

PREASPIRATION OR PREGLOTTALIZATION?

by Frederik Kortlandt — Leiden

In an earlier study (1988) I argued that we have to reconstruct preglottalized stops for Proto-Germanic on the basis of the following reflexes:

(1) Preaspiration in Icelandic, e.g. in *epli* 'apple', *opna* 'open', *vatn* 'water', *batna* 'improve', *mikla* 'increase', *teikn* 'token', *verpa* 'throw', *elta* 'pursue', *verk* 'work'. These examples show that the preaspirated stops do not reflect clusters but directly represent the voiceless plosives of Proto-Germanic. Since the same reflexes are found in the Norwegian dialect of Jæren (cf. Oftedal 1947), preaspiration is an inherited feature in these words.

(2) Preglottalization in the western dialects of Danish: the so-called *vestjysk stød* (cf. Ringgaard 1960). The classic view that it represents "en ljudaffektion, som inträtt vid tenues i vissa ställningar" (Kock 1891: 368fn.) does not explain the rise of the glottal stop.

(3) Gemination in Swedish, e.g. in *vecka* 'week', *droppe* 'drop', *skepp* 'ship', cf. ON. *vika*, *dropi*, *skip*, OE. *wice*, *dropa*, *scip*, Finnish *viikko*. This gemination is unexplained.

(4) Assimilation of *mp*, *nt*, *nk* to *pp*, *tt*, *kk* in the larger part of Scandinavia. The nasal consonant was apparently devoiced by the preaspiration of the following plosive and then lost its nasal feature.

(5) Gemination of *k* before *j* and *w*, e.g. ON. *lykkja* 'coil', *bekkr* 'brook', *nqkkvi* 'boat', *røkk* 'dark'. Similarly, gemination of *t* before *j* in a limited area, e.g. Swedish *sätta* 'set'. (West Germanic geminated all consonants except *r* before *j* and is therefore inconclusive.)

(6) Gemination of *p*, *t*, *k* before *r* and *l* in West Germanic. The same development is found sporadically in Scandinavia; this suggests that we have to do with the loss of an archaic feature (such as preaspiration) rather than with an innovation. In Icelandic, preaspiration is lost before *r* and preserved before *l* (cf. Haugen 1941: 101).

(7) Standard English inserts a glottal stop before a tautosyllabic voiceless plosive, e.g. *lea'p*, *hel'p* (Brown 1977: 27). There is no reason to assume that this is a recent phenomenon (see now Kortlandt 1997).

(8) The High German sound shift yielded affricates and geminated fricatives, e.g. OHG. *pfad* 'path', *werpfan* 'throw', *zunga* 'tongue', *salz*

'salt', *kind*, *chind* 'child', *trinkan*, *trinchan* 'drink', *offan* 'open', *wazzar* 'water', *zeihhan* 'token'. These reflexes suggest a complex articulation for the Proto-Germanic voiceless plosives from which they developed. In the traditional theory, the origin of the gemination is unexplained (but see now Kortlandt 1996). Note that the High German sound shift has a perfect analogue in the English dialect of Liverpool, where we find e.g. *kx* in *can't*, *back* (Hughes & Trudgill 1987: 66).

The reconstruction of glottalization for Proto-Germanic has recently been challenged by Goblirsch, who claims that this feature "has not been directly attested in Germanic" (1999: 117), disregarding the vest-jysk *stød* and the English glottal stop which I have adduced as direct evidence. He claims that the "main argument in favor of the glottalic theory is a typological one" (1999: 118), disregarding both the comparative evidence which I have adduced in the course of the last 25 years (see especially Kortlandt 1985) and the argumentation against the use of typological considerations in linguistic reconstruction (cf. Kortlandt 1995). It is simply not true that "there is a nearly complete lack of direct evidence in Germanic and the other branches of Indo-European" (Goblirsch 1999: 119). What can I do but refer to my earlier publications?

Goblirsch returns to the traditional reconstruction of voiced rather than glottalized stops for Proto-Indo-European and posits "spirants, phonologically undifferentiated as to voice" for the traditional Indo-European voiced aspirates (1999: 120), disregarding the comparative evidence from Germanic (cf. Kortlandt 1988) and other languages and assuming independent rise of occlusion in Celtic, Germanic, Baltic, Slavic, Greek, Iranian, Albanian, Armenian, and Indic (1999: 121). He claims that his reconstruction is "the simplest system possible. There is every advantage to a simple protosystem" (1999: 122) and thereby unwittingly offers a perfect exemplification of the thesis that "the negative potential of aprioristic considerations must not be underestimated. Since theory can easily embody the reflection of rationalized prejudice, it is important that comparative work be carried out inductively" (Kortlandt 1995: 97).

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the Germanic languages in comparison with their Romance and Slavic neighbors is the incomplete voicing in the obstruents. This feature is most striking in the peripheral dialects, especially in Icelandic and Upper German, but also in Danish. I find it very difficult to assume that these dialects have innovated and that the Proto-Germanic system resembled that of Spanish or Greek more than that of the attested Germanic languages.

If we take the evidence of the peripheral dialects at face value, we must reconstruct a series of voiceless fricatives, a series of unaspirated voiceless plosives, and a series of voiceless obstruents with a complex articulation which is reflected as (pre)aspiration in the north and (af)frication in the south. The latter series remained distinct from the original geminates (cf. especially Petersen et al. 1998: 27 on Faroese, Kortlandt 1997: 177 on northern English, and Kortlandt 1996: 56 on southern German). Thus, I think that the alleged strengthening of initial obstruents in North Bavarian *prōəd* 'breit', *tum* 'dumm', *tōx* 'Tag', *kēm* 'geben' and Middle Bavarian *pām* 'Baum', *taitš* 'deutsch', *tō* 'Tag', *krāw* 'grau' (cf. Goblirsch 1994: 33) in fact reflects an archaism. The West Germanic gemination of consonants before **j* gave rise to a sixfold distinction in the obstruents without introducing voicing as a distinctive feature (cf. Kortlandt 1996: 55).

The question now is: what was the feature which is reflected as preaspiration in Icelandic, preglottalization in the western dialects of Danish, gemination in Swedish *veck*, *droppe*, *skepp*, assimilation of *mp*, *nt*, *nk* to *pp*, *tt*, *kk* in the larger part of Scandinavia, gemination of *k* in ON. *bekkr*, *røkk* and of *t* in Swedish *sätta*, gemination of *p*, *t*, *k* before *r* and *l* in West Germanic and sporadically in Scandinavia, preglottalization before a tautosyllabic voiceless plosive in English, and affrication in High German and in the English dialect of Liverpool? It cannot have been gemination, which remained a separate distinctive feature, e.g. in North Tyrol (Imst) *prukkə* 'Brücke', *lqxxə* 'lachen', *deŋkkə* 'denken' (cf. Goblirsch 1994: 35). But it must have been a feature that could easily give rise to gemination under various conditions in the separate languages. As the phonetic difference between gemination and preglottalization is small, it can easily have been the latter, which may have been preserved in English and western Danish and by lenition have developed into preaspiration in West Scandinavian. Thus, I reconstruct for Proto-Germanic the preglottalization which is actually attested in standard British English and which offers by far the simplest explanation for the reflexes in the other Germanic languages. Note that this reconstruction of Proto-Germanic glottalization is wholly independent of any theories one may have on its Indo-European origins.

In a recent article (1997), Page argues that preaspiration was present in the Common Scandinavian period and that the vestjysk *stød* developed from this preaspiration (thus already Pedersen 1912: 42). This view was already rejected by Jespersen, who called it an example of "papirfonetik" (1913: 24). Ringgaard agrees with Jespersen and re-

gards the vestjysk stød as a spontaneous innovation of the westernmost dialects of Danish (1960: 108). This does not explain the origin of the glottalization and dissociates it from the same phenomenon in English and from the rise of preaspiration elsewhere in Scandinavia. Page suggests that in comparison with the Scandinavian dialects with preaspiration, "dialects with stød are more centrally located, a pattern associated with innovations" (1997: 185). On the contrary, I would maintain that the vestjysk dialects are peripheral in relation to other varieties of Danish, which in their turn were peripheral to the dialects of Norway and Sweden at the time of the Viking expeditions. It therefore seems much more probable to me that preglottalization is ancient in Germanic and that the West Scandinavian preaspiration developed from it by lenition.

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