OLD IRISH *TAIR* 'COME!'

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The formation of the imperfective in Old Irish is that of a fairly typical IE language. In the 2 sg. active the overwhelming majority of the attested forms consist historically of a bare present stem with no overt desinence, as can be seen from examples like *mór* (< **-ā*) beside 3 sg. indic. *móraid, ·móra* 'magnifies' (< **-āti*; class A I); *léic* (< **-ī*) beside *léicid, ·léici* 'leaves' (< **-īti*; class A II); *beir* (< **-e*) beside *beirid, ·beir* 'carries' (< **-eti*; class B I); *gaib* (< **-i*) beside *gaibid, ·gaib* 'takes' (< **-iti*; class B II); and *ben* (< **-a*) beside *benaid, ·ben* 'strikes' (< **-ati*; class B IV). In each of these forms the Old Irish final syllable rules, which regularly eliminated unstressed final vowels and -V̆C sequences, have led to the loss of the original stem vowel. A trace of this element, however, is preserved in the palatality or non-palatality of the preceding consonant, which is itself always preserved.

Thurneysen, *GOI* §588, lists six irregular 2 sg. imperatives which show a more extreme kind of reduction. All are made from verbs which form *s*-subjunctives, and all are characterized by a radical truncation of the root syllable precisely similar to that found in the *s*-subjunctive 3 sg. conjunct:

tair 'come!'	(< **to-ar(e)-ink-*)[1]
no-m·ain 'spare me!'	(< **aneg-*)
tog 'choose!'	(< **to-geus-*)
aic(c) 'invoke as surety!'	(< **ad-gᵘed-*)
at·ré, com-éi-r 'arise!'	(< **(kom-)ess-reg-*)
**foir* (Mir. *·fóir*) 'help!'	(< **wo-ret-*)

The resemblance of these forms to *s*-subjunctives is not usually taken to be accidental. According to a theory originally proposed by H. Zimmer, *KZ* 30, 118 f. (1890), the *tair*-imperatives, as we shall call them, continue 2 sg. *s*-aorist injunctives of the type

**ink-s-s, *aneg-s-s, *reg-s-s*, etc.;[2] they can thus be regarded as the second person counterparts of the forms in **-s-t* that according to the usual view underlie the 3 sg. *s*-subjunctives of the same verbs (cf. subj. *·tair(i)* < **to-ar(e)-ĭnk-s-t, ·ain* < **aneg-s-t, ·choméir* < **-reg-s-t*, etc.). From a functional point of view the use of the injunctive in an imperative sense can be compared with the occasional substitution of aorist injunctive forms for imperatives in Vedic Sanskrit and Avestan. With minor modifications this analysis of the *tair*-imperatives is accepted by Lewis-Pedersen (*CCCG*, 286), Thurneysen (loc. cit.), Watkins (*Celt. Vb.*, 139) and Meid (*Grundlagen*, 123); it may fairly be described as the standard theory.

There are several reasons, however, why the proposed derivation of forms like *tair* from injunctives in **-s-s* must be viewed with scepticism. There can be no reasonable doubt that **-s-s* was the ending of the 2 sg. *s*-aorist in dialectal Indo-European, but it is quite a different matter to assume that actual injunctives of the type **ink-s-s* were still available for use as imperatives in early Celtic times. None of the above verbs has an *s*-preterite, the only one of Old Irish sigmatic formations that can be traced with reasonable certainty to the indicative/injunctive of the PIE *s*-aorist.[3] Whether the subjunctives **īss-, *aness-, *gōss-, *gess-, *ress-* (< **reg-s-*) and **ress-* (< **ret-s-*) provide reliable evidence for the late survival of the injunctive is doubtful. The inflection of the *s*-subjunctive is essentially identical with that of the *s*-future and *s*-preterite, all three categories being synchronically characterized by a mixture of thematic and athematic endings.[4] Since this uniformity is almost surely secondary, the athematic structure of subjunctive forms like *·tair(i), ·ain*, etc. can as easily be due to morphological leveling as to inheritance from Proto-Indo-European. If genuinely old, the existence of a 3 sg. modal ending **-s-t* in Common Celtic would certainly lend support to the assumption of a parallel 2 sg. in **-s-s*. But it is at least as likely that the *s*-subjunctive continues a true 'short-vowel' subjunctive of the type seen in Ved. 3 sg. *dárṣat* (: *dṛ-*'split') or Gk. 1 pl. *erússomen* (: *erúō* 'I drag'), and that the **ink-s-t* which underlies *·tair(i)* arose through analogical contamination with the 3 sg. of the *s*-future or *s*-preterite.[5] The latter analysis would account for the modal value

of the s-subjunctive without requiring us to assume the survival of the PIE injunctive as a Celtic category. It would also, of course, deprive the 'injunctive' theory of the *tair*-imperatives of any independent *raison d'être*.

Nor is it clear why, even if Celtic had inherited 2 sg. injunctives of the required type, it would have utilized them as surrogates for the ordinary imperatives **inki, *anege*, etc. It is true, as we have already noted, that aorist injunctives are sometimes employed in a hortative function in Indo-Iranian; this usage is regular in Vedic for *dā-* 'give', *dhā-* 'put' and a few other roots that lack normal aorist imperatives.[6] But apart from special cases like these, hortative injunctives are distinctly uncommon in the Vedic corpus, and only a single example of an s-aorist of this type is actually quotable (*yāṭ* 'sacrifice!', RV 10.6.21).[7] Nowhere else in Celtic have ordinary imperatives been supplanted by injunctives, much less by structurally opaque sigmatic forms in which the personal ending has coalesced with the tense sign. With the doubtful exception of a few example to be discussed below, the only known source of imperatives in Old Irish is the present imperative of Proto-Indo-European.

The difficulties of assuming a semantic development injunctive > imperative were noted in 1970 by W. Cowgill, who offered an altogether different explanation of the *tair*-type (Cardona *et al.*, eds., *Indo-European and Indo-Europeans*, 123). Citing the familiar example of Latin *dīc* 'say!', *dūc* 'lead!' and *fac* 'do!' (for earlier *dīce*, *dūce*, *face*), Cowgill proposed to derive *at·ŕć* and *aic(c)* from **reg'* and **-ged'*, irregularly apocopated forms of the inherited imperatives **rege* (like *aig* 'drive!' < **age*) and **gʷedi* (like *gaib* 'take!' < **gabi*). This suggestion, attractive in its simplicity, has certain advantages over the injunctive theory. From a typological point of view, the inherently peremptory character of the 2 sg. imperative renders it peculiarly susceptible to shortening: for parallels to Lat. *dīc*, etc., one need look no further afield than colloquial English *gimme* or *c'mere*. Five of the six Irish verbs with *tair*-imperatives belong to classes B I and B II, and hence would have inherited imperatives in **-e* or **-i* – precisely the two vowels that can be shown to have been subject to early apocope in other Irish forms. The one exception is *do·goa* 'chooses', from which

one might have expected a more resistant imperative in **-ā*. Here, however, it is conceivable that the A I inflection of this verb is secondary, and that the attested **tog* rests on the apocopated imperative of a thematic present cognate with Ved. *juṣáte* 'enjoys'.[8]

Nevertheless, the 'apocope' theory will not stand scrutiny. In a more recent publication (Rix, ed., *Flexion und Wortbildung*, 40–70) Cowgill has himself shown that the early loss of **-i* was a quasi-regular rule of Insular Celtic, and that, in particular, such third person conjunct forms as OIr. *·beir* 'carries', pl. *·beret* rest on apocopated preforms **beret'* and **beront'*, with the PIE primary endings. This finding might at first glance appear to strengthen the case for apocope in the *tair*-imperatives, inasmuch as it provides independent evidence for assuming the loss of **-i* in the B II imperatives **-ged'* < **guedi* and *ink'* < **inki*.[9] The latter form, however, is in reality a serious embarrassment for the apocope theory: the fact that the 3 pl. in **-ont'* yields *-at* (via **-odd*) rather than disappearing suggests that the phonologically similar sequence **-ink'* (> **-igg*) would have resisted complete truncation as well, leaving **tairec* as the regular reflex of **to-ar(e)-ink'*.

A more general weakness of Cowgill's analysis is that it fails to explain why the attested *tair*-imperatives are built exclusively to verbs with *s*-subjunctives. The probability that the association of the two formations is due entirely to chance is not vanishingly small, but it is low – on the order of one in eight, according to an informal calculation.[10] As a last resort, one might seek to account for this distribution phonologically: since the *s*-subjunctive is wholly confined to roots ending in etymological **-g, *-k, *-d, *-t,* and **-s*, it is at least thinkable that the restriction of the *tair*-type to such roots reflects nothing more than the failure of Cowgill's apocope rule to operate after consonants other than dental and velar obstruents. This would 'explain' the survival of, e.g., **gabi* (> *gaib* 'take!', cf. Gaul. *gabi* (?)) and **bere* (> *beir* 'carry!') beside **reg'* and *ged'*;[11] on the other hand, there is no independent evidence for so peculiar and *ad hoc* a phonological restriction, which would seem to be contradicted by cases like MW *fy* (nasalizing) 'my' < **mem'* (for **meme*) and OIr. pret. 3 sg. *-bu, -bo*, MW *bu* 'was' < **bow'* (for **bowe*).

It is clear that an ideal account of the *tair*-imperatives would combine the merits of Zimmer's and Cowgill's theories, deriving *tair* and its congeners directly from imperatives with Cowgill, while explicitly reating them to *s*-subjunctives with Zimmer. Such an explanation is in fact available. Zimmer's derivation of *tair* from an injunctive **ink-s-s*, rather than, e.g., from an ordinary subjunctive in **-ses* or **-sesi*, was based in part on his assumption that a preform of the structure **ink-s-* + *syllable* would have yielded **-is* or **-issi* under the regular Old Irish final syllable rules. We now know that, strictly speaking, this assumption was incorrect. Cowgill's theory of the absolute and conjunct endings makes it necessary to postulate a pre-Irish loss of a final **-i* so early that it escaped detection by the normal *Auslautsgesetze*: the 3 sg. conjunct *·beir* continues not the injunctive **beret*, but the present **bereti*. I would now like to suggest the possibility that, in exactly the same fashion, *tair* goes back not to **ink-s-s* (i.e., [inks]), but to disyllabic **ink-si*. The structure and meaning of **ink-si* make it an obvious candidate for comparison with the Vedic imperative type seen in *vakṣi* 'convey!' (: *vah-*), *yákṣi* 'sacrifice!' (: *yaj-*), *sátsi* 'sit!' (: *sad-*) and about twenty other examples. The historical status of these forms, which are largely confined to the Rigveda, is somewhat controversial: the final element *-si* has been variously identified with the ending of the *s*-stem locative singular, the 2 sg. of the present indicative and, by haplology, the 2 sg. of the *s*-aorist subjunctive. Fortunately, the early prehistory of the Vedic *si*-imperatives is of no immediate relevance to the present discussion; for modern views on the question the reader is referred to the excellent studies of Cardona (*Lg.* 41, 1–18 (1965)) and Szemerényi (*Lg.* 42, 1–6 (1966)).

Distinct from the problem of the ultimate origin of the *si*-imperatives is the question of their structural position within the verbal system of Vedic Sanskrit. On this point we are better informed. It is clear that, at least from a descriptive point of view, the *-s-* of *-si* is inseparable from the *-s-* of the *s*-aorist, and that, more particularly, the occurrence of *si*-imperatives is closely correlated with the appearance of *s*-aorist subjunctives in *-sa-* (cf. also Narten, *Die sigmatischen Aoriste im Veda*, 45 ff.). A number of roots with imperatives in *-si* have well-established sigmatic subjunctives in the Rigveda, but either show many fewer *s*-aorist indicatives or lack them entirely. Thus, the root *vah-* underlies 25 instances of the imperative *vakṣi* and 21 of the subjunctive (3 sg. *vákṣat*, etc.; cf. YAv. *važaṭ*), but only one of the indicative (3 sg. *ávāṭ*); *nī-* 'lead' furnishes ten instances of the imperative *néṣi* and seven of the subjunctive (*néṣat*, etc.), but only one each of the indicative (3 pl. mid. *aneṣata*) and injunctive (2 pl. *naiṣṭa*); *pṛ-* 'transport' gives sixteen instances of the imperative *párṣi* and 21 of the subjunctive (*párṣat*, etc.), but the indicative is entirely wanting. Whatever the historical interpretation of this distribution, it is a primary synchronic datum which no comparative study can ignore.

The absence of any generally recognized cognates of the *si*-imperatives outside Indo-Iranian (cf. however GAv. *dōišī* 'show' Y. 13. 13) has prevented the development of a consensus as to their antiquity. But the type is clearly archaic within Vedic and could, in principle, easily represent an inheritance from Proto-Indo-European. Positive proof that this is so, in my view, is to be found precisely in the fact that such forms – specifically, **ink-si*, **aneg-si*, **geus-si*, **gʷed-si*, **reg-si* and **ret-si* – provide the most natural point of departure for the explanation of Olr. *tair*, *no-m·ain*, *tog*, *aicc*, *at·ráe* and *coméir*, and **foir*. The structural and functional position of the Irish and Vedic categories are not merely similar; they are virtually identical. Both are active 2 sg. imperatives; both are distributionally associated with sigmatic subjunctives; both are residual within their respective traditions. These agreements are underscored, moreover, by a notable lexical overlap between the two formations.

Three of the six Irish verbs with *tair*-imperatives are made from roots (**aneg-*, **gʷed-*, **ret-*) which have no verbal cognates in Vedic; of the three others, **reg-* lacks an aorist system altogether and is represented only by the petrified present stems *rñjá-*, *rjyá* and *irajya-* 'lead straight, direct'. This leaves only **geus-* and **ink-*, both of which, remarkably enough, correspond to Vedic verbs with imperatives in *-si* and *s*-aorist subjunctives in *-sa-*. For **geus-*, Ved. *jus-*, the Rigveda attests the imperative *jóṣi* (2x) 'enjoy!' and the subjunctive 3 sg. *jóṣat(i)* (3x). The antiquity of these forms has been doubted: Narten (p. 120) inclines to see *jóṣat*, which is found

only in the late first and tenth books, as a secondary creation to *jóṣi*, while Cardona (pp. 13–14) takes *jóṣat* as primary and *jóṣi as* the analogical form. The caution of these scholars, however, is based on an assumption that the Old Irish evidence itself tends to falsify, namely, that a well-developed *s*-aorist subjunctive and *si*-imperative are unlikely both to be old unless supported by an inherited *s*-aorist indicative. As I shall show elsewhere, there is in fact considerable reason to believe that the subjunctive of the sigmatic aorist – and with it probably the imperative in *-si* as well – was at least partly independent of the corresponding indicative in late PIE times. In the present case it can hardly be doubted that both forms are ancient: *jóṣi* is exactly equatable with OIr. *tog* (< **togōss*, with the same secondary shortening from **togōss*' as in 3 sg. subj. *-t* < **-tĕss* beside *·té* < **tēss* (: **teig-* 'go'; cf. *GOI* §626)), while *jóṣat* can be directly compared with the probable thematic ancestor of Olr. 3 sg. subj. *do·gó* (< **gōss* < **geus-s-t*, analogically substituted for **geus-se-t* (cf. above)). Similarly, **inksi* itself, apart from its generalized zero-grade root-vocalism, can be matched with Ved. *nakṣi* 'reach!' (: *naś-*); the corresponding subjunctive (*·tairi* < **-īss*, *·tair* < **-ĭss*) is found in YAv. 1 pl. *nāšāma* and Ved. *nákṣat*.[12] The pattern that emerges is striking:

se/o-subjunctive	*si*-imperative
PIE **ĝéus-se/o-* = *do·gó* = *joṣat*	PIE **ĝéus-si* = *tog* = *joṣi*
PIE **néḱ-se/o-* = *·tair(i)* = *nákṣat*	PIE **néḱ-si* = *tair* = *nakṣi*

It is significant that neither PIE **ĝéus-* nor **néḱ-* appears to have formed an *s*-aorist indicative in the parent language.

An unexpected benefit of the above analysis is that is allows a relatively straightforward explanation for a second set of irregularities. The common verbs *do·gní* 'does' and *do·écai* 'sees' show the anomalous imperatives *déne* and *dé(i)cce*, respectively;[13] apparently starting from these forms, the ending *-e* has made modest inroads elsewhere (cf. *GOI* §589). Although *déne* and *dé(i)cce* bear an obvious resemblance to 2 sg. subjunctives, it is questionable whether they are in fact simply subjunctives which have analogically acquired prototonic stress, as suggested by Thurneysen (ibid.). Why either verb would ever have come to employ its

subjunctive in an imperative sense is altogether unclear, since the subjunctive and imperative are ordinarily kept quite distinct in Old Irish. In the case of *do·gní*, it is difficult to believe that the subjunctive *do·gné*, *·dén(a)e*, an analogical creation on the model of the subjunctive of the substantive verb, would have replaced its inherited imperative **dén(a)i* (< **-gniḭe*), while the imperative of the substantive verb was itself preserved as *bí* (< **biḭe*). Likewise arguing against a subjunctive origin is the fact that *do·écai*, like the other compounds of *ci-* 'see', is exclusively deponent in the subjunctive (cf. 2 sg. *do·écaither*, *·déiccider*), and hence would never have had a 2 sg. in **-e* at any recoverable stage in its history.

The subjunctive of *ci-* is remarkable not only for its avoidance of the active endings, but also for its irregular inflection in the passive, which is consistently sigmatic when unstressed (cf. *·accastar*, *do·écastar*, etc.). This fact, which almost surely indicates the former presence of a complete *s*-subjunctive paradigm (cf. *GOI* §609), has important consequences for the analysis of *dé(i)cce* and, indirectly, of *déne*. As we have seen, the earlier existence of a subjunctive stem **kʷeis-s-*, parallel to **geus-s-*, implies the possibility of an associated imperative **kʷeis-si*, parallel to **geus-si*. It is from such a preform that *dé(i)cce* is in fact most easily derived: the apocope of **-i* would have left a pre-Irish sequence **di-en-kʷēss*, from which the development to a form in **-e* would have been entirely regular.[14] Once established in this way, *dé(i)cce* could itself have served as the trigger for the creation of *déne*, the innovation being favored by the general parallelism of the verbs *·cí* and *·gní*. The fortuitous resemblance of *dé(i)cce* and *déne* to prototonic subjunctives would then have been a natural point of departure for the occasional introduction of analogical forms such as *comainse* 'condemn!' < *con·nessa*.[15]

It thus emerges that our assumption of a Celtic imperative formation in **-si* permits a simple and unified account not only of the *tair*-imparatives, but of *dé(i)cce* and *déne* as well. The chief consequences of this result, which are by no means trivial, have already been noted in the foregoing discussion. Insofar as the co-occurrence of irregular imperatives with *s*-subjunctives in Old Irish can be compared historically with the association of *si*-imperatives and sigmatic aorist subjunctives in Vedic Sanskrit, it is impossible

to escape the conclusion that the Celtic *s*-subjunctive is wholly thematic in origin, and that the Vedic and Celtic imperative type in **-si*, whatever the details of its relationship to the rest of the *s*-aorist system, is the faithful continuant of a Proto-Indo-European category.[16]

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NOTES

1. Although roots are in general presented in their Common Celtic form, an exception is made for the reflex of PIE **neḱ-* (**h₁neḱ-*), which is given for convenience in its pre-Irish form **ink-* (< **enk-* < **n̥k-*).

2. The term 'injunctive', as used here, refers to any finite non-indicative verbal form which lacks an overt mood sign. Whether injunctives, as thus defined, differed from their indicative counterparts in some formal feature, such as, e.g., in the presence or absence of the augment, is a question of little importance for the present study.

3. Here too must be included the *t*-preterite, which Watkins, *Celt. Vb.* §13, has conclusively shown to be a reflex of the *s*-aorist. The normal reduplicated *s*-future (type 3 sg. *gigis*, *·gig* 'will pray' < **gu̯i-gʷed-s-ti*) was probably originally thematic: this is the only way to explain the phonology of forms like *·ebla* 'will drive < **pi-plā-se-ti*, where the loss of the **-s-* indicates that it must once have stood in intervocalic position.

4. The only serious difference is found in the 1 sg. of the absolute flexion, where the *s*-subjunctive and *s*-preterite have *-su*, while the *s*-future shows the analogical ending *-sa*.

5. Note in this connection that the *s*-subjunctives of roots ending in a velar show the characteristically antevocalic development of the cluster **-k-s-* to **-ss-* (cf. *īss-*, *ress-*, etc.). An original athematic **reg-s-t(i)* would have yielded **recht*, with the same phonological treatment as in the *t*-preterite.

6. Cf. Hoffman, *Der Injunktiv im Veda*, 261 ff.

7. A similar example in Gathic Avestan is *dāiš* Y. 43. 10 (: *daēs-* 'show').

8. The appearance of *tog* for **tug*, the expected reflex of **togus'*, would then have to be explained by analogy. Compare the verbal noun *togu*, likewise with **-o-* for phonologically regular **-u-*.

9. I here follow Thurneysen, *GOI* §549, in supposing that *·ic(c)* originally inflected according to class B II. Nothing in the discussion below will depend on this assumption.

10. This estimate was arrived at by examining the active B I, B II and B III verbs listed by Thurneysen in §§756–67, together with the originally thematic hiatus verbs *do·goa* and *fo(a)id* 'spends the night'. Of the fifty strong verbs thus obtained, thirty-six have attested or securely reconstructible *s*-subjunctives and fourteen have *ā*-subjunctives. The probability that a verb randomly selected from this sample will have an *s*-subjunctive is accordingly 36/50; the probability that six randomly selected verbs will have *s*-subjunctives is (36 x 35 x . . . x 31) (50 x 49 x . . . x 45), or .123. It goes without saying, of course, that this figure is only the grossest approximation: on the one hand, there are more than fifty verbs of the required structure; on the other, not all of these are in fact attested with 2 sg. imperatives at a suitably early date. The case of *déic(c)e* 'see!', which is discussed below as a possible seventh example of the type under study, is not considered in the above calculation.

11. It is extremely unlikely that the form *ber*, which is attested fairly frequently beside *beir* as the 2 sg. imperative of *berid* (e.g., at Ml. 38c 28), is the direct continuant of an apocopated **ber'* < **bere*. Secondary depalatalization is very common in this verb, which also appears as *·ber* (alongside *·beir*) in the 3 sg. conjunct (e.g., *na·mber* Ml. 86d 16, *as·mber* Wb. 10b 13; cf. *GOI* §554).

12. The stem *nakṣa-* would seem to have been reinterpreted as a present indicative in Indo-Iranian times; cf. Narten, op. cit. 160. The isolated Vedic 3 sg. *ākṣat* (RV 10.11.7), with generalized zero-grade as in the Irish *s*-subjunctive *īss-*, is probably a late and independent innovation; there is no imperative **ákṣi*.

13. So too *cumgne* 'help!' < *con·gní*. The form *dé(i)cce* serves also as the suppletive imperative of *ad·cí* 'sees'.

14. The retention of the long vowel in **-kʷēss* but not **-gŏss* (cf. *tog*) probably has its explanation in the fact that the *s*-enlarged stem of **geus-* was maintained in the subjunctive, where it was regularly shortened to **-gŏss-* in medial syllables, while **kʷēss-* was largely eliminated from the subjunctive before its shortening in medial syllables could have any effect on the imperative form.

15. If indeed this form should not rather be connected with the Gathic Avestan *s*-aorist subjunctive *stå ŋhaṭ* (< *stā-* 'stand') and taken directly from a *si*-imperative **(kom-ni-)stā-si*. It is difficult to draw any conclusions from the peculiar *escse* Ml.64a 4 gl. *intende*, apparently the 2 sg. imperative corresponding to the passive subjunctive *as·cesar* 44a 4 (< **k(e)id-s-*?). One possibility would be to take the second *-s-* in *escse* as an error triggered by the verbal noun *escsiu* in the following line; the corrected **esce* could then be viewed as the regular reflex of an underlying **eks-keid-si*.

16. Evidence that the *si*-imperatives are an inherited formation can be found in other IE traditions as well. I have argued in the forthcoming *Studies in Memory of Warren Cowgill* that the Tocharian B form *päklyauṣ* [A *päklyoṣ*] 'hear!' is best taken as a *si*-imperative and referred, along with Ved. *srósi* 'id', to a PIE **ḱléusi*. Other forms which readily lend themselves to an analysis of this kind are Hitt. *paḫši* 'protect!' (: **peh₂-*, **peh₂s-* 'id.') and OPr. *teiks* 'put!'. The subject will be treated at greater length elsewhere.