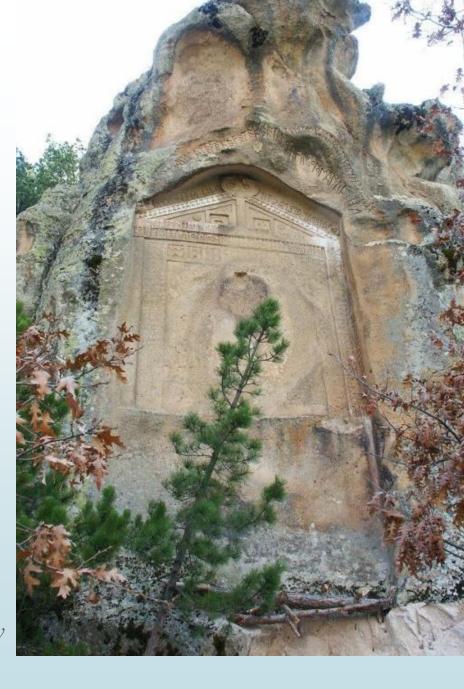
The Phrygian 3rd Person Singular Active Secondary Ending -t/-τ

Aljoša Šorgo, 16 September 2025, Prague

Arbeitstagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft: Archaisms vs. innovations: topics in relative chronology



The Phrygian language

- Phrygian (8th to 4th century BCE) and New Phrygian (2nd to 3rd century CE).
- Old Phrygian:
 - around 400 inscriptions;
 - written in a native alphabet.
- ► New Phrygian:
 - around 100 inscriptions, mostly malediction formulae;
 - written in the Greek alphabet.



The Graeco-Phrygian branch

- Phrygian and Greek both belong to a single branch of Indo-European.
- Common innovations:
 - vocalization of laryngeals: $*#h_1/2/3C > *#e/a/oC$; $*Ch_1/2/3C > *Ce/a/oC$
 - $h_1su > ev$, εὐ; $h_2n\bar{e}r > αναρ$, ἀνήρ; $h_3nh_3mn > onoman$, ὄνομα
 - \bullet *d^hh₁so- > devo-, θεό-; *ph₂tr- > πατρ-, πατρ-; *h₃nh₃mn > onoman, ὄνομα
 - debuccalization of *s: *VsV > *VhV
 - 3sg middle imperative ending *- $sd^h\bar{o}(d)$
 - **P** OPh. -do, NPh. -δου; Gr. -σθω
 - **■** pronoun **auto*-
 - OPh. avto-, Gr. αὐτό-
 - masculine *a*-stem paradigm
 - OPh. mekas; Gr. μέγας

The Phrygian 3sg ending $-t/-\tau$

- Primarily found in the 3rd person singular of the imperfects:
 - **ι** ιος νι σεμουν κνουμανει κακουν <u>αδδακε**τ**</u>, (...)
 - ► 'whoever <u>would do</u> something bad to this grave'
 - **ι** ιος νι σεμουν κνουμανει κακουν <u>αββερετ,</u> (...)
 - ► 'whoever would bring something bad to this grave'
- The Phrygian imperfects: present stem verbal forms.
 - All attested examples are thematic:
 - $dak-e-t/\delta\alpha\kappa-\varepsilon-\tau < *d^heh_1k-e-;$
 - βερ-ε-τ $< *b^h er-e-;$
 - $et-e-(t) < ?*h_1ed-e-.$

The New Phrygian curse formula

- °57°: ιος νι σεμουν κνουμανει κακουν αδδακετ, τιττετικμενος ατ τι αδειτου
 - 'whoever would do something bad to this grave, may he become judged by Zeus'
- In conditional clauses, the imperfect has an epistemic modal meaning.
- In main clauses of conditional sentences, the imperfect has a deontic modal meaning:
 - \bullet °86^W: 10ς νι σεμουν κνουμανι κακουν αδδακετ (...), βας 101 βεκος μεβερετ, (...)
 - ▶ 'whoever would do something bad to this grave (...), may Bas give away his bread, (...)'

The Phrygian 3sg ending $-t/-\tau$

- Also found in the 3rd person singular of the sigmatic optatives:
 - °W01b: yosesait materey eveteksetey ovevin onoman <u>daΨet</u>, lakedokey venavtun avtay materey
 - ► 'whoever would put his(?) own(?) name to this Mother *Evetekset*(?), may he be seized by the Mother herself'
 - \bullet °58°: μονανμρο τιη <u>εγεσιτ</u>, γεγρειμενον
 - **►** 'monanmro(?) he would hold/have to Zeus, cursed (may he become)'
 - **■** °B-05: *kelmis ke <u>umniset</u>* ...
 - 'and Kelmis <u>he would *umnit(*?)</u>'
- Sigmatic optatives: An innovative verbal formation showing the -si/e- suffix (< PIE *-s- + $-ih_1$ -).

From PIE *-t?

- At first glance, Phrygian $-t/-\tau$ seems to be a direct reflex of the PIE secondary ending*-t (cf. Skt. -t, Lat. -d, Hitt. -t).
- Endorsed by Obrador-Cursach (2020) and Orel (1997).
- ► However, Phrygian lost final stops in its prehistory.

Loss of final stops

- 3sg active imperative ending:
 - PIE * $t\bar{o}d$ > NPh. -του
 - e. g. ειτου 'may he become' $< *h_1 eit\bar{o}d$.
- Nom./acc. neuter of the demonstrative pronoun:
 - * $\acute{k}id$ > OPh. si
 - e. g. si keneman 'this niche'.
- 3sg optative desinence:
 - *- $oih_1t > -oi$.
 - e. g. *kakoioi* 'he would harm'.
- Common innovation of Proto-Graeco-Phrygian.

From PIE *-ti?

- ► Haas (1966) and Sowa (2007) suggest development from primary *-ti with loss of final *-i.
- Impossible, since the ending -ti is preserved.
 - Appears in thematic presents:
 - ► °W-11 πεννιτι ιος κοροαν δετουν σουν ...
 - ► 'whoever will pass by this interred girl ...'
 - **■** °B-05 ... <u>tube**tiv**</u> oy nevos deraliv
 - 'may he / he will *tube*(?) his grandson *deraliv*(?)'
 - Also appears in sigmatic optatives:
 - ► °P04a ios ni akenan <u>egese**ti**</u> ...
 - ► 'whoever would / will hold the aken ...'
 - ► °B-05 yos niy art sint imenan kaka [...] <u>dedasitiy</u>
 - 'whoever would do bad things to this monument'
 - •99^W ... με κε οι <u>τοτοσσειτι</u> βας βεκος
 - '... may Bas give away his bread'

From PIE *-to?

- Ligorio and Lubotsky (2018) suggest that $-t/-\tau$ is a middle ending.
- Unlikely, since two middle endings are already attested.
 - ightharpoonup °73 $^{\mathrm{W}}$ 10ς νι σεμον κνουμανι κακον <u>αββερε**τορ**</u> ...
 - 'whoever would cause something bad to be brought to this grave'
 - lacktriangle °129 W 10ς νι σα ματέρε κακον <u>αββέρε**τοι**</u> ...
 - 'whoever causes something bad to be brought to this mother'
- Loss of final *-*o* is unlikely in any case:
 - PIE *toso > OPh. tovo

Analogical origin from primary endings

- The likeliest conclusion is that Phrygian $-t/-\tau$ developed analogically, most likely on the basis of the primary ending -ti.
- Any model must take into account Phrygian phonetic developments.
- Models based on 1sg are problematic due to PIE *-m > Phr. -n:
 - -mi: -n = -ti: X is unworkable.
- Models based on 3pl are problematic due to *-nti > -vvi:
 - -nni: -n = -ti: X is dubious due to the geminate.

Analogical origin from the second person singular

- The second person singular endings *-si and *-s provide the best model.
- \blacksquare However, one must bear in mind the debuccalization of *s.
- The thematic paradigm or vowel-final athematic verbs cannot provide the model.
 - *-e-si > +-e-hi; thus +-e-hi : +-e-s = -e-ti : X is unsuitable.
- Consonant-final athematic verbs do provide a suitable model.
 - *-C-si: *-C-s = *-C-ti: X, X = -C-t
- Relative chronology:
 - after the restriction against final stops is lifted;
 - before *-Cs > -C (cf. NSg *uanaks > OPh. vanak).

Analogical origin from middle endings

- Another possibility is the proportion *-toi : *-to = *-ti : X, X = *-t.
- But the ending *-toi* is used in the aorists, so is it really a primary ending?
- \blacksquare How does the ending - τ op fit into the primary-secondary opposition?
- Until the Phrygian middle system is better understood, this possibility is difficult to endorse.

Conclusion

- The Phrygian 3sg secondary ending $-t/-\tau$ is not inherited from PIE *-t.
- It is likewise not a regular development of any other PIE ending.
- The ending developed analogically based on the 3sg primary ending *-ti.

References

- BEEKES, R. S. P. and de Vaan, M. 2012. Comparative Indo-European Linguistics: an Introduction. Second edition. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.It is likewise not a regular development of any other PIE ending.
- HAAS, Otto. 1966. Die Phrygischen Sprachdenkmäler. Linguistique balkanique 10. Sofia.
- LIGORIO, O. & LUBOTSKY, A. 2018. Languages of fragmentary attestation: Phrygian. In: Klein J., Joseph B., Fritz M. (eds.): Handbook of Comparative and Historical Indo-European Linguistics. Handbücher zur Sprach- und Kommunikationswissenschaft = Handbooks of linguistics and communication science no. 41.3. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter Mouton. 1816-1831.
- OBRADOR-CURSACH, B. 2020. The Phrygian Language. Leiden, Boston: Brill.
- OREL, V. 1997. The language of Phrygians. Description and analysis. Delmar, New York: Caravan Books.
- SOWA, W. 2007. Anmerkungen zum Verbalsystem des Phrygischen. Indogermanische Forschungen 112. 69-95.
- SORGO, A. fthc. A Historical Grammar of Phrygian.

Available on aljosasorgo.si

