

Historische Sprachforschung

(Historical Linguistics)

bisher
Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung

Begründet von Adalbert Kuhn

In Verbindung mit Claus Haebler
und unter redaktioneller Mitwirkung
von Sabine Ziegler
herausgegeben von
Alfred Bammesberger und Günter Neumann †

118. Band (2005)

Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht in Göttingen

ISSN 0935-3518

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The historical derivation of Gothic *aba* and its *n*-stem anomalies

1. Introduction

The Gothic noun *aba* generally follows the *n*-stem declension of that language, but it has certain irregular forms that set it aside from the rest of the *n*-stems of the same gender. These irregularities have recently led to imaginative ideas about its morphology, but as this paper will show, they simply reflect older regular patterns ousted elsewhere. The morphological history of *aba* does in any case reveal an archaic formation in the Indo-European languages.

Gothic *aba* is used in Wulfila's translation of the Bible to translate Greek ἀνὴρ "male person; husband", and this word only.¹ That the Gothic word means "vir, male person; husband" (and never "ἄνθρωπος, homo, Mensch") is clear not only from the Greek word it translates, but also from the fact that practically all passages with *aba* show an opposition between this word and *qēns*, *qinō* "woman, wife" or *magaps** "young woman".²

aba is amply attested in the singular, where it declines as a normal masculine *n*-stem, with a nom.sg. in *-a*, acc.sg. *-an*, dat.sg. *-in*, and gen. sg. *-ins*. The plural attestations are much fewer, with only one attestation in the nom.pl. (*abans*), two in the dat.pl. (*abnam*), two in the gen.pl. (*abnē*), and none in the acc.pl.³ The plural declension is not the usual one for a m. *n*-stem, as these otherwise have a dat.pl. in *-am* and a gen. pl. in *-anē*, with the sole exception of *auhsa** "ox", which has a gen.pl. *auhsnē* (Luke 14,19).⁴

¹ ἀνὴρ is also translated with *manna*, *wair* and *guma*, see Meid 1999 for the semantic differences of these words in the Gothic bible.

² The exceptions are no less clear: Galatians 4,27 *barna þizōs auþjōns mais þau þizōs aigandeins aban* "the children of the lonely one [are] more than those of the one having an *aba*", Luke 1,34 (when the angel tells Mary that she will give birth to Jesus) *hwiwa sijai þata, þandei aban ni kann?* "how is that to be, when I don't know any *aba*?"

³ For the attestations, see Snædal II: 7.

⁴ Given the identical formation of the gen.pl. *auhs-nē* and *ab-nē*, one could speculate that their pl. declension was the same. The acc.pl. of *aba* is not attested, whereas the only other pl. attestation of *auhsa** is the acc.pl. *auhsnuns*. The acc.pl. of *aba* therefore may have been **abnuns*. Although the reading *auhsnuns* is not certain, nowadays it is the preferred one (see Ebbinghaus 2003: 21-22), and is further backed by the Proto-

The standard reference grammar for Gothic, Braune's *Gotische Grammatik*, has in its previous editions been content with classifying the declension of *aba* as "[begründet] auf abweichendem Suffixablaut".⁵ The much awaited new edition has included Sen 2002 as the single reference, where *aba* is treated as a heteroclite, i.e. an original neuter *r/n*-stem,⁶ on the sole basis that the dat.pl. *abnam* corresponds structurally with the dat.pl. *watnam* (nom.sg. *watō*)⁷ "water", which is an old heteroclite in Germanic. Immediately the gender and meaning of *aba* present great difficulties for this interpretation. First, the PIE hetero-clites could not denote animate beings. Second, as a masculine noun with the meaning ἀνήρ, *aba* must be an old animate noun, i.e. a masculine *n*-stem.

2. The Germanic *n*-stem

The aberrant use of the suffix form *-n*-, as seen in the dat.pl. *abnam* and gen.pl. *abnē*, can, although it is quite rare synchronically in Germanic, be seen to have been more frequent in older stages of the Germanic languages. If one looks widely and deeply enough, its use can in fact

Germanic (PG) reconstruction (cf. footnote 17). Since we do not know the nom.pl. of *auhsa**, a claim that Gothic paired a nom.pl. *-ans* with an acc.pl. *-nuns* would be speculative, although far from improbable.

⁵ Braune/Ebbinghaus 1981: §108 Anm. 1.

⁶ In Proto-Indo-European (PIE) the heteroclites had a stem final **-r* in the nom./acc. sg. (and probably **-l* in the word for 'sun', cf. Wachter 1997) and **-n* in the oblique cases, particularly evident in Hittite, e.g. nom.sg. *wātar*, gen.sg. *witenas* "water", nom.sg. *pahhur*, gen.sg. *pahhuenas* "fire" (for the heteroclites as such, see Schindler 1975 and Meier-Brügger 2002: 205-206). The heteroclitic type has left few, but unambiguous traces in Germanic, e.g. Gothic gen.sg. *watins* "water" vs. Old High German (OHG) *wazzar*, Gothic nom.sg. *fōn*, gen.sg. *funins* "fire" vs. OHG *fuir*, and Gothic nom.sg. *sauil* "sun" vs. nom.sg. *sunnō*, dat.sg. *sunnin*. For other possible traces of heteroclites in Germanic, see Krahe/Meid 1969 III: §80 and Friedman 1999.

⁷ The retained *r*'s in the locative adverbs *har* and *þar* in Gothic show that there is no general *r*-loss in PG. The ending *-ō* in *watō* is therefore probably not a reflection of a collective formation **watōr* (vel sim.). The regular PG neuter nom./acc. sg. *n*-stem ending **-ōn* has not yielded the expected ending **-a* in Gothic. The surfacing ending *-ō* has probably arisen by analogy with the regular sg./pl. relationship in the neuter *a*-stem, i.e. *a*-stem sg. *waurd* – pl. *waurd-a* = *n*-stem sg. *X* – pl. *hairtōn-a*, *X*=**hairtōn*. The loss of the final **-n* could be analogical from the m. and f. *n*-stems (the *ōn*-, *īn*- and *an*-stems), where the nom.sg. ends in the suffix form appearing in the nom.pl. without the final *-n*, i.e. in *-ō*-, *-ei* and *-a*. According to Neri 2006: 229¹⁰⁶, the final **-n* was lost after a long vowel in unaccented position. This requires certain assumptions, however – e.g. that this development precedes the loss of short vowels in final position in the third or later syllable (e.g. f.acc.sg. *ōn*-st. **X-ōn-u* > *X-ōn*, infinitive **X-ōn-a* > *X-ōn*), a development that seems to be PG (cf. footnote 23), and it must follow the remaking of the 3.pl. optative ending *-eina* < **-īn#* + *-a* (an assumption that cannot be proven or disproven).

be seen to once have been the normal one. These traces will be outlined in this section.

The PIE animate *n*-stems could either be amph- or hysterokinetic.⁸ In both of these ablaut types, a noun's suffix appeared in the zero-grade in the weak cases, which in our case would leave us with **-n-*. Traditional examples include Latin nom.sg. *carō*, gen.sg. *carnis* "meat" (amphikinetic), Vedic gen.sg. *rājñah*, gen.pl. *rājñām* to *rājan-* "king" (amphikinetic) and Greek ἄρνῃ "lamb" < **wṛh₁én*, gen.sg. ἄρνός ≤ **wṛh₁-n-ós* (hysterokinetic). *n*-stems inherited from PIE would thus provide an abundant input of zero-grade suffix forms into Germanic. Generally, the Germanic languages have a generalization of either **-en-* or **-an-* in the sg. weak cases, and **-an-* in the pl. cases.⁹ Remnants of the zero-grade suffix forms can nevertheless be found, as will be seen below.

a) The word for 'man' portrays a mixture of synchronic *n*- and consonant stem features in Old English (OE) and Gothic.¹⁰ The best way to understand the declension of this word is to presume an original m. *n*-stem, with the zero-grade of the suffix in the weak cases (**man-n-*).¹¹ From the weak cases, a new root **mann-* was created: PG nom.sg.

⁸ Cf. e.g. Hardarson 2005: 217.

⁹ The generalization of **-en-* in the weak cases originates in the loc.sg. (cf. Benediktsson 1968: 30), where **-én(i)* would have been the ending in both the amph- and hysterokinetic type. The generalization of **-an-* is probably from the individualizing *an*-stems, where the suffix **-n-* was affixed to a thematic base in **-a* without any ablaut (for this type, cf. Schaffner 2001: 526-531). This individualizing use was especially frequent in Germanic, cf. Krahe/Meid 1969 III: §91.

¹⁰ OE nom.sg. *manna* (*n*-stem), dat.sg. *menn* (cons-st.) (Campbell 1959: 251-252) = Gothic *manna* - *mann*.

¹¹ Casaretto's (2004: 45) suggestion of "[zwei] Wörter [...], die bereits voreinzelsprachlich miteinander kontaminiert worden sind, indem konsonantische Endungen an den Obliquus **man-n-* traten" is unnecessary. In the end, there is actually no difference between this solution and the one explained above, since the original grammatical endings of the *n*-stems and consonant stems were exactly the same. A generalization of the zero-grade allomorph of the suffix without alteration of the endings would then be identical to a "consonant stem" **mann-* with consonant stem endings, *except* for the nom.sg. Casaretto (2004: 44) views therefore the consonant stem form nom.sg. **mann-z* seen in North-West Germanic (NWG) as the original. The sg. declension in the North Germanic languages does not follow the consonant stem, though, but instead the *a*-st. In addition, the nom.sg. *maðr* is in any case a late analogical creation for **mann*, which would be the regular form from both **mann-z* and **manna-z*. The WG consonant stem nominative forms could have been created by analogy from other consonant stems due to the seemingly consonant stem-looking dat.sg. **mann-i* and gen.sg. **mann-iz*, whereas explaining both Gothic and OE *manna* as being influenced by the *n*-st. *guma* "man" (Casaretto 2004: 45) is unlikely and uneconomical.

**manō*¹² – gen.sg. **manniz* → **mannō* – *manniz* > Gothic *manna* – *mans*.^{13,14}

b) The word for ‘ox’ shows the zero-grade of the *n*-suffix in the plural in Gothic, OE and ON. ON *uxi* has in its pl. nom./acc. *yxn*, gen. *yxna*,¹⁵ dat. *yxnum*, and OE *oxa* has pl. nom./acc. *ōxen*,¹⁶ gen. *oxna*, dat. *oxnum*. Gothic has, as already mentioned, a gen.pl. *auhsnē*. The zero-grade has been generalized from the weak cases, e.g. gen.pl. **uhs-n-ōn*, instr.pl. **uhs-ŋ-miz*.¹⁷

c) The neuter *n*-stem for ‘name’ appears with similar deviant forms in Gothic *namō* and ON *nafn*, where both have generalized the zero-grade in the plural:¹⁸ Gothic nom./acc. *namna*, gen. *namnē*, dat. *namnam* ≈ ON *nofn*, *nafna*, *nofnum*.^{19,20}

¹² The original PG m.nom.sg. *n*-stem ending is an issue, however. See recently Harðarson 2005: 224-229 and Nedoma 2005 with references.

¹³ *mans* has regular shortening of the gemination before *s*. The example given in Braune/Heidermanns 2004: §80, *ur-runs* < **ur-runns* is probably erroneous, however. Counterparts such as OE *ryne* ‘flow’ < **runiz* and Old Norse (ON) *run* ‘bank of stone between two waters through which the water may flow’ < **runa-* (and further Lehmann 1986: R33) show that the noun was probably formed with only one **n*, and that **nn* < **nw* (Seebold 1970: 376) / **nH* (Lühr 1976: 78) belonged to the verb **rinnan-*.

¹⁴ Lehmann’s (1986: M23) reconstruction of the genitive as **man-en-iz* must be false, since only PG **manniz* would give Gothic *mans* as well as provide the analogical basis for the new dative **man-n-i* (for **man-in-i*).

¹⁵ The rare *y*-form *uxna* mentioned by Noreen 1970: §401.2 does probably not exist, cf. Benediktsson 1986: 76-77. The *y-* is generalized from the nom./acc.

¹⁶ The *ø-* is due to an early generalization of the vowel **o-* in the paradigm (cf. Campbell 1959: §196). The expected form would be **yxen*. Cf. further Bammesberger 1993.

¹⁷ The acc.pl. was a weak case in PG, and we can consequently add the acc.pl. **uhsnŋz* to the explanation. Cf. footnote 4 and 23.

¹⁸ The PIE neuter (*me*)*n*-stem had a proterokinetic singular inflection, in which the suffix form *(*m*)*n-* would not occur (only *(*m*)*ŋ* in the strong cases). By means of internal derivation, however, these stems would have an amphikinetic (Harðarson 2005: 217) or hysterokinetic plural (Schaffner 2001: 576, a formation that later could be replaced by an amphikinetic by analogy).

¹⁹ The Gothic dat.pl. *-am* is analogical from the *a*-stem, or possibly from other individualizing *an*-stems with a dat.pl. **-an-miz* with an assimilation **-nm-* > **-mm-* (Krahe/Meid 1969 I: 114). The regular ending would have been **-num* or **-um* (see footnote 23). ON does not differentiate between original **-am(z)* and **-um(z)*, cf. Gothic *-bairam*, *bērum*, *dagam*, *sunum* as opposed to ON *berum*, *bárum*, *dogum*, *sunum*. ON agrees here with the WG languages. *-um* should, however, where it matches Gothic *-am*, be derived from PG **-am-* with rounding to *-um-* before the labial in unaccented position. It is not due to a special development of PIE **-om-* in this position, as quite often claimed (among others Krahe/Meid 1969 I: §45). Neither is Harðarson’s explanation (2001: 102-103) particularly convincing, when he explains the NWG dat.pl. ending *-um* as coming from the *u-* and consonant stems, and the 1.pl.pres. *-um* from the athematic ending **-me/os* with the Sievers-variant **-me/os*. First, by using these explanations, he separates what seems to be one phenomenon into two, and secondly,

d) The transition of some *n*-stems to *u*-stems in ON requires forms with the zero-grade *-n-* to account for it. The special feature of this transition is that the *n*-suffix has become a part of the new root in the *u*-stem. Therefore *ari* “eagle” *n*-stem → *ǫrn* *u*-stem, †**beri*²¹ “bear” → *bjǫrn*. The only way by which the required element **-nu-* could have arisen is with the zero-grade of the *n*-suffix followed by a syllabic nasal (**-nN-* > **-nuN-*), which could have occurred only in the acc.pl. **-n-ŋz* > **-nunz* and possibly in the (dat./)instr.pl **-n-ŋz* > **-numz*.^{22,23}

the forms with **-am-* (which according to Harðarson should be kept as such) would greatly outnumber the forms with **-um-*, and this analogy would then require a further reasoning if correct. It is difficult to see why **-um-* should be morphemically preferable to **-am-*. And more severely, this would be the only instance of a Sievers-treatment of /m/ in PG, which in itself suggests that these variants never existed.

²⁰ From the plural forms, a stem *nafn-* was generalized in ON. And since nom./acc.pl. *nqfn* has the appearance of a normal *a*-stem (e.g. *bqrn* “children”, *lqnd* “lands”, *vqtn* “waters”), the new singular forms became an *a*-stem, nom./acc.sg. *nafn*, just as *barn*, *land*, *vatn*.

²¹ Cf. the f. *n*-stem *bera* “she-bear” and the *n*-stems in OE *bera*, OHG *bero* “bear”.

²² Cf. van Helten 1905: 225, Benediktsson 1968: 11, Lühr 1988: 200 and Johnsen 2004: 121.

²³ Since the NWG languages do not differentiate between original **-am(z)* and **-um(z)* (see footnote 19), the vowel of this dat.pl. ending is of little importance. This shows that the acc.pl. was a weak case in PG, since the vowel **u* is needed to account for the transition to the *u*-st. declension. That the dat.pl. **-(n)umz* is regular in PG is shown by the Gothic dat.pl. ending *-um* in the consonant stems *mēnōþum* “months” and *bajōþum* “both” (Braune/Heidermanns 2004: §117.2). This ending cannot have come from the *u*-stem. The transition of the consonant stems *brōþar* “brother” and *swistar* “sister” to the *u*-st. declension (only in the pl.) is *because* of the regularity of the acc.pl. in *-uns* and dat.pl. in *-um*. The other consonant stems in Gothic have replaced the acc.pl. with the nom.pl. *-s*, e.g. acc.pl. *mēnōþs* m., *fijands* m. “enemies”, *baurgs* f. “towns”. *mēnōþs* would then not share any ending with the *u*-stem with the exception of dat.pl., and the very reason for this ending to come from the *u*-stem then disappears.

The consonant stem ending **-ŋz* has developed from older **-miz/*-maz* with syncope of **i/*a* in the third (or later) syllable (Krahe/Meid 1969 II: 12) (but retained in the dissyllabic **pai-miz*, **twai-miz* > OE *þāem*, *twāem* with *i*-umlaut, and in **pri-maz* > ON *þremr* with *a*-umlaut). The *n*-stem endings **-nmiz/*-nmaz* would either undergo the same syncope and hence develop to **-nŋz* in PG before any anaptyctic vowel would arise before syllabic resonants, or develop to **-unmiz/*-maz* already before the vowel syncope and then assimilate **-nm-* to **-m(m)-* and give **-umz*. An indication that the syncope precedes the anaptyxis is the Gothic dat.pl. *brōþrum* and *dauhtrum*, whose PG transponants are **brōþrŋz/*duhtrŋz*, unless they are analogical recreations of **brōþurum* < **brōþurŋz* < **brōþrŋmiz*. Tremblay’s (2003: 43,137) explanation of the dat.pl. *brōþrum* as coming from **brōþurmiz* with metathesis **ur* > *ru* is ad hoc. It is difficult to see how Harðarson (2001: 102-103) can cause **sŷe-s[t]ŋ-mis* “sisters” and **(h₃)or-ŷ-mis* “eagles” to regularly give Germanic **swe-stru-m(i)z* and **ar-nu-m(i)z* (and similarly Krahe/Meid 1969 II: 41) when PG **ŕ* gives **uR*, not **Ru*, other than in clearly analogical cases such as Gothic *frumists* “first” (OE *fyrmost*) after *fram* “from, forwards”.

e) Internally in NG, there are some m. *n*-stems that have by-forms either with or without a root final *-n-*. These by-forms bear witness of an older united paradigm that underwent a split. Convincing pairs of this sort are ON *sefi* “mind” < **sef/ban-* vs. *sjafni* “id.” < **sef/bnan-*, apparently originating from **sef-an-/seb-n-*, and the amphikinetic pair *hjarsi* “crown of the head” < **hérs-an-* vs. *hjarni* “brain” < **herz-n-*, which shows the effect of Verner’s law. A hysterokinetic pair seems to be present in the pair ON *orri* “heathcock” < **urzén-* vs. Old Swedish *orni* “boar” < **urz-n-* (cf. Greek ἐρσῆν “the male” < **h₁rsén*²⁴).²⁵

f) A more indirect reflection of the zero-graded *n*-suffix can be seen in the consonant gemination in Germanic *n*-stems, a gemination that is generally considered to be caused by the sequence **Tn-* (> **TT-*),²⁶ in other words where the final obstruent of the root was followed by the zero-graded suffix **-n-*, e.g. OHG *knabo* “boy” < **knában-* vs. *knappo* “id.” < **knabn-*. These cases are extensively treated by Lühr 1988: 198ff.

Traditionally, the *-na* in *kvinna*, the gen.pl. of ON *kona* “woman”, has been said to reflect the zero-grade of the *n*-suffix, as only an original sequence *-nC-* could be responsible for the raising of **-e-* (**kwen-n-ôn*) to *-i-*.²⁷ As Harðarson 1989: 88 argues, since this word is extended from a PIE *eh₂-* > PG *ō*-stem,²⁸ we expect the *ō* always to be present in the suffix. Least of all we expect a zero-grade. *kvinna* could rather have a raising of **e* to **i* before a secondary cluster *-nC-*, after the syncope of a medial vowel,²⁹ although good parallels are hard to find.³⁰ There exists a

²⁴ For this PIE reconstruction and ἐρσῆν ≠ ἄρσῆν “id.”, see Peters 1993.

²⁵ For these and yet another pair, see Benediktsson 1968: 11 and further details in Schaffner 2001: 546-549.

²⁶ For this law, see the discussion in Lühr 1988: 189-196.

²⁷ Noreen 1970: §162.1, followed by Benediktsson 1986: 31, Lühr 1988: 199 and Schaffner 2001: 372.

²⁸ All Germanic f. *ōn*-stems are probably secondarily extended from *ō*-stems (when not productively created within Germanic, of course), cf. Harðarson 1989: 84-85 and Jasanoff 2002: 41.

²⁹ The ON f. gen.pl. *-na* cannot continue **-ōnō* with syncope of **-ō-*, as this would have given **-ana*, cf. f. gen.sg. *skipanar* “order” < **skipōnōR/-ār* (cf. Harðarson 1989: 88-89), but has the ending **-anō* from the m./n. This feminine ending may be attested on the Tune-stone in the form *arbijanō* “of the heirs” (Syrett 1994: 212), but the gender has been disputed (Nielsen 2000: 86). The gen.pl. in *-na* is present in all f. and neuter *n*-stems. It is additionally used in some masculines (mainly in poetry), and then often spread analogically to the entire plural paradigm, as with *uxi* (Noreen 1970: §401.3). This *-na* probably continues in most instances the syncopated generalized gen.pl. Proto-Norse (PN) **-anō*, the same ending as in most Gothic m. and neuter *n*-stems.

³⁰ Harðarson (1989: 90) suggests the 1.pl.pret. *fiŋum* of *fá* “get” as a parallel. This form, originally being reduplicated, did not have PG **-enC-*, but the phonology and

by-form *kvenna*, but this should be considered as a younger development regardless the origin of *kvinna*, since this latter form cannot be explained by analogy.^{31,32}

Even though one of the prime examples of the zero-grade form of the *n*-suffix should be rejected (*kvinna*), there are still so many residues of this feature in the Germanic languages that *abnam*, *abnē* constitute a mere continuation of this, and require in themselves no extraordinary explanation to account for it.

3. Derivational history of *aba*

We will finally address the issue of what the historical origin of *aba* might be. First, other Germanic *n*-stem cognates are dubious and, in any case, add nothing to our knowledge of the PG form,³³ since, as shown

structure of these preterites at the PN stage are still opaque, so we cannot know if it is comparable with **kwen-an-ôn*. Harðarson's other example, the Old Swedish pl. *spinnar* (p. 90-91) is not persuasive since it is another *n*-stem. As a result, one could claim that the *i* in this form has been raised from **e* before an original cluster **-nn-* (e.g. gen.pl. **spen-n-ôn*).

³¹ *kvenna* is, according to Harðarson (1989: 87), already present in the oldest manuscripts. It is difficult to say whether it continues an analogy at a late PN stage (**kwennō* instead of **kwinnō* after the oblique stem **kwen-*) or if it is made from a composition form *kven-*, as Harðarson (loc.cit.) thinks. There are, of course, a number of forms with *-enC-* in ON, e.g. *brenna* "burn", f.dat.sg. *hendi* "hand", but these *e*'s continue PN **a*.

³² Harðarson (1989: 86-87) claims that *kvinna* and *kona* ultimately represent a split paradigm from IE **g^hen-h₂*, giving PG nom.sg. **kwenōn* and **kunōn*. These later combined paradigms in ON, but this happened at a relatively late stage, as he sees remnants of the paradigm **kwenōn* in two runic inscriptions from c. 1000 (p. 92-93). This is also the explanation of Noreen (1970: 168), although he makes use of only one of the runic inscriptions (§162.1). But the zero-grade **kun-* is nowhere attested outside the Nordic area, which might suggest that this is an inner-Nordic development. Then he has to reject the idea that **kwe-* has developed to *ko-* (cf. **kweman-* > *koma* "come"), on the basis that *kona* represents an *a*-umlauted form, and that "es diese Lautregel nie gegeben hat" (p. 87²³). But the Old Swedish oblique form *kunu* need not be the original non-umlauted form, but might have *-unu* from *-onu* (Bjorvand/Lindeman 2000: 474, cf. even ON *kana* < *kona* (Noreen 1970: §121)). Further, to my knowledge, *a*-umlaut with an intervening nasal is more absent than present, cf. the following examples where we would expect umlaut: *bruna*, *duna*, *gruna*, *muna* (*ō*-verbs), *una* (*ē*-verb), *hunang*, *run*, *unað* (n. *a*-stems), *bruni*, *duni*, *funi*, *runi*, *-spuni*, *uni* (m. *n*-stems), and especially *duna*, a f. *n*-stem. And the runic forms *kuinu* and *kuino* (see Harðarson footnotes 37 and 40) represent *kvinnu* (arising from paradigm split of *kona* - *kvinna*) rather than **kvenu*. As we know, the rune carvers rarely wrote geminates. All in all, I see little reason to create a PG zero-grade root just on the basis of *kona* instead of assuming that the PG form **kwenōn*, which pops up in all the Germanic languages, has developed to *kona*.

³³ The ON *afi* "grandfather; man" is in the meaning "grandfather" surely from an older *avi* and thus not related to *aba*. Whether the meaning "man" is the continuation of **aban-* must remain open. The OHG name *Abo* might ultimately be from **aban-* too

above, it has to be a PG amph- or hysterokinetic *n*-stem **aban-* or **aben-*. It has long been connected to the PIE root **h₃ep-*.³⁴ This approach has, on the other hand, been a pure root etymology without any explanation on how the Germanic word was actually formed. PIE **h₃ep-* seems to occur in two semantic and morphological domains. One is centered on a verbal root **h₃ep-* “do, make”,³⁵ whereas the other has its ultimate base in an acrostatic heteroclitic **h₃óp-ʔ/*h₃ép-n-* “wealth, riches”.³⁶

With this background in mind, *aba* is best taken as a pre-Germanic internal derivative from the heteroclitic base **h₃óp-ʔ/*h₃ép-n-* “wealth, riches, possession” of the same sort we see in **h₃rĕĝ-ʔ/n-* “power” (Old Avestan *rāzarā*) → **h₃rĕĝ-on-/ *h₃rĕĝ-n-* “having power” → king” (Vedic *rājān-/rājñ-*). This would give an amphikinetic **h₃ép-on-/ *h₃ep-n-* “having wealth, riches, possession” > PG **áfan-/ *abn-* “pater familias”.³⁷ In a patriarchal society where the main hereditary line goes from father to son, it is a straight forward assumption that a noun denoting the possessor of the riches is the man of the household, the husband. Other Germanic derivatives from the heteroclitic **h₃óp-ʔ/*h₃ép-n-* are PG **af/bnija-* “stuff, material” < **h₃ep-n-iĵo-*³⁸ and **abra-* “strong” < **h₃op-r-ó-*.^{39,40}

(Förstemann 1900: 10-11, Kaufmann 1968: 19). Note that they both appear as normal masculine *n*-stems.

³⁴ See e.g. Uhlenbeck 1900: 1 and recently Casaretto 2004: 216 with literature.

³⁵ Attested only in Italic, cf. LIV 298-299. From this, nouns such as the *s*-stem **h₃épo/es-* in Vedic *ápas-*, Latin *opus* “work, act” are then derived. The Germanic verb **ōbijan-* “perform, practice” is usually placed here without any explanation of the formation. This could be an iterative/causative-formation to a non-attested Germanic primary verb **afan-* (pret. **ōf-*) of the 6th class, where a direct continuation of a PIE verb **h₃ep-* would end up (after the regular thematization of the verbal stem). A denominative formation from a non-attested continuation of a root noun **h₃ép-* is less likely.

³⁶ From this is derived a multitude of forms in Anatolian, e.g. Hittite *happar-* “trade; payment”, *happiriya-* “town” < **market*, *happina-* “rich”, *happiriya-* “sell”, cf. Rieken 1999: 315-318, and further Latin *opulentus* “rich” (Szemerényi 1954: 277-281) and Vedic *ápnas-* “property”.

³⁷ For this internal derivation, cf. also **h₁óyHd^h-ʔ/n-* “udder” (Greek οὐθα, Vedic *údhār* with generalized *ū* from a secondary weak stem **h₁uHd^h-n-ʔ*) → **tri-h₁éyHd^h-on-/ *h₁uHd^h-n-* “having three udders” (Vedic *tri-údhán-*) (Widmer 2004: 67-69).

³⁸ Rieken’s (1999: 318) claim that the meaning “wealth, riches” of the heteroclitic had not been specialized already in PIE because of the Germanic forms **af/bnija-* “material” and **af/bnijan-* “perform, prepare” is too bold. The Germanic verb can easily be derived from the noun, and there is no great semantic difficulty in getting from **h₃ép-n-* “riches, property” to **h₃epniĵo-* “that of property, possession” > “stuff, material”.

³⁹ ON *afr-(h)endr* “strong”, Gothic *abrs* “severe, heavy” < “strong” (the Gothic adjective and the adverb *abraba* have a purely intensifying use), by a possessive derivation **h₃óp-ʔ* “possession, wealth” → **h₃opr-ó-* “having possession/resources/

It has been shown here that Gothic *aba* is noteworthy in two respects. First, *aba* retains the use of the zero-grade of the *n*-stem suffix, a feature that has been leveled out in most other Germanic *n*-stems. Accordingly, *aba* may be placed among the other limited remnants of the zero-grade of this suffix in Germanic listed above. Second, *aba* appears to have arisen as an internal derivative of the PIE heteroclite **h₃óǵ/*h₃éǵ-n*-“riches, possession”. This means that we can add a Germanic word to the list of internal derivatives of heteroclites, once again proving the archaic nature of the Germanic branch and its usefulness for our knowledge about the IE proto-language.

power” > “strong”. A direct *ra*-formation from a PG primary verb **afan*- “do, make” is less probable, as the only sure example of such a formation from a 6th class verb is **wakra*- “awake” to **wak(n)an*- “be awake, awaken” (more common from 1st class verbs).

⁴⁰ A pure inner-Germanic development of *aba* cannot be excluded, but requires more assumptions regarding its semantic development. A 6th class primary verb **afan*- (which is needed for the deverbative **ōbijan*-) “do, make, perform, practice” could make an *n*-stem nomen agentis or individualizing noun **afan*- “maker, performer”. There are abundant examples of *n*-stem derivations from 6th class verbs, and they all show the *a*-grade of the root, e.g. OE *mere-fara* “sea-traveller” (**faran*- “travel”), Gothic *ufarswara* “perjurer” (**swar(j)an*- “swear”), OE *snaca* “snake” < “the sneaking, gliding one” (**snakan*- “sneak, glide”). Most likely, these had no ablaut in their ultimate origin, as they seem to be *n*-stem formations to *o*-stem adjectives. These anapophonic individualizing *an*-stems could clearly, however, secondarily decline as amphi- or hysterokinetic stems (see Schaffner 2001: 527 with references, and further the already treated **beran*- (OHG *bero*) vs. **bern*- (ON *Bjarni*, *björn*) “bear” < “the brown one” ← pre-Germanic **b^hēro*- “brown”). Cf. also OE *man-slaga*, OS/OHG *man-slago* “man-slayer” for the generalization of the voiced Verner variant vs. the verb **slahan*- “slay”. The semantic development must either be “performer; worshipper” (cf. Lehmann 1986: A1 “family chief who had to carry out ritual activities”) > “pater familias”, or “worker, cultivator” > “farmer” > “pater familias”. The intermediate semantic stages are all attested in the deverbative **ōbijan*-: OHG *uoben* “perform, practice; worship; cultivate” → (-)*uobo*, *uobāri* “worshipper; cultivator, farmer” (see Köbler 1993: 1183 et passim for the attestations). For “farmer” > “pater familias”, cf. ON *bóndi* “farmer; pater familias, husband”.

An inner-Germanic derivation would not leave us any hints as to finding out whether the stem was amphi- or hysterokinetic. Jasanoff 2002: 3 notes that *aba* “preserves distinctive hysterokinetic features”. Since an amphikinetic inflection regularly would have given *abnē* and *abnam* as well, the claim is probably reasoned in the etymology proposed in Jasanoff 1980: 381, where *aba* is seen as a possessive **wen*-formation **h₃ǵp-wén*. *wen*-stems are, however, more or less restricted to Indo-Iranian, and they do not seem to exist in Germanic at all. Schaffner 2001: 517-518 claims an original amphikinetic type, but without any reasoning.

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