

H. Craig Melchert

The Tocharian *s*-Preterite

There is no consensus on the origin of the Tocharian “*s*-Preterite” (Preterite III). As summarized by Malzahn (2010: 208-14), proposed sources include: a merger of the “classical” PIE sigmatic aorist and the perfect (advocated by various scholars), the PIE sigmatic aorist alone (e.g. Ringe 1990 and Kortlandt 1994), a PIE *is*-aorist (Adams 1994), and a “presigmatic” *h₂e*-aorist resulting from a suppletive replacement of an original **h₂e*-aorist 3Sg R(ó)-e by the corresponding imperfect 3Sg R(é)-s-t of a lengthened-grade (“Narten”) *s*-present (Jasanoff 2003: 178&192ff. et alibi). I will argue that the Tocharian Preterite III represents rather a merger of the “classical” sigmatic aorist and the *h₂e*-aorist (whose reconstruction requires modification).

References

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