

THE VERB “SEIN” AND ITS DEVELOPMENT IN MIDDLE HIGH GERMAN

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Abstract. This article examines a linguistic stage that included a variety of regional dialects whose phonological and morphological differences were caused by both innovations typical of the Middle High German era and inherited characteristics of Old High German. The principal resource for the diachronic study of the language are extant written materials, such as literary works and grammatical treatises, because they both represent dialectal diversity and preserve phonetic and morphological characteristics. The verb "sein" (to be), which demonstrates suppletion—a phenomenon in which many morphological forms of a single lexeme arise from historically separate roots—is a particularly instructive example. Sein distinguishes between tense, person, as well as grammatical function in Middle High German by using the roots b-, es-, and wes-. This verb is categorized as athematic morphologically because it maintains a conservative morphological pattern inside the verbal paradigm by adhering to the antiquated practice of attaching personal endings directly to the verb stem instead of to a thematic vowel.

Keywords: Middle High German (mittelhochdeutsch); verb “sein”; suppletion; athematic verbs; morphology; es- root forms; wes- root forms; phonological change; diachronic analysis.

Introduction. The language was used in a number of dialects throughout this time, and these dialects' phonetic and morphological variations resulted from both fresh phonetic changes and forms carried over from Old High German. For linguists researching the ancient phonetic and morphological characteristics of the language, written monuments and grammar manuals in Middle High German (Mittelhochdeutsch, 11th–14th centuries) are essential resources. One of the most intricate and historically significant verbs in Middle High German is "sein," which means "to be." To convey different tenses, people, and grammatical functions, it uses three different roots: b-, es-, and wes. The evolution of this verb highlights the morphological variety of the language by illuminating characteristics of athematic verbs and the process of suppletion. According to this viewpoint, studying the verb "sein" enables a thorough comprehension of German's historical layers, interdialectal distinctions, and the roots of contemporary forms. Therefore, analyzing the verb "sein" in Middle High German is crucial for appreciating phonological, structural, and grammatical developments in the German language as well as the evolution of the verb system. In German linguistics, this subject still attracts a lot of scientific attention.

Literature review. Tursunov B. states that throughout the 11th and 14th centuries, Middle High German (Mittelhochdeutsch) was spoken in a variety of dialects, with notable distinctions between them [Berdiqul Tursunov 2006: 5]. These variations resulted from both fresh phonetic alterations and inherited traits from Old High German. The Middle High German written monuments that have survived show these distinctions. The Middle High German sound system was represented in grammar texts from this era using a standardized, or fairly controlled, spelling. Because of this, Middle

High German, even in written sources, maintained phonetic and morphological characteristics while reflecting the variations among different dialects, making it a valuable resource for researching the language's historical evolution [Berdiqul Tursunov 2006: 58].

Furthermore, according to Charles W.S., the German verb "sein," which means "to be," is composed of three distinct roots or stems, each of which is essential to the formation of the verb's multiple person and tense forms. The b-root is the initial root. This root, which starts with the letter b, is associated with Latin forms that employ the f sound, such as fui, fore, and futurum esse. It can be found in the German forms du bist (you are) and ich bin (I am). This root may also be found in English, where it appears as being (being), been (been), and be (to be). The es-root is the second root. It may be found in Latin in forms such as est and eram, which translate to "he/she/it is/was." This root appears as er sei in the subjunctive mood and as ist in the indicative mood in German. Sunt and sim are the comparable Latin versions. The wes-root is the third root. There is no direct Latin counterpart for this root, although it does match to the English forms were (were) and was (was). In Middle High German, it is connected to the past tense forms ich was (I was) along with wir waren (we were). Older adjectival forms are still preserved in terms like abwesend (absent) as well as anwesend (present), but the form Wesen formed from this root is now exclusively found as a noun. As a result, the verb "sein" uses several roots to convey tense, person, as well as grammatical roles. Its three-root structure demonstrates the German language's historical evolution as well as its relationships to other Indo-European languages [Charles W.S. 1893: 255 p].

Methods. The verb "sein" (to be) is one of Middle High German's most significant and historically difficult verbs. It evolved from numerous forms in former eras, finally becoming the form found in contemporary German. During the Middle High German period, the first- and second-person plural forms of the indicative mood were originally represented using the earlier forms birum and birut. These forms were gradually superseded by optative mood forms, and sîn along with sît gained popularity. Later, in New High German, this structure was reduced even further, yielding the generic plural form sind. Characteristic shifts also occurred in the urgent mood. The more recent form bis and the older form wis were in rivalry here. The bis form expanded throughout time and is still used in some dialects today. However, new grammatical constructs eventually took the place of these forms in literary German. Another result of historical evolution is the infinitive form of sein. It was formed in relation to the optative basis and is derived from the Middle High German sîn form. This suggests that several grammatical forms interacted to produce the verb's genesis and evolution. In general, the verb sein had several parallel forms in Middle High German, which were progressively reduced to a single system in New High German. This approach was crucial to the development of the verb system and marks a significant point in the historical development of German [Жирмунский В. М. 1948: 253].

Results and discussions. In addition, Athematic verbs are a unique grammatical category in Middle High German, according to Minor A. Ya. Verbs like tuon (to do), gan (to go), stan (to stand), and sin (to be) fall within this group. They are especially significant for the study of language history since, in contrast to other verbs, they have essentially retained their Old High German forms. Athematic verbs are distinguished by their direct attachment of personal ends to the verb stem without the need of a thematic vowel in between. They differ from other verbs in this way. The most significant and

intricate verb in this category is *sein*, which means "to be." The prevalence of several forms characterizes its conjugation. The forms *bin*, *bist*, and *ist* were employed in the singular indicative mood, but *sī*, *sīst*, and *sī* (*sei*) emerged in the subjunctive (conjunctive) mood. Even more variation can be seen in the plural forms, which included concurrent forms like *bim*, *sin* (*sind*), *birt*, *sat* (*seit*), and *sint* (*sind*). *Sīn* and *sīt* were employed in the subjunctive. Certain types progressively became obsolete as history progressed. For instance, by the 13th century, subjunctive forms had taken the place of the words *birn* (we) and *birt* (you plural). This shows that the verbal system has been simplified and standardized. The fact that the verb *sein* has several roots—a process referred to as suppletion in linguistics—is another significant feature. In other words, a single verb might have forms derived from many roots. For example, the *b*-root includes the forms *bin* and *bist*, but the *s*-root includes the forms *sint* and *sin*. The majority of these historical forms, including *ich bin*, *du bist*, *er ist*, and *wir sind*—all of which have their origins in Middle High German—have remarkably survived in contemporary German. In general, one of the most significant and archaic layers of Middle High German is made up of athematic verbs, particularly *sein*. Their research is fundamental to understanding German's grammatical system, historical evolution, and the genesis of contemporary verb forms [Мишор А. Я. 2019: 59].

Conclusion. In conclusion, one of the most intricate and significant in history verbs in Middle High German is "sein," which means "to be." Its forms, which come from several origins, amply demonstrate how the grammatical system has evolved. Through the *b*-, *es*-, and *wes*- roots, the verb indicates a variety of tenses, persons, and moods, including indicative, subjunctive (conjunctive), imperative, and infinitive. Parallel variations frequently occur. The simultaneous employment of several the plural in Middle High German, in particular, highlights the dialectal variation and morphological complexity of the language. Additionally, "sein" is a member of the athematic verb class, which is identified by the impact of direct attachment of personal ends to the verb stem. This characteristic made it easier to simplify and standardize forms during the shift to New High German while assisting to maintain its historical forms. Many morphological and phonetic traits, like *ich bin*, *du bist*, *er ist*, and *wir sind*, are still present in modern German alongside the increasing obsolescence of certain older forms. Furthermore, the evolution of "sein" offers a significant illustration of suppletion—the coexistence of forms derived from many roots inside a single verb. This demonstrates the intricacy of the Middle High German grammar system and how it gradually became simpler over time. As a result, learning the verb "sein" is crucial to comprehending the phonetic and grammatical changes in German as well as its historical evolution and the genesis of grammatical formations. All things considered, the verb "sein" in Middle High German is one of the most crucial instruments for tracking linguistic evolution throughout history, enabling researchers to examine the origins of contemporary forms, interdialectal variations, and the ancient strata of German. Because of this, it is extremely important not just for grammar but also for the study of German phonetics and history.

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