

**GERMANIC STUDIES.  
VERNER'S LAW IN  
GOTHIC. PART I**

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Germanic Studies. Verner's Law in Gothic. Part I by Francis Asbury Wood

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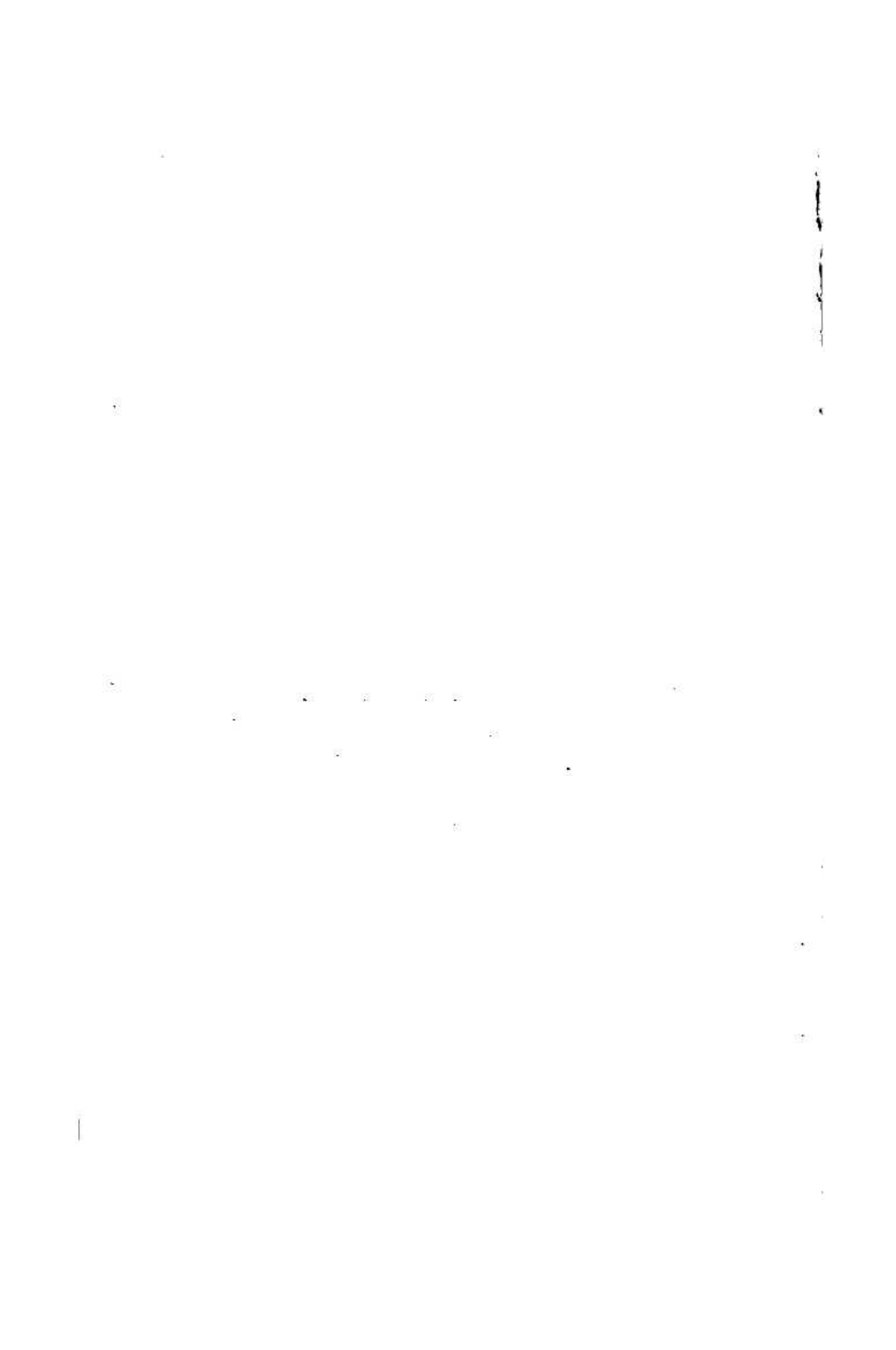
**FRANCIS ASBURY WOOD**

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## INTRODUCTION.

In preparing Part I. of this work it has been my endeavor to give as exhaustively as possible all instances of the working of Verner's Law in Gothic. In Sections 1-5 comparison is made with forms in the several Germanic dialects; in Section 6, however, where the accent variation in suffixes is treated, this is not done, since it is the Gothic that is primarily considered.

In Part II. I make no attempt to give every reduplicating verb. My object is to bring forward as much proof as possible to show that the reduplicating verbs are ablauting, and to indicate how this ablaut arose.

The following authorities have been consulted and have been found more or less helpful:

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———, Angelsächsische Grammatik, 2te Aufl. Halle, 1886.

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Other works have also been consulted, and reference is made to them where they aid in establishing any point taken in the dissertation.

My thanks are also due to Assistant Professor H. Schmidt-Wartenberg and Associate Professor Carl D. Buck for helpful suggestions and assistance in procuring material.



## I. VERNER'S LAW IN GOTHIC.

Of all the Germanic dialects Gothic is the most uniform and the most subject to leveling. Comparatively few by-forms occur. This is natural, since it represents the speech of one community, practically of one man. It is quite probable that the Gothic known to us has yielded more to *systemswang* than the language as spoken. Certainly it reached a stage of development that the other dialects did not attain till much later. Hence it is that there are so few instances of "grammatical change," and so many forms that have been largely influenced by analogy. For example, instead of *gumans* the historically correct form would have been \**kumans*, though this in turn goes back to a pre-Germanic \**guumonos*. And it is not improbable that *giman* may also be of secondary formation for an original \**kuman*, which is seen in O.S., O.E. *tuman*, O.N. *koma*. Cf. Sievers, PBB, VIII, 80 ff. Such forms as O.H.G. *gidungan* from *dwingan*, with the disappearance of *w* before *u*, or *lārun* from *lesan*, are never met with in Gothic. The stage of Gothic at the time of Ulfilas was reached later by O.H.G. when it wrote *gidwungan* and *lāsun*. Consequently Gothic often has the appearance of preserving older formations. This is not the case, however, wherever analogy has been a disturbing element.

We must therefore expect to find in the workings of Verner's Law a generalization in favor of either the surd or the sonant spirant. What we actually find is more frequently the former.

According to Verner's Law there should be in Gothic an interchange, in allied forms, of *f-b*, *h-g*, *hw-w*, *þ-d*, *s-z*. Since the interchange of *h-g* brings in some points not raised by the interchange in the other cases, this will be treated by itself.

1. First then as to the development of nasal + guttural (whether velar or palatal) as affected by Verner's Law, or not affected.

The verb *þeiha*, with which cf. Lith. *tenkù*, may be put in pre-Germanic form as follows:

\**teuqō*, \**teibōga*, \**teipqumē*, \**teiqōnds*.

This would have yielded in Gothic if undisturbed by analogy,—

*þeiha*, \**þāh*, \**þungum*, \**þungans*.

The form *þeiha*, however, has taken the verb out of the third ablaut-series and made of it a verb of the first series. So we have:

*þeihan, þāih, þaihum, þaihans.*

In O.H.G. *dihan* went through the same process, but retained the "grammatical change," giving:

*dihan, deh, digum, gidigan.*

As *dwingan* had originally the perf. part. *gidungan*, that may have helped to retire from use the \**gidungan* that belonged to *dihan*. In O.S. *thihan* has the perf. part. *githigan*, and also the old irregular form *githungan*.

In O. E. we may suppose the following development:

* <i>þihan</i> ,	* <i>þōh</i> ,	<i>þungon</i> ,	<i>þungen</i> ,
* <i>þihan</i> ,	<i>þāh</i> ,	<i>þigon</i> ,	<i>þigen</i> ,
<i>þeon</i> ,	<i>þeah</i> ,	<i>þugon</i> ,	<i>þogen</i>

We have here forms belonging to three ablaut-series. These various forms, together with those in O.H.G. and in O.S. show that leveling had not taken place in Germanic.

With this verb is connected the noun *þeihs* <√*teþ* (v. Brugmann, Grundr. II, p. 394) and German *ding*, Eng. *thing*, etc., and further Av. *tanc-ista-*, "most sturdy," *tac-*, "to rush," Skt. *tak-ati*, "flows," Lith. *tek-ù*, "flow," "run."

To this root belongs a numerous family: O.E. *geþingan*, O.S. *thingon*, O.H.G. *dingōn*, M.H.G. *dingen*, N.H.G. *dingen*, *bedingen*, etc.

The Goth. *þreihan* runs exactly parallel with *þeihan*. In the other dialects the development is different. The reason for this will be discussed later.

In *fāhan* the *h* has spread to all the forms. O.H.G. has *fāhan*, *fāng*, *fāngum*, *gifangan*. This more nearly represents the original state of affairs than the Gothic.

The sing. pret. was more readily assimilated to the plural, because the vowel was the same. O.S. and O.E. have forms corresponding to those of O.H.G. O.N. has occasionally in the pres. subj. *fange* for the regular *fāe*. This presupposes an inf. *fanga*, which is found in O. Sw.

An unnasalized form of this root occurs in Goth. *fagr*s, and in O.H.G. *fuogen*, O.E. *gefegan*, and in M.H.G. *wēgen*.

The verb *hāhan* is parallel in its development with *fāhan*, except that in O. N. the inf. is always *hanga*.

The noun *hūhrus* <\**χūoxrus* shows a difference in accent, as

compared with O.H.G., O.S. *hungar*, O.E. *hungor*, O.N. *hungr* < \**χungrús*. The weak verb *huggrjan*, as it had the accent on the suffix, is regular in its development.

In the Goth. *juggs* and *jühisa* we have an instructive illustration, as it shows that the comparative had the accent on the root-syllable, as Verner pointed out. In O.N. occurs the same interchange: positive *ungr*, com. *ðre* and the later *yngr*, superl. *yngrstr* and once *ðrstr*. The last form proves nothing for the superlative, since the *r* shows that it was modeled after the comparative like German *mehrst*. In O.H.G. are *jung*, *jügiro*, besides the usual *jungiro*. Kluge in Paul's Grundr., I, 400, derives *jugiro*, which he writes with a short *u*, from \**juwisa* by Bugge's Law, comparing it with Skt. *yáviyāś*. But Bugge's Law requires the accent \**juwisa* to give *jugiro*, and that is authorized neither by the Skt. accent nor by the *z* of the comparative in Germanic. It is better therefore to explain it with Paul, in PBB, VI, 544, as a partial assimilation from an original \**jühiso*, so that it would be in line with the Goth. *jühisa* and O.N. *ðre*.

The development of I.E. \**penqe*, "five," is peculiar. It probably represents an assimilation to \**penpe*, which regularly gave the Goth. *fimf*. This assimilation doubtless took place before the Germanic sound-shifting, at any rate before the disappearance of the nasal before *χ*, otherwise the Germanic form would have been \**fiχ(ge)* > Goth. \**feih*. In like manner \**puqtó-* or \**peuqtó-* would give Gothic \**fukta* or \**feikta*. In two words so closely allied the development would certainly be parallel. This, however, does not shut out the possibility of dialectal variation. So Kauffman, PBB, XII, 512, basing his conclusion on the \**puqtó-* set up by von Fierlinger, KZ, 27, p. 194, supposes a survival of the guttural in the Swabian *fuchsen*, 15, and *fuchsk*, 50, and in *fust*, etc. This view is supported by Brugmann, Grundr., II, 476.

Now it is certain that the same dialect would not retain the guttural in the ordinal and change it to a labial in the cardinal. If these forms given by Kauffmann could be historically traced to O.H.G. there would be much better ground for supposing that the *ch* comes from the I.E. *q*. There seems to be a change here for which at present no reason can be given, though it seems similar to the change in Low German of *ft* > *cht*. And it is hardly necessary to hold to the presence of *ch* in order to explain the disappearance of *n*, when we consider how frequently a nasal disappears before a spirant throughout the Upper German. Staub, in Frommann, die d. Ma., VII, 31, lays down the