A BRIEF WORD ON THE LANGUAGE OF MY YOUTH

It is a strange and difficult thing to describe a language one spoke in one's youth, particularly when so very much time has passed since any other person has spoken it. My memories of such things are somewhat fuzzy at best, the act of recollection often becoming an exercise in frustration. At times I am able to speak this old tongue without thinking, while most of the time I can remember barely a word.

In the summer of 1979 or 1980 or so I happened to find myself in the lovely city of Madison, Wisconsin, and chanced one fine Saturday evening to meet a graduate student of the university there who introduced me to the joys of Wisconsin's own unique Point Special beer, of which we both drank shamefully excessive quantities. As it happened, he was also a student of linguistics, and some two years ago, near the beginning of this strange compilation of my life's path so far, I happened upon him again through that mystical and wonderful black magic known as "The Internet." Although he is now, of all things, a Presbyterian minister, he was kind enough after reading early drafts of this memoir to help me to compile, to the best of my recollection, the spoken language of the peoples I first lived amongst in northern Europe some thirty-five hundred years ago.

My recollections are without doubt imperfect, yet his careful linguistic skills and endlessly patient questions have helped us to construct this rough and rudimentary reference to the early language that I remember and occasionally, if only on a visceral level, find myself speaking.

I have no memory of a mother or father, yet in an odd sort of way I find reading this reference almost akin to looking at old photographs of my parents. The memories it evokes are among my very first. They are often surprising, and with rare exception are quite precious to me. My thanks to Reverend Paul Burgess, whose kindness in this exercise I can likely never repay. —ZM

agran (neuter noun, a- stem), fruit.

agranlauz (adjective), fruitless, barren.

agwiz (feminine noun, wi- stem), axe.

ailaz (masculine noun, a- stem), fire.

alguz (masculine noun, u- stem), elk.

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alnaz (adjective), all.
ana (preposition), on or upon (modifying dative case), on or at (modifying
    accusative case).
andhjō (feminine noun, jō- stem), end.
ansuz (masculine noun, u- stem), breath, spirit.
askaz (masculine noun, a- stem), ash (as in tree).
aukwaz (masculine noun, wa- stem), eye. (Nominative plural is aukwōz;
    however, the old nominative dual, augge, is sometimes heard.)
bharnan (neuter noun, a- stem), child.
bheraz (adjective), brown.
bheraz (masculine noun, a- stem), bear.
bhidhanam (verb), bite.
bhlaenghraz (adjective), dark, dark blue, blue-black, raven-colored.
bhlaewaz (adjective), blue.
bhlakaz (adjective), black.
bhlisjaz (masculine noun, ja- stem), joy.
bhrator (masculine noun, r- stem), brother. (Irregular nominative singular
    bhrator, instead of *bhrater.)
bhrekanam (verb), break.
bhughiz (masculine noun, i- stem), bow.
darriz (masculine noun, i- stem), throwing spear.
de (preposition), to (modifying accusative case).
deranam (verb), peel, flay, split or split away, tear or tear off.
dewalaz (masculine noun, a- stem), godling. (Vocative singular is regular,
    dewale).
dewaz (masculine noun, a- stem), god. (Defective vocative singular dewaz,
    identical to nominative singular, instead of expected *dewe; cf. in Latin
    Agnus Dei with agnus as vocative instead of *agne.)
dewazen (collective neuter noun, e- stem), gods or pantheon. (As in the
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exclamation dewazen!, gods!

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dewō (feminine noun, ō- stem), goddess.
dhaghaz (masculine noun, a- stem), day. (Old instrumental plural, dhaghami,
    survives as a set form with distributive meaning, day by day.)
dhaghriz (masculine noun, i- stem), tear, teardrop.
dhautuz (masculine noun, u- stem), death.
dheubhaz (adjective), deep.
dhugeter (feminine noun, r- stem), daughter. (Genitive singular dhugtraz,
    etc. Indo-European schwa in stem dhuget- disappears except in nominative
    singular & vocative singular.)
elaz (adjective), red or brown, in the coloring of animals or plants.
elaz (masculine noun, a- stem), eel. (Tim the Soldier, beware! ;-)
en (conjunction), and.
ertō (feminine noun, ō- stem), earth.
erzanam (verb), deceive, mislead.
galojanam (verb), call.
gerbhanam (verb), carve, engrave, write.
geusanam (verb), taste.
ghaisaz (masculine noun, a- stem), dart, spear.
ghastiz (masculine noun, i- stem), quest.
ghelaz (adjective), yellow.
ghernjanam (verb), long for (governs the accusative case).
ghibhanam (verb), give.
ghizlan (neuter noun, a- stem), hostage.
ghreaz (adjective), green.
ghweraz (adjective), wild, fierce.
gūdhilaz (masculine noun, a- stem), testicle. (Nominative plural is gūdhilōz,
    though nominative dual gūdhilage survives in common use, cf. English
    ballocks; oblique cases in the dual number affix plural endings to -ag-:
    genitive gūdhilagon, dative gūdhilagmez, accusative gūdhilagans.)
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gunnanam (verb), know (in the sense of know how or be acquainted with).
gwemanam (verb), come.
gwenō (feminine noun, ō- stem), woman.
gweraz (masculine noun, a- stem), throat.
gwuntjō (feminine noun, jō- stem), battle.
handuz (masculine noun, u- stem), hand.
hantjanam (verb), hunt.
hantjārijaz (masculine noun, ja- stem), hunter.
hantjārijō (feminine noun, jō- stem), huntress.
hapraz (masculine noun, a- stem), goat.
haprō (feminine noun, ō- stem), she-goat.
hardaz (adjective), hard, tough, stout.
helmaz (masculine noun, a- stem), helmet.
in (preposition), into or down (modifying accusative case); in (modifying
    dative case).
juwuntaz (adjective), young.
juwuntiz (masculine noun, i- stem), youth.
kabhanam (verb), have.
katiz (masculine noun, i- stem), malice.
ken (adverb), here.
kwat (adverb), what.
kweitaz (adjective), white.
kwi (adverb), why.
laikanam (verb), play.
leithanam (verb), lead.
leudhaz (adjective), little.
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leuktan (neuter noun, a- stem), light, as in brightness. (leuktan dhagheso,
    daylight. leuktan suelois, sunlight. leuktan mananun, moonlight.)
leuktanam (verb), light, shine, illuminate. (leuktidhi, it shines.)
līkaz (adjective), like, similar.
manē (masculine noun, an- stem), moon.
manwaz (masculine noun, wa- stem), man.
mater (feminine noun, r- stem), mother.
materlauz (adjective), motherless.
med (preposition), with (modifying dative case); after (modifying accusative
    case).
ni (adverb), not. Ni ūtan, nothing but or mere(ly).
orjan (neuter noun, ja- stem), slave, outsider.
par (preposition), from, through, or by (modifying genitive case).
pater (masculine noun, r- stem), father.
paurktjō (feminine noun, jō- stem), fear.
peduz (feminine noun, u- stem), foot.
peuganam (verb), fuck.
plaikhanam (verb), embrace, hug.
plato (feminine noun, ō- stem), place, level ground.
plekhaz (masculine noun, a- stem), caress, touch.
prijandaz (masculine noun, a- stem), friend.
prijaz (adjective), free.
prumaz (masculine noun, a- stem), start, beginning.
pullaz (adjective), full.
raudhaz (adjective), red. (A redheaded wench might be referred to as Raudhō,
     "Red.")
reistaz (adjective), straight, tall.
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reubanam (verb), snatch.
reugan (neuter noun, a- stem), smoke.
rigethō (feminine noun, ō- stem), dominion, domain, sphere of divine
    influence or divine possession.
rigganam (verb), bind.
rūnō (feminine noun, ō- stem), secret, whisper.
saiwalō (feminine noun, ō- stem), soul.
saiwaz (masculine noun, wa- stem), sea.
salbhaz (masculine noun, a- stem), ointment.
sauthan (neuter noun, a- stem), hollow, grave.
skandhō (feminine noun, ō- stem), shame.
skarbaz (adjective), sharp.
skeidanam (verb), shit.
skeldhuz (masculine noun, u- stem), shield.
skeubhanam (verb), push, shove.
skeudanam (verb), shoot, throw.
skeudārijaz (masculine noun, ja- stem), shooter, thrower.
skeudaz (masculine noun, a- stem), shot.
skeudilaz (masculine noun, a- stem), dart, missile. (Cf. English
    shuttlecock.)
slekanam (verb), strike, smite, kill.
sloghiz (adjective), sly.
snaigwaz (masculine noun, wa- stem), snow.
starraz (masculine noun, a- stem), starling.
stodhanam (verb), stand.
strankaz (adjective), strong.
sturkaz (masculine noun, a- stem), stork.
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sueliz (feminine noun, i- stem), sun.
suerdhan (neuter noun, a- stem), sword.
suerdhanam (verb), cut, pierce.
suester (feminine noun, r- stem), sister.
sunuz (masculine noun, u- stem), son.
ūtan (conjunction), but. Ni ūtan, nothing but or mere(ly).
weljanam (verb), will or shall. Auxilliary verb indicating future tense or
    intention (sueliz weljidhi leuktanam, the sun will shine).
werdhanam (verb), become. Copulative verb, governing the nominative case
     (Slodhe werdhidhi pater, Slodhe becomes a father- and not *Slodhe
    werdhidhi patarun).
wittaz (masculine noun, a- stem), knowledge, knowing, wisdom.
wudhrō (preposition), against (modifying accusative case).
wudhrostodhanam (verb), resist, withstand.
wulkwaz (masculine noun, wa- stem), wolf.
wulthuz (masculine noun, u- stem), glory.
wurdhaz (masculine noun, a- stem), fate.
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NAMES

These names will generally be inflected like the noun stem class to which they belong. The name as we would give it in English is placed first; in parentheses follows the original, as best we can reconstruct it.

Male Names

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Atli (Zsallic Atliz).

Att (Zsallic Attuz).

Atto (Zsallic Attaz).

Bhar (Zsallic Bharaz).
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Bhott (Zsallic Bhottuz).
Bhrodhi (Zsallic Bhrodhiz).
Eidh (Zsallic Eidhaz).
Ghrani (Zsallic Ghraniz).
Gwuli (Zsallic Gwuliz).
Hadh (Zsallic Hadhaz).
Haki (Zsallic Hakiz).
Hordh (Zsallic Hordhaz).
Mann (Zsallic Manniz).
Orm (Zsallic Ormaz).
Orn (Zsallic Ornaz).
Ozur (Zsallic Ozure).
Ragh (Zsallic Raghaz).
Reinn (Zsallic Reinniz).
Reuk (Zsallic Reukuz).
Skap (Zsallic Skapaz).
Skardh (Zsallic Skardhaz).
Skegh (Zsallic Skeghiz).
Slodhe (Zsallic Slodhe).
Thordh (Zsallic Thordhaz).
Thrain (Zsallic Thrainaz).
Throst (Zsallic Throsthaz).
Toki (Zsallic Tokiz).
Tolo (Zsallic Tolaz).
Unn (Zsallic Unniz).
Wulth (Zsallic Wulthuz, meaning glory.)
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Female Names

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Asdhis (Zsallic Asdhiz).
Asta (Zsallic Astō).
Audh (Zsallic Audhuz).
Bhera (Zsallic Bherō, meaning brown-eyed or brown-haired).
Bhigdhis (Zsallic Bhigdhiz).
Bholla (Zsallic Bhollō).
Dhalla (Zsallic Dhallō).
Dhotta (Zsallic Dhottō).
Ghinna (Zsallic Ghinnō).
Ghroa (Zsallic Ghrowō).
Ghulla (Zsallic Ghullō).
Halla (Zsallic Hallō).
Halldhis (Zsallic Halldhiz).
Herdhis (Zsallic Herdhiz).
Hildh (Zsallic Hildhuz).
Inghun (Zsallic Inghunuz).
Inghwa (Zsallic Inghwō).
Melka (Zsallic Melkō).
Oghn (Zsallic Oghnuz).
Osk (Zsallic Oskuz).
Raudhō (Zsallic Raudhō- meaning redheaded).
Runa (Zsallic Runō).
Saenna (Zsallic Saennuz).
Skur (Zsallic Skuruz).
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Thora (Zsallic Thorō).

Thordhis (Zsallic Thordhiz).

Tobha (Zsallic Tobhō).

Tonna (Zsallic Tonnō).

Unna (Zsallic Unnō).

Utha (Zsallic Uthō).
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Dog Names

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Ho (Zsallic Howō).
Hobh (Zsallic Hobhuz).
Irsa (Zsallic Irsan).
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Names of Tribes

Bhlaenghrōz, meaning the dark ones, as in dark blue, blue-black, raven-colored.

Ghwerōz, meaning the wild ones or the fierce ones.

Darrihardoz, meaning the spear-hardy, or the "spearchuckers."

Reistōz, meaning the straight ones, the tall ones- "those who stand tall."

Skeldhubherōz, meaning the shield bears.

Starrōz, meaning the starlings. (As nasty a bird as I've ever met!)

Names of Gods

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Wodhanaz, cf. Odin.
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Frijjō, cf. Frigg.

Ingwaz, cf. Frey.

Fraujō, cf. Freya.

Thonaraz, cf. Thor.

Tiwaz, cf. Týr.

Nerthō, a mother earth goddess.

Austrō, sun goddess.

Loghaz, mad demon trickster, half-brother to Wodhanaz

Noun Declensions

Masculine a- stems

dhaghaz, "day"

Singular Plural

Nominative dhaghaz dhaghōz

Genitive dhagheso dhaghōn

Dative dhaghoi dhaghomez

Accusative dhaghan dhaghans

Vocative dhaghe

Neuter a- stems

ghizlan, "hostage"

Singular Plural

Nominative, Accusative ghizlan ghizlō

Genitive ghizleso ghizlōn

Dative ghizloi ghizlomez

Neuter ja- stems

orjan, "slave"or "outsider"

Singular	Plural

Nominative, Accusative orjan orjō

Genitive orjeso orjon

Dative orje orjomez

Masculine u- stems

sunuz, "son"

Singular Plural

Nominative sunuz suniwiz

Genitive sunaus suniwōn

Dative sunju sunumez

Accusative sunun sununs

Vocative sunau

Feminine $\bar{o}-$ stems

haprō, "she-goat"

Singular Plural

Nominative haprō haprōz

Genitive haprōz haprōn

Dative haprō haprōmez

Accusative hapron haproz

Masculine i- stems

juwentiz, "youth"

Singular Plural

Nominative juwentiz juwentīz

Genitive juwentois juwentijōn

Dative juwentī juwentimez

Accusative juwentin juwentinz

Vocative juwenti

Feminine i- stems

sueliz, "sun"

Singular Plural

Nominative sueliz sueliz

Genitive suelois suelijōn

Dative sueli suelimez

Accusative suelin suelinz

Neuter e- stems

dewazen, "gods" (collective)

Singular Plural

Nominative, Accusative dewazen dewazō

Genitive dewazeso dewazōn

Dative dewazei dewazemez

Masculine an- stems

manē, "moon"

Singular Plural

Nominative manē mananiz

Genitive mananun mananōn

Dative mananun manomez

Accusative mananun mananuns

Masculine and Feminine r- stems

pater, "father"

Singular Plural

Nominative pater patariz

Genitive patraz patron

Dative patri patrumez

Accusative patarun patrunz

Vocative patar

mater, "mother"

Singular Plural

Nominative mater matariz

Genitive matraz matron

Dative matri matrumez

Accusative matarun matrunz

Vocative matar

bhrator, "brother"

Singular Plural

Nominative bhrator bhratariz

Genitive bhratraz bhratrōn

Dative bhratri bhratrumez

Accusative bhratarun bhratrunz

Vocative bhratar

suester, "sister"

Singular Plural

Nominative suester suesteriz

Genitive suestraz suestron

Dative suestri suestrumez

Accusative suestrunz

Vocative suestar

dhugeter, "daughter"

Singular Plural

Nominative dhugtariz

Genitive dhugtraz dhugtrōn

Dative dhugtri dhugtrumez

Accusative dhugtarun dhugtrunz

Vocative dhugetar

Verb Conjugation

slekanam, to strike, smite, kill

Present Active Indicative

Singular Dual Plural

First Person slekō, slekōwiz slekamez,

I smite we two smite we smite

Second Person slekisi, slekadhez, slekidhe,

you smite you two smite you smite

Third Person slekidhi slekandhi

he smites they smite

Preterite Active Indicative

Singular Dual Plural

First Person sleka slekwi slekumi

I was smiting, etc...

Second Person slekthaslekdhiz slekudhe

you were smiting, etc...

Third Person sleki slekun

he was smiting, etc...

Infinitive

slekanam,

to smite

Imperative

Singular sleke, smite thou!

Plural slekedho, smite ye!

Active Present Participle

slekendh, smiting

Singular Plural

Nominative slekendh slekendhiz

Genitive slekendheso slekendhōn

Dative slekendhō slekendhmez

Accusative slekendhan slekendhans

Passive Present Participle

slekanaz, being smitten

Singular Plural

Nominative slekanaz slekanōz

Genitive slekaneso slekanōn

Dative slekanō slekanomez

Accusative slekanan slekanans

Adjectives

strankaz, strong

Masculine

Singular Plural

Nominative strankaz strankōz

Genitive strankeso strankaizōn

Dative strankom strankomez

Accusative strankan strankans

Vocative stranke

Feminine

Singular Plural

Nominative strankō strankōz

Genitive strankōz strankaizōn

Dative stranki strankomez

Accusative strankōn strankōz

Neuter

Singular Plural

Nominative strankan strankō

Genitive strankeso strankaizōn

Dative strankom strankomez

Accusative strankan strankō

Comparative Superlative

strankiraz, stronger. strankistaz, strongest.