



A Note on the Research History of the Insular Celtic t-Preterite

David STIFTER

The explanation of the Insular Celtic t-preterite as continuing an earlier athematic 3rd sg. s-aorist was not first announced – as is widely held – by Heinrich Zimmer 1890 (‘Keltische studien. 1. Exkurs. Das sogenannte t-präteritum der keltischen sprachen’, *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung* 30 (1890), 198–217; actually, for Zimmer the starting point was the 3rd sg. middle of the s-aorist), but the idea is already mentioned in a sketch among the notes of Rudolf Thomas Siegfried, edited after his death by Whitley Stokes and published 1867 under the title ‘Miscellanea Celtica, by the Late R. T. Siegfried. Collected, Arranged, and Edited by Whitley Stokes’, *Transactions of the Philological Society* 1867, 252–300 (re-edited in German as: ‘Miscellanea Celtica, von dem verstorbenen R. T. Siegfried. Gesammelt, geordnet und herausgegeben von Whitley Stokes’, vol. 6 of Adalbert Kuhn’s *Beiträge zur vergleichenden Sprachforschung auf dem Gebiete der arischen, celtischen und slawischen Sprachen*, 1870, 1–18); the entry on p. 296 goes:

“S is lost between R and T: Ir. *tart* = [Goth. *thaurstei*], Eng. *thirst*, TARSTI [Skr. *tṛsh*. So perhaps the Irish preterite *ru-burt* ‘tuli,’ from] **ruburšt*, the Welsh *kymberth* [from **kym-ber-št*].”

David Stifter
Institut für Sprachwissenschaft
Universität Wien
david.stifter@univie.ac.at