

Grammatical Incompatibility of 2 Main Prussian “Dialects” as Implication of Different Phonological Systems

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1. Two main known Old Prussian dialects

Monuments of the Old Prussian language are:

- 1) Elbing Vocabulary, a manuscript of 802 words coming from the boundary of the 13th/14th c.;
- 2) 3 so called Old Prussian Catechisms, printed books of 1545 (I, II, the latter being a corrected version of I) and 1561 (III), of which two first consist of 5 Christian prayers in 6 pages of Old Prussian text placed against 6 pages of its German source but the third one is a translation of M.Luther’s “Enchiridion” in 55 pages of Old Prussian text placed against 55 pages of its German source plus 1 mixed page;
- 3) Dictionary of Simon Grunau of 100 words, a manuscript of 1517–1526 in several versions;
- 4) Fragmentary texts;
- 5) Prussian toponyms and anthroponyms.

The Elbing Vocabulary embraces basic Prussian vocabulary which is essentially supplemented by material of the 3rd Catechism. The latter also represents the grammatical structure of Old Prussian.

As for Grunau’s Dictionary, there are ca. 10 words and a pair grammatical forms in it, not known in the Elbing Vocabulary and in the Catechisms, but the material for this Dictionary was gathered inconsistently from apparently different Old Prussian dialects (cf. *Wobelke, rancko* vs. *muthi, Merga*).

There are only several fragmentary texts with no more than several additional words not testified in the other monuments, but the toponymic data is abundant, although not investigated thoroughly up today. Therefore, the Elbing Vocabulary and the Catechisms represent the basic source for the researcher.

The dialect of the Elbing Vocabulary may be only assumed as being *Pomezanian*. The Catechisms come from *Samland*, the 3rd having been translated in Pobethen. Presence of *o* (**/ō/*) in the Elbing Vocabulary against *-a < -*ā, ā /ā/* in the Catechisms is the main feature making difference between these dialects, cf. *Towis* E vs. *Tāws* III. The 1st Catechism is characteristic of

the long *e* (**/ē/*), absent in the other Catechisms but present in the Elbing Vocabulary, cf. *Swetan* E, *swetan* I vs. *swytan* II, *swītan* III.

The long vocalism is diphthongized in the stressed¹ position in the Elbing Vocabulary (cf. the barytones *doalgis*, *soalis* vs. the oxytone *wosee*, the barytone *peadey* vs. oxytone *queke*), but the first component of the stressed circumflex diphthong is lengthened (*coysnis*, *scroysles*, *droanse*, *peempe*², *teansis*, *mealde*), so that often it absorbs the second component *i* (*moasis*, *seamis*, *semo*). The latter feature occurs in the Catechisms too (*pallapsaey* I, *pallapsittwey* I, *pallapse* III, *seggēsei* III)³. With less probability the same may be said about *dewus*, *dewes* of the Dictionary of Simon Grunau too.

The following features are present in all Catechisms but not testified in the Elbing Vocabulary:

- 1) there is the long *ū* instead of “Elbing” **ā*, **ō* after the labials and gutturals in Catechisms (*mutien* II, *Mütien* III vs. *Mothe* E, *poūton* III vs. *Paodaminan* E, *Accodis* E⁴),
- 2) the stressed long *ū* and *ī* (not coming from the long *ā* and *ē*) tend to diphthongization⁵,
- 3) except long compounds (*stūrintickrōms* III), only one length may be present in one word in the stressed position, unstressed length being shortened (*dereis* III < **dī-*, *kurpi* III vs. *kurpe* E, beside *semmē* III – the stressed final *-ē* could not turn into *-ī* in the Catechisms because of

¹ Klusis M. *Prūsų kalba, I*. Vilnius, Prūsia, 1989, 22–23.

² Cf. Latv. circumflex *p`empis* – Mažiulis V. *Prūsų kalbos etimologijos žodynas*, vol. 3, L–P. Vilnius, Mokslas, 1996, p. 241. Pr. subst. fem. *peempe* is a feminine derivative from the subst. masc. **pempis* < adj. neutr. **pempan* ‘swollen’ with the circumflex tone, cf. Mažiulis, l.c. This word was barytone (cf. Lith. *pémpė* with a metatony), occasionally written (or later rewritten) *peempe* instead **peampe*. As for the oxytone *dongo* E 403 (for oxytone cf. not Lith. *dangus* but also two (!) spellings in the same Elbing Vocabulary *Dangus* E 3, E 95), the spelling *dongo* instead of **dango* was either a mistake, or occasionally reflected the accented stem (Latv. *danga* with its “stiepta” tone on *n* is a borrowing from O.Curonean, the tone could be changed). These ideas are not taken into consideration in Klusis, op. cit.

³ Cf. Latv. circumflex *p`empis* – Mažiulis V. *Prūsų kalbos etimologijos žodynas*, vol. 3, L–P. Vilnius, Mokslas, 1996, p. 241. Pr. subst. fem. *peempe* is a feminine derivative from the subst. masc. **pempis* < adj. neutr. **pempan* ‘swollen’ with the circumflex tone, cf. Mažiulis, l.c. This word was barytone (cf. Lith. *pémpė* with a metatony), occasionally written (or later rewritten) *peempe* instead **peampe*. As for the oxytone *dongo* E 403 (for oxytone cf. not Lith. *dangus* but also two (!) spellings in the same Elbing Vocabulary *Dangus* E 3, E 95), the spelling *dongo* instead of **dango* was either a mistake, or occasionally reflected the accented stem (Latv. *danga* with its “stiepta” tone on *n* is a borrowing from O.Curonean, the tone could be changed). These ideas are not taken into consideration in Klusis, op. cit.

⁴ This is a famous hypothetical diminutive masc. “Lith.” °*akutis* of the fem. *akis* in some well-known too bold conjectures.

⁵ This process is poorly reflected in the 1st Catechism in which several samples, as *Thou*, *noumans*, *preyleigintwey*, either witness slight pronunciation at the beginning of the process *ū* > *ou*, *ē* > *eī*, or have got into the text from other dialects, cf. Palmaitis M.L., *Über strukturelle Besonderheiten des prußischen (altpreußischen) Verbs* / Baltistica, XXXIV (2), 1999, 189, notes 4–6. The spellings *ou*, *ei* cannot reflect any method to mark the accent in the 1st Catechism because of the only one case of *ou* in non-monosyllabic words (*noumans*) there.

- the later alternation $\bar{a}i/\bar{a}$, $\bar{e}i/\bar{e}$, which was generalized in ultima first in $-\bar{a}ja > -\bar{a}i/-\bar{a}$, $-\bar{e}ja > -\bar{e}i/-\bar{e}$ verbal forms, cf. the hyper-correction $giwei$ III = $giw\bar{e}^6$, Latv. *dzīve* (with the broken pitch),
- 4) if not supported by the system, all originally short final vowels are clipped in words which are not one syllable particles or compounds with such particles, cf. *tur* I, II (relic of the *i*-stem verbs ousted by the *ija*-stem verbs, as *turri* III = *grīki(si)*), *enimt* III, *erlaikūt* III, but *arwi* (the system of the neuter forms), *dīgi* III, *deyg* I (compound with the particle *gi*).

2. Yatvingian character of the dialects of the Old Prussian Catechisms

More than 30 years ago Vytautas Mažiulis drew attention of his students that the phonological system of the dialects of Samlandian Catechisms differed not only from the system reflected in the Elbing Vocabulary but also from that reflected in the first records of Samlandian localities⁷. This concerns Common Baltic long $*/\bar{a}/$, which is rendered as *o* in the Elbing Vocabulary and (with few exceptions) in all Prussian toponyms including Samland, but which manifests as \bar{a} in the Catechisms. Cf. *Brote* E 173 vs. *Brāti* III 67 and such toponyms of Samland as *Klochoten* 1258 (not $*kl\bar{a}k-$!), *Soke* 1258 (not $*-s\bar{a}k-$!), *Garwoniten* 1290 (not $*-\bar{a}n-$!), *Wosegaw* 1278 (not $*\bar{a}z(\bar{e})-$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Wosian* 1299 (not $*\bar{a}z\bar{e}in$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Jodisakka* 1331 (with the Balt. $*\bar{a}$, not $*\bar{o}$!), *Wobsdis* 1331 (not $*-\bar{a}bzd-$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Wosebirgo* 1331 (not $*\bar{a}z\bar{e}-$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Wosegowiskapynis* 1331 (not $*\bar{a}z\bar{e}-$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Wosegowiske* 1331 (not $*\bar{a}z\bar{e}-$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Wosispile* 1331 (not $*\bar{a}z\bar{e}-$, a prothetic *w-* pointing out to a very old $*\bar{o}$), *Langoditen* 1394 (not $*-\bar{a}d-$). The same feature occurs in later spellings too: *Notkaimen* 1441 (not $*n\bar{a}t-$!), *Wopayne* 1446 (not $*w\bar{a}p-$!), *Seppothenn* 1494 (not $*-\bar{a}t-$!). For V. Mažiulis this made ground to conclude that \bar{a} of the Catechisms could not reflect the Common Baltic $*/\bar{a}/$, especially having in mind hypothetical process $\bar{a} > \bar{u}$ / B-, G-. The latter really shows later character of the vowel \bar{a} in the Catechisms because this process could take place only after some intermediary \bar{o} -stage in any case (this had to happen already in some proto-dialect of the Catechisms).

⁶ Palmaitis L. *Baltų kalbų gramatinės sistemos raida* [BR]. Kaunas, Šviesa, 1998, p. 223.

⁷ Cf. Būga K. *Rinkiniai raštai*. Sudarė Z. Zinkevičius. Vilnius, 1961, vol. 3, p. 106.

V. Mažiulis explained \bar{a} of the Catechisms as a result of later Samlandian evolution $\bar{o} > \bar{a}$. If so, two processes had to take place before the appearance of the Catechisms in 1545 – 1561 and since recording the toponyms between 1258 (*Klochoten*) – 1494 (*Seppothenn*), i.e. in 301 or even 51 (!) years: 1) first the vowel $*\bar{o}$ (< trad. Balt. $*\bar{a}$ and trad. Balt. $*\bar{o}$) had to turn into $*\bar{u}$ after the labials and the gutturals, 2) later the vowel $*\bar{o}$ (not the narrower allophone $*.\bar{o}$ of the trad. Balt. $*\bar{o}^8$!), after having remained whole in all other positions, had to turn into $*\bar{a}$. Such processes seem to be unlikely not only because of the shortage of historical time, but also because the process $*\bar{o} > *\bar{a}$ had to run phonetically from the upper articulation toward the lower one, while almost at the same epoch quite an opposite process is traditionally reconstructed running from the lower toward the upper articulation: $*\bar{e} > *\bar{i}$. The latter has not taken place in the dialect of the 1st Catechism, cf. *turretwey* (Lith. *turėti*), *stenuns* (Lith. praes. *stena*, *leja* – praet. *lėjo*), *lesuns* (Latv. *lēzēt*), *grecon*, *grekun* (Proto-Polish $*gr\bar{e}x\bar{o}$), *swetan* (Proto-Polish $*sv\bar{e}t\bar{o}$), *betten*, *edeitte*, *eden* (Lith. *ėda*) vs. *turrītwei* III, *stīnons* III, *lysons* II, *līsuns* III 127, *griquan* II, *grijkan* III, *swytan* II, *swītan* III, *bitan(s)* II, *bītas* III, *ydieyti* II, *īdeiti* III, *ydi* II, *īdin* III).

Therefore it seems better to treat the vowel \bar{a} (in place of the vowel $*\bar{o}$ of the Elbing Vocabulary and Prussian toponyms) and even \bar{i} (in place of the vowels $*\bar{e}$) of the Catechisms as feature of Samlandian Soudovian, having in mind that a) – the Teuton Order settled ca. 1600 Soudovians in the North-West of Samland after conquering Soudovia as well as that b) – these Soudovians were extremely vital (after 300 years Soudovians and not other Prussians are described by H. Maletius)⁹.

This presupposes some Yatvingian proto-dialect of the language of the Catechisms, in which during sufficiently vast period of time such processes took place: 1) West Baltic $*\bar{o}$, $*.\bar{o} > \bar{u}$ / B-, G-, 2) $*\bar{o}$ (not $*.\bar{o}$) $> *\bar{a}$ in other positions, 3) the broader allophone $*\bar{o}$ having been eliminated from the system, only the narrow and rare phoneme $*.\bar{o}$ remained, 4) this caused the narrowing $*\bar{e} > *\bar{i}$, supported by the narrow \bar{u} coming from $*\bar{o}$, $*.\bar{o}$ after the labials and the gutturals. The processes 1)–3) took place (long) before resettling the Soudovians to Samland, but the process 4) started approximately at the time of the resettling.

⁸ Казлаускас И. *К развитию общебалтийской системы гласных* / ВЯ 1962, 4; Мажюлис В. *Некоторые фонетические аспекты балто-славянской флексии* / Baltistica, I (1), 1965, 17–30; Mažiulis V. *Baltų ir kitų indoeuropiečių kalbų santykiai* [BS]. Vilnius, Mintis, 1970, 18–25.

⁹ Palmaitis L. *W kwestii identyfikacji języka "Katechizmów pruskich"* / Komunikaty Mazursko-Warmińskie, 2000, 3 (229) 501–507; idem *Prūsų katekizmo kalbos identifikacijos klausimu* / In: Vakarų baltų kalbos ir kultūros reliktai III. Klaipėdos universiteto Baltistikos centras. Klaipėda 2000, 15–19.

The final process, when the new $*\bar{i}$, and parallel – the new $*\bar{u}$, began to oust the original $*\bar{u}$, $*\bar{i}$ which turned into $*o\bar{u}$, $*e\bar{i}$, is known only from Samlandian Catechisms and, therefore, does not belong to their Yatvingian proto-dialect.

The presupposition of Yatvingian proto-dialect of the language of the Catechisms is backed up by data coming from proper Yatvingian territory. Here the locality *Gubiniten* with $\bar{u} < *a$ was registered in 1259, half a century before the appearance of the Elbing Vocabulary, in which this process is not traced at all. On the other hand, the process $*\bar{e} > \bar{i}$ has been testified on Yatvingian territory in Belarus in localities *Лепль*, the 14th c., against later *Липль*, *Мирунишки* 1559, *Mete* 1452 against *Muma* 1559.

3. Changes in grammar caused by phonetic changes

In 2000 Wojciech Smoczyński published “Untersuchungen zum deutschen Lehngut im Altpreussischen”¹⁰, where he summarized his new look on development of Old Prussian. I dare to call his method “generalizing by analogy”. The author generalizes trends in free spellings in accordance with contemporary German way of spelling and draws conclusions which are crucial in comprehending Old Prussian inflection and derivation. Thus such instances, as *rekian* II, *reykyen* II, undoubtedly reflecting the *ija*-stem (cf. *Rikijan* III), are generalized by W. Smoczyński on all cases of spellings *ian*, *ien*, *ion*, due to what new Baltic morphonemic derivatives are postulated (cf. e.g. the explanation of *median* E as $*medijan$ ¹¹). Since broad generalizations of this kind present extraordinary suggestions to treat Old Prussian material in an unexpectedly new way, although sometimes they do not prove insufficiency of the views of R.Trautmann, J.Endzelīns and later researchers (this concerns also Polish tradition to question rendering of tones in the 3rd Catechism¹²), I dare to adhere to Vilnius school of J.Kazlauskas–V.Mažiulis and to put off polemics with W.Smoczyński till it becomes necessary in a special monograph on grammatical structure of Old Prussian.

Further, basing myself mainly on results of the research of Vytautas Mažiulis, I shall show what grammatical differences had to be implicated by distinctive phonologic features of the

¹⁰ Smoczyński W. *Untersuchungen zum deutschen Lehngut im Altpreussischen*. Kraków, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2000.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159.

¹² For me, such examples as *tāns prēmans* (*dijgi Swints postānai*) III 49₃ are sufficient for a conclusion that a dash over the vowel does indicate tones and not only stress in the diphthongs: one must stress either *tāns* or *prēmans* here.

dialects of the Catechism in their grammar in comparison with dialects where these features were not presented (as e.g. in the Elbing Vocabulary).

To understand essential difference between the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms and the language of the Elbing Vocabulary, a number of common changes in the long vocalism of the low and the middle rise must be recognized.

According to J.Kazlauskas and V.Mažiulis, in Common Baltic the phoneme */ō/ of the middle rise (< trad. Balt. *ō) manifested in 2 allophones: the narrower *.ō and the broader *ō both appearing in complementary distribution. The narrower allophone *.ō occurred in the stressed position but the broader allophone *ō occurred in the unstressed position. In West Baltic the opened back Balt. *ō of the low rise < trad. Balt. *ā (cf. *Brote* E, *brāti* III) coincided with the broader allophone *ō of the phoneme */ō/ of the middle rise < trad. Balt. *ō (cf. the barytone *cixtia* III)¹³.

Later, but also in the Common Baltic period, the long diphthongs were shortened. On some of the last stages of West Baltic the ending of the nominative singular of the thematic stems was shortened [cf. *Deywis* E, *Deiws* III, but still occurred sporadically (*lāisk*)*as* (III) when it was difficult to pronounce combinations of the consonants]¹⁴. Earlier, as in Common Indoeuropean, there was only one inflection *-(a)s further splitting into the nom. *-(a)s and the gen. *-(a)s as in Hittite¹⁵.

Crucial changes, which took place in phonetics and grammar of the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms, were due to a later process of reduction of the unstressed short final vowels and shortening of the unstressed long vowels. It is not clear whether these changes were

¹³ Mažiulis V., BS 22–23. On page 24 (§ 13), while speaking about common Baltic processes, V.Mažiulis mentions oxytone Lith. *dosnus* < unstressed **dō-* as sample of the same process which resulted in Prussian of the Catechisms as *cixtia* III with its *-a* < **-ā* < **-ō*, generalized from analogous but barytone grammatical forms, or *dātwei* III with its *-ā* < **-ō* generalized from the oxytone forms. With no doubts this leads to clear and simple explanation also of the East-Baltic thematic genitive singular Lith. *vilko*, Latv. *vilka* < barytone Balt. **-ō* (with the subsequent Mažiulis' theory of lengthened thematic stems, paradigmatic and non-paradigmatic cases etc.), not < trad. **-ā* < mythological Common-IE "ablative" **-o-ed*, as Zinkevičius Z. *Lietuvių kalbos kilmė*. Vilnius, Mokslas, vol. I, 1984, p. 200.

¹⁴ The reason seems to be morphologic but not phonetic (some researchers speak about shortening of the hypothetical ending of the gen. sg. masc. **-ase* > **-as*, nevertheless short endings still are not reduced in the Elbing Vocabulary). The shortening of the nominative singular had to take place provided the genitive singular was of the same form. Therefore and especially having in mind archaic character of the Baltic languages, it cannot be excluded that the language structure of Common Baltic was still the same as of Common Indoeuropean: it was not "accusative". For a pre-accusative language structure of Indoeuropean cf. Гамкрелидзе Т.В., Иванов Вяч. Вс. *Индоевропейский язык и индоевропейцы*. Издательство Тбилисского университета, т. I, 1984, p. 267–319; cf. a modified view with the explication of the term "fientivity" in: Palmaitis L., BR 26– 34.

¹⁵ There had to be an intermediary period between the non-accusative (the so-called "active" or fientive) and the accusative structure in Baltic, when sentences with the subject in the fientive ("active") case were still possible. This was reflected in a common form *fient*. > nom., gen. *-as* as in Hittite. In order to differentiate the nominative singular from the genitive singular the ending of the former was reduced (the latter could not be shortened since its form *the*

common Yatvingian, or they came into being only in Soudovian Prussian of Samland due to unknown peculiarities of crossing of the Yatvingian system (possessing long $*\bar{a}$ < trad. Balt. $*\bar{a}$) with the Prussian system (possessing long $*\bar{o}$ of the low rise < trad. Balt. $*\bar{a}$).

System of the verbal inflections.

Two phonemes merged in the phoneme $/\bar{a}/$ in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms: 1 – the opened back Balt. $*\bar{o}$ of the low rise < trad. Balt. $*\bar{a}$ (cf. *brāti* III) and 2 – NOT the narrower $*\bar{o}$ of the middle rise < Balt. $*\bar{o}$, but only its unstressed or generalized unstressed broader allophone $*\bar{o}$ < trad. Balt. $*\bar{o}$ (cf. the barytone *cixtia* III or *naseylis* II with occasionally stressed second syllable in the latter). The stressed narrower allophone $*\bar{o}$ of the narrower $*\bar{o}$ of the middle rise < the same Balt. $*\bar{o}$ remained as the phoneme $/*\bar{o}/$, cf. *perōni* III.

Unfortunately, both phonemes (1, 2) were used as markers in grammatical forms, i.e. in the thematic ending of the 1st singular IE $*-\bar{o}$ and in the Baltic verbal stem-ending trad. $*-\bar{a}$.

The form 1st sg. *cixtia* III, with its $-a$ < $*-\bar{a}$ < the unstressed broader allophone $*\bar{o}$ of the middle rise phoneme $/*\bar{o}/$ < trad. Balt. $*\bar{o}$, shows that quite analogous was the barytone ending of the 1st person singular either in the root verbs. Since to the time of the Catechisms the former broader allophone $*\bar{o}$ of the middle-rise phoneme $/*\bar{o}/$ < trad. Balt. $*\bar{o}$ had already merged in one phoneme together with the low-rise phoneme $/*\bar{o}/$ < trad. Balt. $*\bar{a}$, and since one can hardly imagine different personal inflections in oxytone and in the barytone personal forms in the same language, one must conclude that the ending 1st sg. $*-\bar{a}$ was generalized also in the oxytone forms (cf. the opposite generalization Lith.-Latv. 1st sg. $-u$ < the stressed narrower allophone $*\bar{o}$ of the middle rise phoneme $/*\bar{o}/$ < trad. Balt. $*\bar{o}$).

Such process took place not only in Yatvingian. But the quality of the low-rise back vowel was $*\bar{o}$, not $*\bar{a}$ in Prussian, therefore the discussions concern Yatvingian or Prussian Soudovian here.

After the thematic ending of the 1st person present singular $*-\bar{o}$ had been generalized as $*-\bar{a}$ ($*krikstij-\bar{a}$ > much later *cixtia* III), in barytone forms it coincided with the inflection $*-\bar{a}$ of the 3rd person \bar{a} -stem preterit of the thematic verbs and the 3rd person present of the \bar{a} -stem verbs: praet. $*lazin\bar{a}$ (much later > *lasinna* III), praes. $*bij\bar{a}$ (much later > *bia* III). With no doubt the same happened also to the inflection of the barytone 1st person singular of the \bar{a} -stem preterit of

vowel + -s was supported by many instances of the genitive in other stems). Cf. Mažiulis V., BS § 52, Palmaitis L. *Dėl baltų kalbų nenominatyvinės praeities.* / Baltistica II Priedas (1977), p. 115.

the thematic verbs and the 1st person singular present of the *ā*-stem verbs: **-ā-ō > *-āā > *-ā*. On this stage paradigms of the following type had to appear (the verb *beigeite*, testified by H.Maletius, is taken conditionally):

	<u>Thematic stems</u>	<u>ā-stems</u>
Present		
1 st sg.	<i>*(bēg)ā</i>	<i>*(bij)ā</i>
3 rd	<i>*(bēg)a</i>	<i>*(bij)ā</i>
Preterit		
1 st sg.	<i>*(bēg)ā</i>	[<i>*-ājā</i>]
3 rd	<i>*(bēg)ā</i>	[<i>*-ājā</i>]

After that, the process of shortening of the unstressed long vowels and reduction of the unstressed short final vowels began, what could be possible due to the retraction of the accent from the final syllable to the root. There are no data to presume other reason of this retraction as only mixing different languages (Prussian and Yatvingian) in Samland. All forms with the ending *-ā* had to turn into forms with the ending *-a* (e.g. **bēga*, **bija*) but the accent was leveled and the mobile accent paradigm was lost (all verbal forms became barytone). The form of the 3rd person present of the thematic verbs had to lose its inflection and to become a zero-ending form, e.g. **bēg*¹⁶, as in Latvian or in the Samogithian dialect of Lithuanian. Nevertheless such zero-ending 3rd person thematic form could not appear in Prussian. In Latvian and in Samogithian the zero-ending is opposed to the ending which from the very beginning was of another quality: 1st sg. praes. *-u < *-uo*. In Prussian of the Catechisms, in the intermediary period of facultative parallel use of the shorted and non-shortened endings (cf. *viņš nezina / viņš nezin* in modern colloquial Latvian), the forms were mixed: 1st sg. praes. **bēgā / *bēga* beside the 3rd praet. **bēga / *bēg*. Here the necessity to distinguish between the 1st and the 3rd persons was not supported by other forms, as it took place in Latvian or Samogithian, because of a great plenty of cases when these forms had not been distinguished already in the previous epoch: 1st sg., 3rd praes. **bijā > *bija*, 1st sg., 3rd praet. *bēgā > *bēga*. As a result, since the period of the use of facultative parallel forms (see above), there became fixed such variant of the form of the 3rd person of the thematic

¹⁶ Cf. analogous shortening in the *i*-stem verbs: a relic *tur* I, II, yet not ousted by the *ija*-stem model as in *turri* III = *grīki(si)* III – see CATECHISMUS IN PREUBNISCHER SPRACH, UND DAGEGEN DAS DEUDSCHE. First published: 1545. 6th reprint: Vilnius 1995. Introduction, text, philological comments, reconstruction. / In: Bibliotheca Baltica. Vilnius: Pradaī 1995, p. 92, note 26.

verbs in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms, which coincided with the form of the 1st person singular in the present tense, i.e. **(bēg)a*, i.e. in full correspondence with the coincidence of the 1st person singular and the 3rd person in historical *ā*-stem preterit of the thematic verbs and in the present and preterit of the *ā*-stem verbs.

In the endings of the suffix verbs (e.g. *widdai* III, i.e. 1st pers. sg. praes. **widājā*, 3rd pers. **widāja*, 1st pers. sg. praet. **widājā*, 3rd pers. **widājā*), on the contrary, the long ending of the 1st singular person, when reduced into the short ending, was clipped together with the reduced short ending of the 3rd person, because of the tend to shorten the long words and because the 1st singular person and the 3rd person were coinciding in many other cases at the same time. The resulting **-āja > -āi/-ā*, *-ai/-a*, **-ēja > -ēi/-ē*, *-ei/-e* forms were subsequently generalized on the preterit due to the coincidence of the preterit and the present form in many other cases:

	<u>Thematic stems</u>	<u>ā-stems</u>
Present		
1 st sg.	<i>*(bēg)a</i>	<i>*(bij)a</i>
3 rd	<i>*(bēg)a</i>	<i>*(bij)a</i>
Preterit		
1 st sg.	<i>*(bēg)a</i>	[<i>*-āja > -āi/-ā</i> , <i>-ai/-a</i>]
3 rd	<i>*(bēg)a</i>	[<i>*-āja > -āi/-ā</i> , <i>-ai/-a</i>]

Such lack of distinction between the 1st and the 3rd persons in singular was the first step toward analytism. A subsequent necessity to use pronouns, which specified persons, inevitably caused the third stage of the development: ousting of the form of the 2nd person and its replacement with the form of the 1st/3rd person in singular: *kas du Gīwu bhe Rikawie en Prabutskan* III 85₁₄, i.e. **kas tū gīwu be rikaūja en prābutskan* (here the final *-u* in *gīwu* reflects former long *-ā* after the labial *w*) “der du lebest vnd regierest in ewigkeyt”. Nevertheless, this process was hindered by the presence of personal forms which still were discerned in the athematic verbs in singular: the 1st sg. **-m* or **-mā > -mu* and *-ma / -mai*, the 3rd person *-t* as well as the 2nd person sg. *-sei*. The latter could be occasionally borrowed to replenish the thematic paradigm in present: *druwēse* III = [*druwēise / druwēisei*], *seggēsei* III = [*segēisei / segēise*]:

	<u>Thematic stems</u>	<u>ā-stems</u>
Present		
1 st sg.	<i>*(bēg)a</i>	<i>*(bij)a</i>

2 nd sg.	*(bēg)a / *(bēg)asei	*(bij)a / *(bij)asei
3 rd	*(bēg)a	*(bij)a
Preterit		
1 st sg.	*(bēg)a	[*-āja > -āi/-ā, -ai/-a]
3 rd	*(bēg)a	[*-āja > -āi/-ā, -ai/-a]

Relic of the original form of the 2nd person singular may be *sātuinei* III 85₃: *Toū etwēre twaian rānkan/ bhe sātuinei wissan...*, t.y. **toū etwerja twajan rānkan be sātwinei wisan...* “Du thust deine handt auff/ vnd settigest alles...”.

We see that the difference between the present and preterit form had also to be lost in many cases on the second and the third stages of the development. The present and the preterit forms could be distinguished if only different stems were used for them in the athematic verbs, or in case of the apophonic, nasal, *sta-* or *ja-*present. This was the second step toward analytism, because in order to specify tense, when it was not clear from the context, one was forced to use perfect forms or impersonal participles instead of personal forms. Both possibilities may be illustrated by corresponding Latvian and Lithuanian examples (although the similar necessity may be found in Latvian only): perfect instead of preterit – Latv. *as asmu runājis* (praet. *runāju* coincides with the praes. *runāju*); participle instead of the personal form – Lith. *aš ten buvęs* (instead of *aš ten esu buvęs*, a feature of quite other nature). In other words, in order to be understood correctly, a Samlandian Prussian (Soudovian) had to specify tenses in the following way: (the 1st sg.) **as bīga*, (the 2nd sg.) **tū bīga*, (the 3rd pers.) **tāns bīga* in the present tense and (the 1st sg.) **as asmu (asmai / asma) bīguns* or **as bīguns* instead of **as bīga*, when the latter was not comprehensible from the context, (the 2nd sg.) **tū aseī bīguns* or **tū bīguns* instead of **tū bīga*, (the 3rd sg.) **tāns ast bīguns* or **tāns bīguns* instead of **tāns bīga* in the past tense.

To add, one may remember the Slavic innovative *l*-preterit of the participle origin, although the Slavic development was not the same.

System of the noun inflections.

Due to the narrowing $\bar{e} > \bar{i}$ in dialects, reflected in the 2nd and in the 3rd Catechisms, the \bar{e} -stem declension lost its Common-Baltic appearance there. Since there is no evidence of the oxytone forms of the genitive singular in the Catechisms, one must assume that even oxytone nouns had barytone genitive in singular, e.g. nom. sg. **giwē* (/ *giwēi*) (cf. Latv. *dzīve* with the broken pitch) – gen. sg. **gīwis*, but not **giwīs* (< **giwēs* < **gīwēs*). This gen. sg. *-is* in its turn

was at the same time the genitive ending of the *i*-stem nouns (*niaubillīntis* III) and of the *ja*-stem nouns which merged with the *i*-stem (*wismosingis* I) in this case. There are traces of the \bar{e} -stem acc. sg. **-en* (*geiwien* II), nevertheless one cannot distinguish them from the *ja*-stems' accusative singular, totally reflected as *-ien* (not to say that the *ja*-stems were constantly supplemented by changing former *i*-stems). The \bar{e} -stem dative singular form *-ei* still preserved the regular Baltic appearance: *semmei* I, *pērgimie* [*pērgimeī*] III, nevertheless this inflection was identical to that of the *i*-stem dative singular. On the other hand, even the ending nom. sg. *-i* could not represent the \bar{e} -stem exclusively, because the same was the \bar{i} -stem ending nom. sg. *-i* (*supūni* III, if the \bar{i} -stem) after the shortening of the final lengths. Therefore only rare oxytones of the *semmē* type bore witness of the Baltic class of the \bar{e} -stem nouns in the dialects of the 2nd and the 3rd Catechisms.

Thus the number of the types of declension tended to be reduced at least in the language of the 2nd and the 3rd Catechisms. Simplification of the noun grammar was accompanied with a feature which had to change even the syntactic system very strongly. This feature was coincidence of the forms of the accusative singular and the genitive plural which spread from the thematic paradigm.

Development of the Balt. gen. pl. trad. **-ōn* in Prussian was dependent on the same distribution of the accented narrow **.ō* and the unaccented broad **ō* allophones of the phoneme Balt./ IE **-ō*: the accented West Baltic inflection gen. pl. **.ōn* > **ūn*, but the unaccented West Baltic inflection gen. pl. **ōn* > **ān*¹⁷. Later, in epoch of the shortening of the tautosyllabic length [this happened before the shortening of unstressed lengths and reduction of the unstressed short endings in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms] both variants turned into **-un* and **-an* correspondingly. The free alternation of the allomorphs gen. pl. *-un* / *-an* in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms (cf. the barytones *grecon*, *grekun* I, *grīkan* III, *nusun* I, *noūsan* III, *noūson* III) shows that the unaccented variant was not generalized in the genitive plural there. The unaccented variant gen. pl. *-an* was not generalized in order to ensure as many instances of the former opposition of the gen. pl. (accented) *-un* : acc. sg. (always unaccented) *-an*, as was only possible. Nevertheless, after the genitive plural inflection had become unaccented in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms, the both variants of the genitive plural, *-un*, *-an*, were mixed there.

At the same time the variant gen. pl. *-un* coincided with the *u*-stem acc. sg. *-un* (*sunun* I, *soūnon* III), while the variant gen. pl. *-an* coincided with the *a*- and the \bar{a} -stems' acc. sg. *-an* (*grīkan* III, *rānkan* III). This essentially disordered distribution of noun inflections and even

¹⁷ Cf. Мажюлис В. *Некоторые фонетические аспекты балто-славянской флексии*, § 7.

enabled the appearance of such unusual innovations as the *i*-stem gen. pl. *-in* (*nidruwīngin* III 121₅) as being equal to the *i*-stem acc. sg. *-in* (*druwīngin* III 119₁₃).

As a result, in a lot of instances, a syntactic ambiguity had to appear which had been impossible in former regular inflectional structure of the language. This concerns (1) expressing the objective genitive in plural when its subordinating noun is in the accusative singular, (2) expressing the subjective genitive in plural when its subordinate noun is in the accusative singular and (3) expressing the direct object determined by the not agreed attribute, i.e. when the attribute is a noun in the genitive plural, but the direct object, determined by the said noun, is in the accusative singular. As examples, sentences based upon the Enchiridion may be discussed: “I believe in the remission of sins” (1), “God breaks the opposing of bad servants” (2), “God saves a child of sins”. Lithuanian correspondences represent classical samples of the Baltic syntactical type: (*aš*) *tikiu nuodėmių atleidimą* (1), *Dievas laužia blogų tarnų pasipriešinimą* (2), *Dievas išgano nuodėmių vaiką* (3).

To discuss these sentences, one must notice that there is no necessity to use the personal pronoun *aš* “I” in these cases in Lithuanian if the first person is not to be emphatically specified. Unlike Lithuanian, the use of the personal pronoun is indispensable in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms because of the not distinguishing there of the 1st singular and the 3rd persons of the verb if the latter is not athematic: *as druwē* [*druwēj(a)*].

Secondly, in Lithuanian sentences the objective genitive plural of the word “sins” (1), the subjective genitive plural of the words “bad servants” (2) and the genitive plural of the not agreed attribute “sins” (3) differ with their inflection *-ų* from the accusative case inflection *-ą* of the subordinating noun “remission” (1), of the subordinate noun “opposing” (2) and of the determined noun “child”.

There is no such difference in the same sentences literally translated into the language of the Catechisms: **as druwēi en grīkan etwērpsnan* (1), **Deiws lemja wārgan wāikan emprīkistalīsnan* (2), **Deiws izrankina grīkan malnīkan* (3) – all noun inflections are the same *-an*! Therefore one cannot understand whether the meaning of (1) is “I believe in the remission of sins”, or “I believe in the sin of remissions”, or “I believe in a sin which is called remission” [cf. **as druwēi en grēkan galīnsnan* “I believe in the sin (which is) murder”]. Similarly, it is not clear whether the meaning of (2) is that God breaks the opposition of bad servants, or that God breaks a bad opposition of servants, whether the meaning of (3) is that God saves a sinful child, or that God saves sin of the children.

A sample of such ambiguous sentence is [*Es drowy en*] *Etwerpsennian griquan* II 9 which clearly is an incorrect translation of German [*ICH glewbe an*] *Vorgebung der sünden* II 8. Such sentences could not exist in a normal speech.

To correct an ambiguity coming from the destroyed inflectional system, only analytical means could be used. In this case the best was to differentiate cases by the demonstrative pronoun *stas* which had different stems in the accusative singular (*stan*) and in the genitive plural (*stēisan*). This is the way in which Albanian went in which only the article is declinable and therefore is able to indicate cases. Of course, the German language influenced Prussian interpreters – with no doubt, there are enough places in the Catechisms where the German article is translated without any necessity, e.g. *Deiws /.../ swaian Soūnon Christon / stēismu gāntsan swītan / bhe tīt dijgi steimans malnijkikamans / ni massais kai stēimans vremmans / potaukinnons bhe pertenginnons ast / kawijds dijgi / stesse gāntsas switas grijkans ast pūdauns / bhe stans vrans / esse grīkans /.../ isrankiuns* III 115. Nevertheless such places do not contradict the necessity to use the artroid *stas* as grammatical means to specify syntactic relations¹⁸.

Thus the said sentence of the 2nd Catechism appears comprehensible in the 3rd Catechism because of the artroid (although written erroneously *steise* instead of *stēisan*) there: *As Druwē ēn /.../ etwerpsennian steise [*stēisan] grijkan* III 45. Cf. also: *malnijks steisan grīkan* III 115.

After the demonstrative pronoun *stas*, as well as other pronouns of the same stem type, had appeared in the function of the artroid to differentiate the accusative singular and the genitive plural, they naturally began to adopt functions also of the genitive singular as well of the dative inflections and to reshape corresponding determined forms as “accusatives”: *weldūnai asmai stēisei [*stesse] prābutskan gijwan* III 63, *īduns esse stesmu garrin* III 105, *swāimans Mukinnewingins* III 87. In the Catechisms there are also many constructions, in which only the first member of the homogenous chain (pronoun, adjective or noun apposition) is marked with inflection showing actual syntactic case, while the other members are formed as “accusatives”: *twaiāsmu mīlan soūnan* III 131. All this allowed R. Trautmann to define these “accusatives” as *casus generalis*¹⁹. It is not so important, in what degree this development was stimulated by similar German constructions, as whether and in what degree this was really spread in colloquial language. Sometimes the authenticity may be traced by deviations from the German constructions, cf. above *weldūnai asmai stēisei prābutskan gijwan*, not *gijwas* as *Lebens*, but the main thing, which seems to support the authenticity, is the undoubted presence of the “accu

¹⁸ Palmitis M.L. *Rekreation als Überprüfung der Rekonstruktion.* / *Baltistica* XXXIII (1) 1998, 43–46.

¹⁹ Trautmann R. *Die altpreußischen Sprachdenkmäler.* Göttingen 1910, p. 207–208.

satives singular” in specifying cases with the artroid acc. sg. *stas*, gen. pl. *stēisan*. This was one of the main turning points of the language toward analytical structure, in which leveling of the non-nominative case inflections beside use of some artroid words for syntactic cases seems to be quite credible.

4. Incompatible grammatical structures

It had been already a common West Baltic epoch, when the unstressed broader allophone of the phoneme */ō/ of the middle rise (trad. Balt. *ō) was generalized on analogous positions in the same grammatical forms with former narrower allophone *.ō [the same process sporadically took place in East Baltic too – cf. Lith. *dosnus*, gen. sg. (*vilk*)o with the broader allophone in the unstressed positions]. But this was the period in the language of the Catechisms when analytical features and the casus generalis came into being due to coincidence of many grammatical forms after reduction of the final inflections. In these inflections the back opened *ō of the low rise (trad. Balt. *ā) and the unstressed allophone of the *ō of the middle rise (trad. Balt. ȯ) had merged in *ā earlier.

Having in mind all said above about grammatical changes caused by phonetic changes in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms, it is not difficult to describe a structure without these changes. With no doubt, this was the structure of the language reflected in the Elbing Vocabulary and probably spoken even later on all territory of proper Baltic Prussia except Samland.

The verbal system

	<u>Thematic stems</u>	<u>ā-stems</u>
Present		
1 st sg.	*(bēg)ō	*(bij)ō
2 nd sg.	*(bēg)ei	*(bij)ai < -*ōi
3 rd	*(bēg)a	*(bij)ō

Preterit

1 st sg.	*(<i>bēg</i>)ō	[* <i>-ōjō</i>]
2 nd sg.	*(<i>bēg</i>)ai < -*ōi	[* <i>-ōjai</i> < -*ōi]
3 rd	*(<i>bēg</i>)ō	[* <i>-ōjō</i>]

Since no data may be shown pointing out to any process of vowel reduction in this language, one may assume that the reconstructed situation was contemporary to that of the Prussian Catechisms of the 16th c.

Forms of the 1st person singular and the 3rd person could not coincide in the present of the thematic and athematic verbs. They could coincide only in the barytone forms in the *ā*-stem preterit of the thematic verbs as well as in the present and preterit of the *ā*-stem verbs and in the preterit of the *āja*-, *ēja*-, *ija*-stem verbs. In the root and in the *ā*-stem verbs of the mobile accent paradigm the form of the 1st person singular had the accented ending and therefore it always differed from the form of the 3rd person. Thus there was no such need in use of pronouns specifying persons in this language as it was in the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms. No tends toward analytism may be traced.

The noun system

To illustrate differences from the (Yatvingized) language of the Catechisms, let us take presumably barytone (*wīrs* III, *kurpe* E) and oxytone (*mergo* E, *zemmē* III) nouns from the Enchiridion and the Elbing Vocabulary:

	<u>Barytones</u>		<u>Oxytones</u>	
Singular				
nom.	* <i>wīris</i>	* <i>kurpē</i>	* <i>mergō</i>	* <i>zemē</i>
gen.	* <i>wīras</i>	* <i>kurpēs</i>	* <i>mergōs</i>	* <i>zemēs</i>
dat.	* <i>wīrā</i>	* <i>kurpei</i>	* <i>mergai</i>	* <i>zemei</i>
acc.	* <i>wīran</i>	* <i>kurpen</i>	* <i>mergan</i>	* <i>zemen</i>
Plural				
nom.	* <i>wīrai</i>	* <i>kurpēs</i>	* <i>mergōs</i>	* <i>zemēs</i>
gen.	* <i>wīran</i>	* <i>kurpjan</i>	* <i>mergun</i>	* <i>zemjun</i>
dat.	* <i>wīramans</i>	* <i>kurpēmans</i>	* <i>mergōmans</i>	* <i>zemēmans</i>
acc.	* <i>wīrans</i>	* <i>kurpens</i>	* <i>mergans</i>	* <i>zemens</i>

Thematic stems had the ending nom. sg. *-s, which manifested as archaic -as in difficult to pronounce combinations of consonants or, occasionally, -us after the labials, -s – after the tautosyllabic diphthongs with *r*, -is in all other cases. Approximately such distribution may be reconstructed basing on data of the Elbing Vocabulary of the boundary of the 13th/ 14th c. (*Deywis, winis, keckers*) and of the Dictionary of Simon Grunau (*dewes, dewus, thaus, labbis, keckirs = tickers *[tikrs]*) of the 16th c. against data of the Enchiridion (*Deiws, Deiwas 1x, lāiskas*) of the 16th c. The nom. pl. masc. -ai was pronounced -oi in the stressed position due to the lengthening of the first component in stressed circumflex diphthongs (cf. *yccroy E, clattoy E, pallapsaey I, grekoy Gr*).

It may be conjectured that in this language all substantive forms of the accusative singular and the forms of the nominative plural of the *ā-*, *ē-*, *i-*, *ī-* and *ū-*stems were never oxytone. On the other hand, having no data pointing out to any process of the retraction of the accent from the final syllable to the root in this language, it may be conjectured that the ending of the oxytone nouns gen. pl. -un was accented (**mergun, *zemjun*).

The above reconstructed situation is also assumed to be contemporary to the language of the Catechisms of the 16th c.

Thus the accusative singular forms coincided not with all forms of the genitive plural, but with the barytone forms only. Although the sample constructions (1), (3), discussed earlier, keep to be incomprehensible without the specifying word here as well [**as druwjō en grēkan etwerpsnan* (1), **Deiws izrankija grēkan maldenīkan* (3)], the sample construction (2) is fully correct (**Deiws lemja wargun waikun emprīkistalēsnan*) as well as a multitude of other comprehensible constructions with the oxytone words, e.g. **Deiws mīli genun konkstin* “God loves the decency of wives”. A number of instances in which a specifying word must be added (**as druwjō en etwerpsnan steisun grēkan, *Deiws izrankija maldenīkan steisun grēkan*) still does not mean any turning point of the language toward the analytical structure and does not stimulate formation of any “casus generalis”.

Huge deviations in grammar between the language of the Catechisms and the language of the Elbing Vocabulary (the latter being reconstructed by eliminating phonetically conditioned innovations) allow us to treat the both as belonging to incompatible dialectal zones, i.e. as different languages. The first one may be called Samlandian Soudovian. The latter one is simply Prussian.