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Where Does Gmc. *$\bar{o}g$- 'fear' Come From?: The Problem of the Original Base Structure*

Toshiya Tanaka

1. Introduction

The PIE base structure underlying the Gmc. preterite-present *$\bar{o}g$- 'fear' has not yet been satisfactorily elucidated in the scholarship of historical and comparative linguistics. The aim of this paper is to propose a new, plausible explanation with regard to this problem.

A direct reflex of the Gmc. preterite-present *$\bar{o}g$- 'fear' is documented in Gothic but not in other Gmc. dialects (cf. Prokosch 1939: 193; Birkmann 1987: 78; etc.). Extra-Gothic Gmc. dialects, though not showing a parallel preterite-present, document related weak verbs, e.g., ON *ōast* 'be afraid', *ægja* 'frighten' (a causative, parallel with Go. *ōgjan*), OE *on-ēgan* 'fear' (Pokorny 1994: 7f.; Lehmann 1986: 270; etc.). Outside Germanic, two IE dialects attest cognate verbs, i.e., Gk. ἄχνυμαι, ἄχομαι 'I am sad, I mourn' and OIr. *ad-āgor* 'I fear' (cf. Pokorny 1994: 7f.; etc.).

2. Previous Studies

This section provides a brief review of previous studies on the PIE base structure underlying Gmc. *$\bar{o}g$-.

2.1 Traditional View

In treating the historical morphology of Gmc. *$\bar{o}g$-, traditional studies assume a PIE root *agh-'fear' (cf. Pokorny 1994: 7; Lehmann 1986: 270; etc.). This pre-laryngealist, pre-Benvenistean assumption itself cannot give a satisfactory account of the vowel alternation $\bar{o}/a$, observable in Go. *ōg* vs. *un-agands* (cf. Jellinek 1926: 161; Kieckers 1928: 265; Krahe and Seebold 1967: 146; etc.). It seems that this phenomenon calls for the presumption that the alternation at issue reflects *$\bar{o}/\partial$ < *oH/H (cf. Seebold 1970: 362). I am discussing more about this point in the following subsection.

2.2 Seebold (1970)

In attempting an etymological explanation of Gmc. *$\bar{o}g$-, Seebold (1970: 362) claims that the vowel alternation illustrated in the preceding subsection is a reflex of *$\bar{o}/\partial$ < *eh_2/h_2. Leaving aside the validness of his identification of the laryngeal phoneme as *h_2, the assumption of a vowel plus laryngeal seems indispensable to an analysis of the historical

* Throughout the text of this paper, a single asterisk (*) stands for a reconstructed form and a double asterisk (**) a non-existent or impossible form.

morphology of the relevant preterite-present verb. The compensatory lengthening discernible in Go. *ōg* might appear ascribable to a vowel (pre-Gmc. **a* or **o*) plus another consonant (say, **ɣ*; cf. Krahe and Seebold 1967: 30; etc.), but the corresponding zero-grade participle *un-agands* 'fearless' clearly indicates that the subsequent consonant is a laryngeal (i.e., **∂* < **H*).

Unfortunately Seebold does not provide a reconstructed form of a PIE root or base for Gmc. **ōg-*. It must be clarified what form of a PIE radix is reconstructible and what kind of a role the laryngeal consonant plays within the relevant base structure.

2.3 Birkmann (1987)

Birkmann (1987: 78) proposes that the PIE root **h₂egh-* should be posited for Gmc. **ōg-*. This idea is convincing to the extent that such related nominals as Gk. *ἄχος* 'pain, distress', Go. *agis*, OE *ege* (< **agiz*) 'fright' can be derived from the simple *e*-grade radical form. The consanguine Gk. verb, *ἄχ-νυ-μαι* (a nasal-infixing middle) or *ἄχ-ο-μαι* (a thematic middle) 'I fear', can also be explained as a simple reflex of the *e*-grade radical shape, i.e., **h₂egh-* > **agh-* > **ἀχ-*.[1)]

How, then, are the morphological traits of the Gmc. preterite-present in question to be accounted for? Birkmann puts forward practically two ideas.[2)] One is that Gmc. **ōg-* is a secondary creation on the analogy of the Strong VI verbs. The other is that it reflects an erstwhile reduplicating perfect, i.e., **h₂e-h₂egh-* > **h₂a-h₂agh-* > **āgh-* > **ōg-*.

As regards the former prospect, the problem of the origin of the lengthened vowel in the Strong VI preterites arises, as Birkmann himself admits. Moreover, I am sceptical of this idea itself. If **ōg-* was a secondary creation in, say, Proto-Germanic, why was it a preterite-present, lacking its original present form (i.e., ***ag-*) and expressing the present meaning by the original preterite form? It seems more likely that another Class VI strong verb, ***ag-* 'fear', was created, which is not the case. In my opinion, preterite-presents provided the basis for the strong preterites, and not vice versa, when the Gmc. paradigmatisation took place.[3)] Birkmann's first idea, therefore, does not seem to me contributory to a plausible explanation of the origin of Gmc. **ōg-*.

Apropos of the latter suggestion, an alternative pre-form **h₂e-h₂ogh-* may be better posited. Given that **ōg-* is a preterite-present, the underlying pre-Gmc. base must be the *o*-grade

1) Beekes (1969: 279) in this connection suggests that a zero-grade variant **h₂gh-n-u-* might possibly underlie Gk. *ἄχ-νυ-μαι*. This possibility cannot be flatly denied, for the acute accent on the first syllable (i.e., *ἄχ-*) does not necessarily point to the original PIE accent there (cf. Hewson and Bubenik 1997: 217; etc.) and a middle occasionally reflects a zero-grade base (e.g., *μαίνομαι* < **μαν-jo-* < **mn-jo-*, cf. Beekes 1969: 279). However, this does not affect the validity of positing the PIE radix **h₂egh-* for those lexical items now at issue.

2) Birkmann (1987: 78) states that "Die germanische Formen können dann entweder sekundäre Bildungen nach Muster der starken Verben der 6. Ablautreihe sein (wofür zunächst deren Entstehung zu klären wäre) oder auch lautgesetzlich aus reduplizierten Perfektformen hergeleitet werden: ***H₂eH₂egh-* > ***H₂aH₂agh-* > **āgh-* > *ōg-*."

3) For details, see Tanaka (in progress: Chapter 4).

*$h_2$ogh- rather than the *e*-grade *$h_2$egh-. But this is not a very weighty point. What is far more important is that this account remains at best phonologically plausible. There is due reason to doubt that *ōg- reflects a quondam reduplicating perfect. Taking a close look at characteristics of preterite-presents, it lacks a cogent motivation. If a Gmc. preterite-present could be a reflex of a reduplicating perfect, Class VII preterite-presents would have existed, which is not the fact[4]. It seems better to seek for a different origin of the lengthened vowel at issue.

In sum, it must be said that while Birkmann's postulation of the PIE radix *$h_2$egh- is acceptable, his accounts of the origin of the lengthened vowel in *ōg- are not credible.

3. Proposal

Further to the criticism in the preceding section, the present section attempts to offer a sufficient analysis of the base structure from which the Gmc. preterite-present *ōg- descended.

3.1 Base Configuration Underlying Gmc. *ōg-

As discussed in §2.3 above, the PIE radix *$h_2$egh- is best reconstructed for Gmc. *ōg- and related IE lexical items. It also seems necessary, as considered in §1.2 above, to attribute the Gothic vowel alternation ō vs. *a* to *ā /*ō vs. *∂ (< *eH vs. *H). It follows from these that the PIE base underlying the Gmc. preterite-present *ōg- must be *h_2eHgh-. How, then, is the internal structure of this base configuration interpretable? Given that the radical form is best considered *$h_2$egh-, the post-vocalic *-H- ought to be construed as an infix.[5] There remain problems as to this idea. What kind of general theory about PIE morphology certifies this interpretation to be feasible?[6] Are there any other cases which require post-vocalic laryngeal infixation? The following two subsections approach these queries.

3.2 Infixation Theory for IE Morphs

My claim that the Gmc preterite-present *ōg- traces its ancestry back to the PIE base *h_2e-H-gh-, where a laryngeal phoneme is infixed into the post-vocalic position of the root *$h_2$egh-, seems to be ratified by Karstien's (1971) infixation theory. Despite its extensive

4) Tanaka (2000: p.302, Note 3) has already pointed out that although scholars have not so far paid due attention to this fact, absence of a Class VII (i.e., reduplicating) counterpart is a significant feature of Gmc. preterite-presents and constitutes one of the mysteries of the relevant distinct group of verbs which require a principled explanation. For details of the argument that Gmc. preterite-presents are reflexes of a previous *unreduplicating o*-grade verbal form, see Tanaka (in progress).

5) It is impracticable to construe this base configuration as consisting of the root *h_2eH- and the determinative *-gh-, simply in the light of the Benvenistean root theory. It is evidently unmotivated to posit a PIE radix **h_2eH-, for no reflex of this morph (> **ā- or possibly a morph comprised of a lengthened vowel of a different colour, according to the colour of the post-vocalic laryngeal) is recognisable as a cognate to those lexical items for a meaning related to 'fear'. For this, see Walde and Pokorny (1930: I. p.1, s.v. ā), Pokorny (1994: I. p.1, *s.v.* ā), etc.

6) Note that Benveniste's (1935) version of PIE root/base theory disallows this type of laryngeal infixation.

applicability, this theory has so far, it seems to me, unduly neglected by scholars who are engaged in empirical research of IE morphology.[7] I believe that this theory is requisite to analysing IE morphs and that there are many cases that fail to be adequately treated if only the Benvenistean theory is carried into effect.

Illustrating various forms of IE morphs, Karstien (1971) proposes a general IE infixation theory. His proposal on how a root with the *CeC-* shape is extended by an infix can be concisely represented by the following formal chart:

(1)

a. Position 0 Infixation: *I-eC-*
b. Position 1 Infixation: *C-I-eC-*
c. Position 2 Infixation: *Ce-I-C-*
   Position 2a Infixation: *CCe-I-C-*
d. Position 3 Infixation: *CeC-I-*
   Position 3a Infixation: *CCeC-I-*
e. Position 4 Infixation (Post-suffixal Infixation): *CeCC-I-*

where I stands for an infixal element

The five configurations brought up here describe the shapes where an infixal element stands immediately before the radical elements (Position 0), between the first radical consonant and the radical vowel (Position 1), immediately after the radical vowel (Position 2 and 2a), immediately after the cluster of the radical vowel and a consonantal element (Position 3 and 3a), and after the cluster of the radical vowel and two consonantal elements (Position 4), respectively. The difference between Position 2/3 and Position 2a/3a may be regarded as the difference in base/stem shape between Type I and Type II in the sense of Benveniste (1935) into which infixes are inserted. Position 0 and 3/4 'infixations', on the other hand, are interpretable as equivalent to prefixation and suffixation, respectively, in a normal sense[8].

7) This might perhaps have originated from, say, Neu's (1981) scepticism about the relevant theory, pointing out that meanings and/or functions of IE infixes are not clarified whereas comparable non-IE infixes add a distinct meaning to the root.

8) A terminological problem might be perceived here. Prefix(ation), suffix(ation) and infix(ation) should be entities or notions complementary to each other, and affix(ation) must be the right superordinate to them. In presenting the schema (1), therefore, Position 0-3 'Affixations' may give a better description of the relevant configurations. But I am not to blame Karstien for this, since his primary concern aims at elucidating what kinds of infixation (in a real sense) are observable in IE roots and secondarily he discovers that similar elements to those employed for infixation are discernible for prefixation and suffixation as well, and thus proposes a generalised schema (see Karstien 1971: especially 202). In respect of Position 0 Infixation (or Affixation), furthermore, another problem may be detected. As (1a) shows, this affixation is assumed to apply only to roots with the shape **eC-* (see Karstien 1971: 202ff.). If this assumption holds in a strict sense, the first term of Benvenite's root theory will have to be modified to some degree. Or else, the affixation (1a) will have to be interpreted not as affixation but as a different process (such as a 'laryngeal and a sonant element are somehow interchangeable in the root

These two strategies for enlarging a root/base have no direct pertinence to our discussion in the present context, and we should like to confine our illustrations to Position 1 and 2 infixations, which are more relevant to the concerns of this paper.[9)]

Position 1 infixation may be exemplified by the following specimen (cf. Karstien 1971: 130 and 154):

(2) Root **gem-* 'to press, compress'

a. **gem-* (with no infixation)

> Slav. **žъmǫ* 'I (com)press'
> Arm. *čmlem* 'I (com)press'
> Gk. *γέντο* 'he grasped'
> Lith. *gùmulti* 'to crumple, knead'
> *gùmulas* 'lump, clod'
> Russ. *gomola* 'mush, lump'

Cf. Pokorny (1994: 368f.)

b. *g-l-em-

> Lith. *glemžti* 'to gather up, crumple, compress'
> OHG *klemmen*, OE *beclemman* 'to fetter'
> Lat. *glomus* 'a clew'
> *glomerāre* 'to wind into a ball, gather up'

Cf. Pokorny (1994: 360f.)

c. **g-r-em-*

> OHG *krimman* 'to press, grasp with claws'
> OE *crammian* 'to cram, stuff'
> Lith. *grùmulas* 'lump, clod'
> Gk. *γρόνθος* 'a clenched fist'

Cf. Pokorny (1994: 383)

Here it is intelligible that similar meanings are expressed by the lexical items reflecting **gem-*, **glem-* and **grem-*. Consider also (3) below, which exemplifies Position 2 infixation (cf. Karstien 1971: 150):

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initial position' or '**HeCr-* and **ReCr-* are somehow relatable to each other', just as **CeR-* and **CeH-* can be somehow linked with each other (see Karstien 1971: 162), in order to keep Karstien's theory compatible with the first term of Benveniste's root theory. Various other problems are conceivable in attempting to integrate the two theories in a formal fashion. But this attempt is beyond the scope of this paper. Moreover, configurations of infixation other than those given in (1) (Position k, etc.) are proposed in Karstien (1971), but they are omitted here for the sake of brevity.

9) As regards the PIE post-radical infixation (or suffixation), an itemized stratification is thinkable. For this, see Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1995: 295ff.).

(3) Root **lep-* 'to peel (off), split off'

a. **lep-* (with no infixation)

> Gk. *λέπω* 'I peel off'

Alb. *ljapë* 'belly fur of slaughtered animals'

lepíj 'I chisel', *latë* (< **laptā*) 'a small (pick)axe'

Lat. *lepidus* 'dainty, cute, enchanting'

OE *læfer, leber* f. 'a rush, a reed'

OHG *leber* 'a rush'

Lith. *lôpas* 'cloth', *lópau, -yti* to 'mend, darn'

lepùs, 'soft', *lepáuti* 'to be high-spirited'

Cf. Pokorny (1994: 678.)

b. **le-u-p-*

> OInd. *lumpáti* 'he smashes, shatters, damages, plunders'

lopáyati 'he injures'

Gk. *λῦπη* f. 'offending, insulting,'

λῡπέω 'I sadden, distress'

Lith. *lupù, lupti* 'to split off, peel'

Cf. Pokorny (1994: 690f.)

If Benveniste's root theory alone is adopted in analysing the materials in (2) and (3), the forms **gl/rem-* and **leup-* will be decomposed into the root **gel/r-* and the suffix **-em-*, the root **lew-* and the determinative **-p-*, respectively, and no implication of their relatedness to **gem-* and **lep-* will derive from this consequence. By these analyses, the number of the roots will be unnecessarily or unmotivatedly increased, which obviously contradicts the principle of Occam's razor. Common roots should be posited as **gem-* and **lep-*, and different shapes in (2) and (3) ought to be understood as bases formed through the process of infixation[10]. For other independent examples of the infixation in Position 2, see Karstien (1971: 139ff. *et passim*).

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10) Furthermore, the fourth term of Benveniste's root theory permits only a nasal element to be infixed to the Type II stem. Infixation with this configuration is abundantly attested in dialects, especially in Old Indic, where nasal infixation is fairly productively applied to derive a rich set of verbal shapes (cf. Benveniste 1935: 161; etc.), but theoretically a question remains: Why is the IE infixation restricted to this type? Karstien's theory seems to give an answer to this query: The IE infixation is not restricted to the type **CC-n-eC-*, which happened to have survived (or possibly revived) as a productive word-formation process in some dialects, but various patterns of infixation were once operative at a very early stage of the proto-language, which were only sporadically or fossilisedly retained in historically attested materials. To the extent that plentiful instances for his infixation theory are raised by Karstien (1971), that this theory, allowing a wide range of infixation patterns, fills in the gap in Benveniste's unnaturally restricted view on IE infixation, and that affixation processes similar to Karstien's theory for IE are attested in extra-IE languages as well (and thus it is typologically plausible; see Karstien 1971: 14ff.), this theory is worth adopting when we attempt analysing manifold shapes of IE morphs.

In terms of Karstien's general infixation theory, the PIE base *h_2eHgh-, underlying Gmc. *ōg-, is understood as an instance of Position 2 infixation (cf. [1c] above) of a laryngeal into the radix *h_2egh-.

3.3 Independent Motivation for Post-Vocalic Laryngeal Infixation

The process of Position 2 infixation of a laryngeal finds independent motivation inside Gmc. materials. Another Gmc. preterite-present *mōt- 'find room, have permission, may' is pertinent to the present discussion.

Pokorny (1994: 705f.) posits a root *med- 'measure' for Gmc. *mōt-, and observes that the relevant preterite-present comes from the ō-grade of this root. But the origin of the supposed lengthened-grade remains unexplained. Lehmann (1986: 145), on the other hand, proposes that this verb comes from the *o*-grade of the root *meh_1- (> *mē-) 'measure' followed by a consonantal element *-d-. This view, obviously, is not capable of capturing the similarity both in meaning and form between Gk. μέδομαι (< *med-) 'think on, take care of' and μήδομαι (< *mēd-) 'meditate, reflect, invent' (cf. Benveniste 1973: 400), since the base *med- is by no means derivable from the supposed root *meh_1- or the supposed base *meh_1-d-. What is required is a theory whereby the two bases, *med- and *mēd-, are related in a principled manner[11]. Karstien's infixation theory again provides an appropriate portrayal of the original base configuration: As for the historical morphology of Gmc. *mōt-, the form *med- should be posited as a PIE radix, with the proviso that this root allowed a Position 2 infix *-h_1- (i.e., *me-h_1-d-). Thus, the Gmc. preterite-present *mōt- is interpreted as reflecting the *o*-grade variant of the infixed base *mo-h_1-d- (i.e., *mo-h_1-d-).

The following chart demonstrates that morphologies of IE lexical items akin to Gmc. *mōt- (cf. Benveniste 1973: 399ff.; Lehmann 1986: 145 & 258; etc.) are satisfactorily accounted for in terms of a pair of bases, i.e., *me/od- (an uninfixing base) and *me/o-h_1-d- (a base with the infix *-h_1- at the post-vocalic position), from a single root *med- :[12]

11) The strategy of positing two distinct roots *med- and *mēd-/*meh₁d- (cf. Birkmann 1987: 84) only results in failure to obtain a due generalisation and in neglect of the similarity in form and meaning between the relevant pairs of words (see (4) below). I have already concisely dealt with this problem elsewhere. See Tanaka (2000: p.303, Note 8).

12) Since a wide range of meanings are attested in the relevant lexical items (i.e., from a physical deed like 'measure' to a mental activity like 'think on', 'meditate'), such a specific meaning as 'reflect' or 'govern' cannot be ascribed to the root *med-, as Benveniste (1973: 399ff.) claims. Instead, the original meaning must have been related with the notion of 'the established rule of order' (*op. cit.*, p.399) or 'to take with authority measures appropriate to a present difficulty; to bring back to normal – by a tried and tested means – some particular trouble or disturbance' (*op. cit.*, p.404). I have touched upon this issue elsewhere as well. See Tanaka (2000: 300).

(4)	**me/od-*	**me/o-h_1-d-*
Gk.	*μέδομαι* 'I think on, take care of'	*μήδομαι* 'I meditate, reflect, invent'[13]
		Hom. *μήδεα* 'designs, thoughts' (sg. **μῆδος*)
Lat.	*medeor* 'I heal, cure, apply measures for a malady'	
	modus 'measure'	
OIr.	*midiur* 'I judge'	
Go.	*mitan* 'measure'	*gamōt* 'find room, have permission, may'
ON	*meta* 'reckon, estimate'	
OE/OS	*metan* 'measure, mete out'	*mōtan* 'have cause to, must'
OHG	*mezzan* 'measure'	*muozan* 'may, can'
		māz n. 'measure'
Arm.		*mit* (gen. *mti*) 'thought'

This subsection has confirmed that another Gmc. preterite-present **mōt-* provides supporting evidence for laryngeal infixation at Position 2. This minimally suffices to answer the second question addressed in §3.1 above.

4. Conclusion

The PIE base structure underlying the Gmc. preterite-present **ōg-* is best represented as (the *o*-grade variant of) **h_2e-H-gh-*, where a laryngeal infix stands at the post-vocalic position of the radix **$h_2$egh-*. A couple of bases, i.e., **h_2e/o/ø-H-gh-* and **h_2e/o/øgh-*, from a single radix **$h_2$egh-*, sufficiently explains morphologies of the relevant cognate verbs:

(5)	**h_2e/o/ø-H-gh-*	**h_2e/o/øgh-*
	> **ā/ō/əgh-*	> **a/o/əgh-*
Gothic	*ōg* 'I fear'	
Greek		*ἄχνυμαι*, *ἄχομαι* 'I am sad, mourn'
OIr.	*ad-āgor* 'I fear'[14]	

13) The original function/meaning of a PIE infix is often hard to determine (cf. Karstien 1971: 27f.). But 'strengthening' or 'intensity' is occasionally perceivable as a function of an infix (cf. *op. cit.*, 28f.). An intensified meaning may be observable in *μήδομαι* 'meditate, reflect, invent', which contains a laryngeal infix in its base, compared with *μέδομαι* 'think on, take care of', having a short or simple radical vowel.

14) Concerning Old Irish *āgor*, Pokorny (1994: 8) supposes that it comes from an archaic PIE perfect (i.e., **ōgh-* < **h₂o-H-gh-* rather than **āgh-* < **h₂e-H-gh-*). It is not, however, that Pokorny's interpretation is accepted by every scholar. Meid (1971: 27f.), for instance, rejects this idea by claiming that the relevant Old Irish verb is of the present deponent origin. This opinion should imply that it is a reflex of the *e*-grade variant of the infixing base **h₂e-H-gh-* > **āgh-*. Either explication concurs with the schema given in (5).

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ゲルマン語動詞 **ōg-*「恐れている」の由来をめぐって: 祖語における語基構造の問題

ゲルマン語第VI類過去現在動詞である **ōg-*「恐れている」が，印欧祖語のどのような語基を反映したものであるが，従来の印欧語及びゲルマン語比較言語学研究では，定説と言えるものが存在しない。本論文の目的は，過去の研究それぞれの長所及び短所を洗い出し，その上で新たな説明を提案することである。

本論文の提案は，**ōg-* を生み出した印欧祖語の語基の構造は，**h_2e-H-gh-* と表示されるものであり，それは語根 **h_2egh-* の母音後位置にラリンジャル子音が接中辞として挿入されたものであるということである。このようなラリンジャル子音の（母音後位置への）接辞は，Karstien(1971)によって提唱された印欧祖語一般接中理論によって認可されるものであることを主張し，ラリンジャル子音の語根への接中という設定への独立的動機付けが存在することを，ゲルマン語内資料を用いて独自に裏付けている。