* Druwis.

As druwê en Deiwan,
Tâwan Wisse-
musîngin kas ast
teikûuns, Dangon
bhe semmien.
Bhe en Jesûm
Christum,
swaian ai-
nan Soûnon nouson
Rikijan, kas
pogauts ast,
esse Swintan
Noseilien, Gemmons
esse stan
Jumprawan Mariân,
Stînons po
Pontio Pilato,
Skrîsits, Aulauns,
bhe en-
kopts, Semmailîsons
prei Pickullien,
Entîrtan deinan
etskiûns esse
gallan, Vnsaigû-
bons no Dangon,
Sîdons
prei tickrômien
Deiwas *steise*
wissemusîngin Tawas

Stwendau per-
gubuns wirst
preyleiginwey stans
geiwans bha
aulauwussens.

Stwendau
wirst pergubons
leygenton stæns
geywans bhe
aulaunsins.

isquen dau *tâns*
pergûbons wijrst,
prei ligint stans
gijwans bhe
aulausins.

As drowe an
swintan naseilen,
Ainan swintan
krixtianiskun kir-
kin, *Ainan*
perroniscon
swintan,
Et werpsannan
grecon,
At skisen-
na menschon, Ba
prabitscun gei-
win. Amen.

Es drowy en
swyntan naseylien,
Aynan swyntan
krichstianisquan
kirken,
Perronisquan
swyntan,
Etwerpsennian
griquan,
Etskysnan
menses, Bhe pra-
busquan geywien,
Amen.

As Druwê ên*stan*
Swintan Noseilien
ainan Swintan
Cristiâniskan
kijrkin *Stan*
perôniskan
Swintan
etwerpsennian
steise grijkan
etskîsnan
mensas, bhe
ainan prâbut-
skan gijwan, AMEN.

Sta Thawe nuson.

Stan Thawe nouson.

Stas Tâwa Noû-
son.

THawe nuson kas
thu asse an-
dangon. Swintints
wirst twais emmens.
Pergeis
twais laeims.
Twaits quaits
audasseisin

THawe nouson kas
thou æsse æn-
dengon, Swyntits
wirse tways emmens,
Pareyse *noumans*
tway ia ryeky,
Twaits quaits
audaseysin

Tâwa Noûson kas
tu essei Endangon.

Swintints
wîrst twais Emnes.

Perêit
twais Rijks.
Twaits Quâits

Audâsin,
kâgi Endan-
gon *tijt dêigi*

nosemien.

Nouson deinennin
geitien dais noû-

mans schan
deinan. Bhe

etwerpeis noûmas

nousons âu-
schautins, kai mes
etwêrpimay

na sem-
mey key audangon.
Nusan deini-
nan geittin dais
numons schin-
deinan. Bha
atwerpeis noumans
nuson anschautins,
kay mas
atwer pimay

nasemmiey kay
endengan,
Nouson deyninan
geytiey days
noumans schian
deynan. Bhæ
etwerpeis noumans
nouson anschautins,
kay mes
etwerpimay

nuson auschantnikamans. Bha ny wedais mans enperban- dan. Slaït is rankeis mans assa wargan. Amen.	nouson an- schautinekamans. Bhæ ni wedeys mans enperbandasnan. Slaït is rankeis mans æsse wargan. Emmen.	noûsons au- schautenîkamans. Bhe ni weddeis mans emperbandâsnan. Schlâit isrankeis mans, esse <i>wissan</i> wargan. AMEN.
Assa stan Crixtisnan.	Assæ stan Crixtisnan.	<i>Stas Sacraments</i> stessei <i>swintan</i> cixtisnan.
Nuson Rekis Christus bela prey <i>swaians</i> <i>maldaïsins</i> , Jeithy en <i>wissan</i> swetan, mukinaity <i>wissans</i>	Nouson rykyes <i>Jsus</i> Chricstus byla prey <i>swayiens</i> <i>maldaysins</i> , Jeiti en <i>wyssen</i> swytan, mukineyti <i>wyssens</i>	<i>Kâigi</i> Noûson Rikijs <i>Jesus</i> Christs bille, prei Markon <i>en pansadaumannien</i> , Jeiti <i>stwen</i> , enwissan swîtan, mukinaiti <i>wissans</i> <i>amsin adder</i>
poganans, bha cixtity dins en emmen Thawas, bha Sunos, bha swinte Naseilis,	poganens, bhæ Cixtidi- diens en emnen Thawas, bhæ sou- nons, bhæ swyntas naseylis,	pogûnans, bhe Crixteiti tennans, en Emnen <i>steise</i> Tâwas, bhe <i>steise</i> Saûnas bhe <i>steise</i> Swintan Noseilîs.
Kas drowe bha cixtits wirst, stas wirst deiwwuts, Kas <i>aber</i> nidruwe, stas wirst proklantitz.	Kas druwe bhæ cixteits wirst, stes wirst deywuts, kas nidruwe, stes wirst preclantys.	Kas <i>stwi</i> druwe bhe Cixtits wijrst, stas wijrst Deiwwuts, kas <i>adder</i> ni Druwe, stas wijrst perklañtîts.

Assa Sacramentan
bietis eden.

Nusen rickis
Jesus Christus,
anstan nactin
kadan
proweladin,
ymmeits stan
geittin, dinkowats
bha limatz bha
daits swaimans
maldaisemans bha
belats, ymaity
stwen, edeitte,
sta ast mais ker-
mens, kas
perwans dats
wirst, staweidan
segeitty
prey mayan
menissnan.

Assa Sacramenten
bytis ydi.

Nouson reykeis
Jsus Chricstus
anstan naktin
kaden
proweladin,
ymmeits sten
geytien, dinkautzt
bhe lymuczt, bhe
dayts swaymans
maldaysimans, bhe
bylaczt, ymayti
stwen, *bhe* ydieyti,
stæ æst mays ker-
mens, kas
perwans daeczt
wirst, Steweyden
segeyti
premayien me-
nisnan.

Stas Sacraments
Steisei Altari.

Noûson Rikijs
Jesus Christus,
ênstan Nack-
tien, kaden tans
prawilts *postâi*,
imma *tans* stan-
geitin dinkauts
bhe lîmauts, bhe
dai swaimans,
maldaisimans, bhe
billâts, immaiti
stwen, îdeiti,
sta ast mais
kêrmens, kas
pêrwans dâts
wîrst, Sta-
wîdan seggîtei
prei maian
pominisnan.

Stasma polleygo	Stæsmu poleygo	Stesmu empolijgu
jmmitz deyg	ymmeyts deygi	immats diigi
stan kelkan pho	sten kelkan,	stan Kelkin
<i>stan</i> betten eden,	<i>postan</i> bitans ydi,	pobītas īdin,
dinkowatz bha daitz	dinkauczt bhe daitz	Dinkauts, bhe dai
<i>swaimans</i>	<i>swaymans</i>	<i>stan steimans</i>
<i>maldaïsemans</i>	<i>maldaysimans</i>	
bha belats, jm-	bhæ bilats, ymmay	bhe billâts, Jmaiti
maitty stwen, bha	ti stwen bhe	stwen, bhe
pugeitty wissay	puieyti wyssay	poieiti wissai
is stasma, schis	istesmu, Sis	isstesmu, Schis
kelchs ast sta	kelkis æst stæ	kelks ast stas
nawans testamentan,	neuwenen Testa-	nauns Testaments
an maian	menten en mayiey	en maian
kraugen, kha	kræuwiey, ka	krawian, kas
perwans palletan	per wans praliten	perwans pralieiton
werst, pray att	wirst, prey et-	wîrst, prei etwer-
werpsannan gre-	werpsennian	psennien <i>stêison</i>
kun, steweydan	griquan, Stewidan	grijkan, Stawīdan
segeitty, <i>kodesnim-</i>	segeyti <i>kudesnammi</i>	seggītei
<i>ma yous pogeitty</i>	<i>joes puietti</i>	
pray maian	prey mayian	prei maian
menisnan.	minisnan.	pominīsnan.

Then I eliminated the orthographical differences between the three versions while maintaining the distinction between linguistic variants. Finally I assigned separate phonemic interpretations to the three versions on the basis of my review of the historical evidence (1988). I concluded that the three texts basically represent three successive stages in the development of the moribund Prussian language. Here I shall give a systematic account of the main differences between the three versions.

The phonological differences between the three catechisms largely result from the diphthongization of monophthongs and the monophthongization of diphthongs:

(1) *ē > I [ē] > II [ie] > E [ī].

I turrettwey, II turryetwey, E turrîtwei.

I stenuns, II styienuns, E stîmons.

I lesuns, II lysons, E lisons.

I grecon, II griquan, E grijkan.

I swetan, II swytan, E swîtan.

I bietis eden, II bytis ydi, (E steisei altari.)

I edeitte, II ydieyti, E îdeiti.

I betten eden, II bitans ydi, E bîtas îdin.

I grekun, II griquan, E grijkan.

(2) *ēi > I [ēi] > II, E [iei].

I palletan, II praliten, E pralieiton.

(3) *ēn > I [ēn] > II, E [ien].

I penckts, II pyienkts, E piêncts.

(4) *ī > I, II [ei] > E [ī]. This close diphthong remains distinct from open *ei > I, II, E [æi].

I widekausnan, II weydikausnan, E wijdikausnan.

I preiken, II preyken, E prijki.

I scrisits, II skresitzt, E skrîsits.

I leiginwey, II leygenton, E lîgint.

I geiwans, II geywans, E gijwans.

I geiwin, II geywien, E gijwan.

I auschantnikamans, II anschautinekamans, E
auschautenîkamans.

I crixtits, II crixteits, E crixtits.

I staweidan segeitty, II steweyden segeyti, E stawîdan
seggîtei.

I polleygo, II poleygo, E polijgu.

I deyg, II deygi, E dijgi.

I steweydan segeitty, II stewidan segeyti, E stawîdan seggîtei.

(5) *ā > *ō > I [uo] > II, E [ū].

I muttin, II mutien, E mûtien.

I somonentwey, II smunintwey, E smûnint.

I taykowuns, (II tykynnonns,) E teikûuns.

I patickots, (II pagauts, E pogauts.)
I gobuns, II gubons, E gûbons.
I pergubuns, II pergubons, E pergûbons.
I deiwuts, II deywuts, E deiwuts.

(6) *ōi > I [uoi] > II [ūi] > E [oui].
I pugeitty, II puieyti, E poieiti.
I pogeitty, II puietti, cf. E pouîs.

(7) *ū > I [ū] > II, E [ou].
I sunun nusun, II sounon nouson, E soûnon noûson.
I Thawe nuson, II Thawe nouson, E Tâwa noûson (2x).
I nusan, II, E nouson.
I numons, II noumans, E noûmans.
I, II noumans, E noûmas.
I nuson, II nouson, E nousons.
I nuson, II nouson, E noûsons.
I nuson, II nouson, E noûson.
I sunos, II sounons, E saûnas.
I nusen, II nouson, E noûson.

(8) *w > I [w] > II, E zero before rounded vowels.
I wuschts, II vsts, E vschts.
I taykowuns, (II tykynnonns,) E teikûuns.
I aulawns, II, E aulauns.
I att skiwuns, II etskyuns, E etskîuns.
I aulauwussens, II aulaunsins, E aulausins.
but: I deiwuts, II deywuts, E deiwuts.
I dinkowats, II dinkautzt, E dînkauts.
I dinkowatz, II dinkauczt, E dinkauts.

The declensional system was simplified by the elimination of irregular stem forms and endings:

(1) Replacement of i-, u- and consonant stems by a-stems.
I, II emnen, E emnan.
I tawischis, II tauwyschis, E tawischas.
I tawischis, II tauwyschies, E tawischas.
I, II pecku, E peckan.

I tirtin, II tirtien, E tîrtan.
I geiwin, II geywien, E gijwan.
(I laeims,) II ryeky, E rijks.
I schin, II schian, E schan.
I dins, II diens, E tennans.
I sunos, II sounons, E saûnas.

(2) Regularization of a-stem endings.

I, II mergwan, E mêrgan.
I krixstianiskun, II krichstianisquan, E crixtiâniskan.
I perroniscon, II perronisquan, E perôniskan.
I grecon, II griquan, E grijkan.
I menschon, II menses, E mensas.
I prabitscun, II prabusquan, E prâbutskan.
I grekun, II griquan, E grijkan.

(3) Elimination of the neuter gender.

I sta Thawe nuşon, II stan Thawe nouson, E stas Tâwa nôûson.
I sta nawans testamentan, II stæ neuwenen testamenten, E
stas nauns testaments.
I kha, II ka, E kas.

The conjugational system was simplified by a reduction of verbal categories:

(1) Replacement of the imperative by the indicative.

I, II tur, E turri (10x).

(2) Replacement of the infinitives in -twey and -ton by -t.

I swintintwey, II swyntintwey, E swintint.
I somonentwey, II smunintwey, E smûnint.
I leiginwey, II leygenton, E lîgint.

(3) Elimination of the nasal infix.

I sindats, II syndens, E sîdons.

(4) Replacement of the optative by the indicative.

I pergeis, II pareyse, E perêit.
I audasseisin, II audaseysin, E audâsin.

(5) Replacement of the preterit by the present tense.

I bela, II byla, E bille.

I ymmits, II ymmeits, E imma tans.

I jmmitz, II ymmeyts, E immats.

(6) Replacement of the active by the passive preterit.

I, II proweladin, E tans prawilts postâi.

(7) Replacement of the optative by the imperative? (cf. Kortlandt 1982: 7)

I segeitty, II segeyti, E seggîtei (2x).

There are various discrepancies in the numerals, pronouns and adverbs:

I dessempts, II dessimpts, E dessimton 'ten'.

I pirmas, II, E pirmois.

I tirts, II tirtis, E fîrts.

I schan, II sten, E stan.

I schan, II, E stan.

I dins, II diens, E tennans.

I ymmits, II ymmeits, E imma tans.

I, II stwendau, E isquen dau.

I preiken, II preyken, E prijki.

I vnsey, II vnsei, E vnsai after semmai (Van Wijk 1918: 59).

The prefix and preposition *na* was replaced by *no* after *po* (Van Wijk 1918: 51):

I naseilen, II naseylien, E noseilien (2x).

I andangon, II nadengon, E no dangon.

I na semmey, II nasemmiey, E nosemien.

I naseilis, II naseylis, E noseilîs.

The main syntactic innovations are the following:

(1) Introduction of the definite article.

E steise wissemusingin tawas, êstan swintan noseilien, stan perôniskan, steise grijkan, steise tâwas, steise saûnas, steise swintan noseilîs, stêison grijkan.

(2) Introduction of a possessive pronoun.

I **nuson** **auschautins**, II **nouson** **anschautins**, E **nousons** **âuschautins**.

I **nuson** **auschantnikamans**, II **nouson** **anschautinekamans**, E **noûsons** **auschautenîkamans**.

(3) Loss of inflection in the adjective.

I **wismosingis** **thawas**, II **wyssen** **mukis** **thawas**, E **steise** **wissemusîngin** **tawas**.

I **swinte** **naseilis**, II **swyntas** **naseylis**, E **steise** **swintan** **noseilîs**.

Lexical changes comprise the following:

I **ny** **anterpinsquan** **menentwey**, II **nienbænden** **westwey**, E **ni** **enbândan** **westwei**.

I **pattiniskun**, II **salobisquan**, E **sallûban**.

I **falsch**, II **reddi**, E **redde**.

I **waitiatun**, II **waytiation**, E **dâtwei**.

I **wismosing**, II **wissemokin**, E **wissemusîngin**.

I **patickots**, II **pagauts**, E **pogauts**.

I **preitickray**, II **preytickaray**, E **prei** **tickrômien**.

I **wismosingis**, II **wyssen** **mukis**, E **wissemusîngin**.

I **et** **werpsannan**, II, E **etwerpsennian**.

I **laeims**, II **ryeky**, E **rijks**.

I **perbandan**, II **perbandasnan**, E **perbandâsnan**.

I **menissnan**, II **menisnan**, E **pominisnan**.

I **att** **werpsannan**, II **etwerpsennian**, E **etwerpsennien**.

I **menisnan**, II **minisnan**, E **pominîsnan**.

I conclude that the second catechism occupies an intermediate position between the first and the third. Since the three texts represent three distinct varieties of the Old Prussian language, they must be kept apart in an analysis of the material. The older catechisms reflect a linguistic system which is clearly more archaic than the language of the *Enchiridion*. They give us a glimpse of what Prussian must have looked like before it succumbed to the pervasive influence of German. The analysis offered here provides a temporal dimension which is crucial for a correct evaluation of the historical

development.

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Senujų prūsų katekizmų kalba

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Savo pranešime 1995 m. Eichstätt'o konferencijoje autorius parodė, kad *Enchiridiono* kalba yra vėlyvesnis ankstesniųjų katekizmų kalbų vystymosi rezultatas. Stipri vokiečių kalbos sintaksės įtaka yra logiškai laukiama neišvengiamoje kalbos mirties situacijoje. Idiosinkrazijų nuoseklumas Will'o tekste aiškiai rodo jo neabejotiną prūsų kalbos mokėjimą. Šiame straipsnyje autorius bando parodyti šitų atradimų pasekmes gramatinės sistemos analizei. Išreiškiama nuomonė, kad neteisingas istorinės raidos suvokimas iššaukia klaidingų prūsų kalbos priešistorijos hipotezių gimimą.