

Comparative Philology Seminar Series HT23 Old High German & Old Saxon

Session 2: Nominal Morphology, Tuesday 31st January 2023

Part I: An Overview of Nominal Morphology

1. Introduction

The Lord's Prayer (*Hêliand* 1600-1612; *Tatian* 34, 6; *Freisinger Paternoster*)

Key: **Different** Identical

<i>Hêliand</i> (M) (Old Saxon)	<i>Tatian</i> (East Franconian) ¹	<i>Freisinger Paternoster</i> (Bavarian) ²
Fadar [...] ûsa [...]	Fater unser	Fater unsēr,
<u>thu</u> <u>bist</u> an [...] <u>himila</u> [...]	thū thār bist in himile	dū pist in himilum,
geuuîhid <u>sî</u> <u>thîn</u> <u>namo</u> [...].	sī giheilagōt thîn namo	kauuîhit sī namo dīn.
Cuma <u>thîn</u> [...] rîki .	queme thîn rihhi	piqueme rīhhi dīn.
<u>Uerða</u> <u>thîn</u> <u>uulleo</u> [...],	si thîn uullo	uuesa dīn uullo,
<u>sô</u> [...] an <u>erdo</u> , <u>sô</u> [<i>thar uppa</i>] <u>ist</u>	sō her in himile ist, sō sī her in erdu	sama sō in himile est, sama in erdu.

Latin version (*Freisinger Paternoster*):

Pater noster qui es in celis, sanctificetur nomen tuum, adveniat regnum tuum, fiat voluntas *tua sicut in caelo et in terra.*

2. A Comparison of OHG and OS Nominal Morphology

Noun classes

Table 1: Noun declensions and modern descendants

noun class	stem type	declension	PIE shape ³	Gmc.	OHG	OS	NHG	English
<i>thematic</i>	<i>vowel</i>	<i>masc. a</i>	<i>-o</i>	*dag-a-	tag	dag	<i>Tag</i>	day
		<i>masc. ja</i>	<i>-jo</i>	*herd-ja-	hirti	hirdi	<i>Hirte</i>	herder
		<i>masc. wa</i>	<i>-wo</i>	*saiw-a-	sēo	sêo	<i>See</i>	sea
		<i>masc. i</i>	<i>-i</i>	*gast-i-	gast	gast	<i>Gast</i>	guest
		<i>masc. u</i>	<i>-u</i>	*sed-u-	situ	sidu	<i>Sitte (fem.)</i>	custom
		<i>neut. a</i>	<i>-o</i>	*word-a-	wort	word	<i>Wort</i>	word

¹ Edition: Braune and Heidermanns (2018: 56).

² Ibid

³ Adapted from Salmons (2018: 70) and Ringe (2017: 221).

	<i>neut. ja</i>	<i>-jo</i>	<i>*kun-ja-</i>	kunni	kunni	<i>‘Geschlecht’</i>	<i>‘gender’</i>
	<i>neut. wa</i>	<i>-wo</i>	<i>*knew-a-</i>	knēo	knio	<i>Knie</i>	knee
	<i>neut. u</i>	<i>-u</i>	<i>*feh-u-</i>	fihu	fehu	<i>Vieh</i>	<i>‘fee’</i>
	<i>fem. ō</i>	<i>-ā</i>	<i>*gib-ō-</i>	geba	gebu	<i>Gabe</i>	gift
	<i>fem. jō</i>	<i>-jā</i>	<i>*sund-jō-</i>	sunt(e)a	sundia	<i>Sünde</i>	sin
	<i>fem. i</i>	<i>-i</i>	<i>*kraft-i-</i>	kraft	kraft	<i>Kraft</i>	power
	<i>fem. u</i>	<i>-u</i>	<i>*hand-u</i>	hant	hand	<i>Hand</i>	hand
<i>consonant</i>	<i>neut. az-/iz</i>	<i>-s</i>	<i>*lamb-az- /iz-</i>	lamb	-	<i>Lamm</i>	lamb
	<i>masc. an</i>	<i>-n</i>	<i>*han-an-</i>	hano	hano	<i>Hahn</i>	chicken
	<i>fem. ōn</i>		<i>*tung-ōn-</i>	zunga	tunga	<i>Zunge</i>	tongue
	<i>fem. īn</i>		<i>*hauh-īn-</i>	hōhī(n)	hōhi	<i>Höhe</i>	height
	<i>neut. an</i>	<i>-n</i>	<i>*hert-an-</i>	herza	herta	<i>Herz</i>	heart
<i>kinship terms</i>	<i>ter</i>	<i>-r</i>	<i>*brō-þer- *mō-der-</i>	bruoder muoter	brôthar môdar	<i>Bruder Mutter</i>	brother mother
<i>athematic</i>	<i>masc.</i>		<i>*mann-</i>	man	man	<i>Man</i>	man
	<i>fem.</i>		<i>*naht-</i>	naht	naht	<i>Nacht</i>	night
<i>participial</i>	<i>masc.</i>		<i>*frijōnd-</i>	friunt	friund	<i>Freund</i>	friend

There was a restructuring of noun types from PIE to Gmc according to their type of stem. This leads to a terminological standardisation of the noun classes in the Germanic languages (e.g. *a*-stem, *ō*-stem), although, in most instances, the labelling is obscure, as further sound changes, which took place before surviving textual evidence, have caused the defining class elements to be lost or changed.

There is more variation in nouns classes in OHG than persists in NHG (where nouns are divided between weak/strong).

Table 2: Case, number, gender (adapted from Salmons (2018: 69))

	PIE	Gmc.	OHG/OS	NHG
Case	8/9	6	5/6	4
Number	3	3	2/3	2
Gender	3	3	3	3

There is a gradual reduction in case and number values over time from PIE to the modern day, although NHG retains a three-part gender system. There are several case mergers; for example, in Gmc, the dative takes on the functions of the PIE ablative, dative, and locative Fulk (2018: 143). Over the OHG/OS periods, there is a traceable reduction of the instrumental case, the functions of which are taken over by the dative (and prepositions).

Table 3: Canonical case endings

		OHG	OS
sing.	nom.	-∅	-∅
	acc.	-∅	-∅
	gen.	-es	-es
	dat.	-e	-e
	ins.	-o/-u	-o/-u

pl.	nom.	-ø/-a	-ø/-os
	acc.	-ø/-a	-ø/-os
	gen.	-o/-ōno	-o/-ōno
	dat.	-m/-n	-m/-n

Broadly speaking, these are the suffixes that will most frequently mark the different cases, although this applies just to strong nouns and, even then, there is considerable variation.

Further reading: Ringe (2017), Bammesberger (1990), Salmons (2018), Fulk (2018), Bergmann et al. (2016).

Vocalic stems

Caveat: these normalised paradigms represent the composite knowledge of various handbooks and are snapshots of patterns, but not indicative of the forms that will be found in any one dialect or text. One of the difficulties of OHG/OS studies is how ‘different’ one form of a language variety can look from one time and one text to the next. Where possible, East Franconian—the dialect of the OHG *Tatian*—forms of OHG are used, alongside some common alternants.

These paradigms are based on those found in Braune and Heidermanns (2018), Gallée et al. (1993), Cathey (2002) and Holthausen (1921).

***a*-stems**

		Gmc⁴	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
<i>a</i>-stem		Germanic *<i>daga</i>- ‘Tag’		neut	Germanic *<i>hrussa</i>- ‘Ross’/‘horse’	
masc						
sing.	nom.	*dagaz	tag	dag	hros	hros
	acc.	*dagā	tag	dag	hros	hros
	gen.	*dagas	tages	dages/-as	hrosses	hrosses
	dat.	*dagai	tage	dage/-a	hrosse	hrosse
	inst.	*dagō	tagu/-o	dagu/-o	*hrossu	hrossu
plur.	nom.	*dagōs/-ōz	taga	dagos	hros	hrossu
	acc.	*daganz	taga	dagos	hros	hrossu
	gen.	*dagō	tago	dago	hrosso	hrosso
	dat.	*dagamaz	tagum/-un	dagon/-un	*hrossum/-un	hrossun
				OHG	OS	
<i>a</i>-stem		Germanic *<i>worda</i>- ‘Wort’		neut		
neut						
			nom.	wort	word	
			acc.	wort	word	
			gen.	wortes	wordes	
			dat.	worte	worde	
			inst.	wortu	wordu	
			nom.	wort	word	
			acc.	wort	word	
			gen.	worto	wordo	
			dat.	wortum/-un	wordun	

⁴ Based on Ringe (2017), Salmons (2018) and Fulk (2018).

NB: The reconstructed Gmc forms are provided here to show the genesis of the canonical inflectional endings. They will not be provided for other paradigms.

The a-stems are emblematic of the canonical OHG/OS inflectional endings. Some elements of PIE morphology persist, such as the instrumental *-ō* ending in Gmc. which reduces to *-o/-u* by OHG/OS.

a-stems are the most numerous noun class and can be masculine or neuter. Most OHG masculine nouns belong to this class, including those ending in *-il* (e.g. *himil*, *sluzzi*) and *-ing* (e.g. *kuning*). Common neuters of this class end in *-sal*, as well as the diminutives *-īn/-līn*.

The only morphological difference between OHG/OS is in the masc nom/acc pl: OHG has *-a*, whilst OS (and OE) have *-as* suffix. One theory (amongst many) espoused in Fulk (2018: 147): PIE **-ō-es* > PIE **-ōs* > PGmc. **-ōz/*-ōs*, variants which arose out of the effects of Verner's Law (*/s/ > /z/*). Endings were generalised in respective languages: OS (**-ōs*) (but OHG merges nom pl with accusative (*-a*)). Final *-z* drops in WGmc and there is a levelling process with the accusative in both language varieties. This theory is not without controversy, as it requires an unequal levelling of VL throughout the paradigm (Ringe, 2017: 300). Other theories reconstruct a dimorphemic and disyllabic PGmc. **-ōsiz* to get around the VL levelling issue, although this is controversial due to the absence of any other disyllabic suffixes across Gmc.

The declension of OS *a*-stems varies depending on stem length. A long stem in the Germanic languages consists of VCC, VV(C), or V:(C). Conversely, a short stem has one or no consonant after the stem vowel (Cathey, 2002: 270).

OS neut nom/acc pl endings vary depending on root syllable weight. Light syllables have *-u*, heavy syllables *ø*. PIE **-ā* > PGmc. **-ō* > Goth. *-a*, NWGmc *-u*. The neut nom/acc pl has a *ø*-morpheme plural in OHG through paradigmatic generalisation.

Further reading: Fulk (2018), Ringe (2017).

ja- and *wa-*stems

		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
<i>ja</i> -stem		Germanic <i>*herdja</i> - 'Hirte'		neut	Germanic <i>*rīkja</i> 'Reich'
masc					
sing.	nom.	hirti	hirdi	rīchi	rīki
	acc.	hirti	hirdi	rīchi	rīki
	gen.	hirtes	hirdies/-eas/-es	rīches	rīkies
	dat.	hirt(i)e	hirdie/-ea	rīche	rīki
	inst.	hirt-(i)u/ -o	hirdiu/-ie		
plur.	nom.	hirte, -a	hirdios	rīchi	rīki
	acc.	hirte, -a	hirdios	rīchi	rīki
	gen.	hirt(e)o, -io	hirdio	rīchio	rīkio
	dat.	hirt-im/n, -um/n	hirdiun/-ion	rīchiun	rīkium
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
<i>wa</i> -stem		Germanic <i>*snaiwa</i> - 'Schnee'		neut	Germanic <i>*knewa</i> - 'Knie' & <i>*balwa</i> - 'Verderben'
masc					
sing.	nom.	snēo	snêu/-o	knēo	balu
	acc.	snēo	snêu/-o	knēo	balu
	gen.	snēwes	snêwes	knēwes	baluwes
	dat.	snēwe	snêwe	knêwe	baluwe

		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
plur.	nom.	snēwa	?	knēo	kneo
	acc.	snēwa	?	knēo	kneo
	gen.	snēwo	?	knēwo	?
	dat.	*snēw- um/un/on	?	knēw-um, -un, on	kneohon

ja- and *wa-* stems are a-stem subvariants. Masculine *ja-* stems include nomina agentis in *-āri*, e.g. *fiskāri* and loanwords with the same suffix, e.g. *altāri* ('altar'). The root vowel in *ja-* stems is always an umlauted form if possible, e.g. OHG *hirti* < Gmc. **herdja-* (Jones, 2011).

Evidence for Gmc. /j/ in the *ja-* stems can be seen in the vocalisation at the end of the nom/acc sg: /i/. There is broader retention of vocalised /j/ in OS but also evidence of syncopated forms, as is the (general) norm in OHG, where only relics of /j/ are seen in the occasional form with <e>/<i>. This is the main differentiator from the usual *a-* stem pattern.

Evidence for full paradigms of the *wa-* stems is patchy. There are no attestations of plural *wa-* stems in OS. The *wa-* stems are treated as a separate subclass because the /w/ has important phonological effects (Braune and Heidermanns, 2018: §203): /w/ > /o/ / _#. /w/ is only retained in the oblique cases, where an epenthetic vowel is often added (e.g. *scato*, dat. sg. *scatawe*).

***ō-* stems**

		OHG	OS
<i>ō</i> -stem		Germanic *<i>gebō-</i> 'Gabe'	
fem			
sing.	nom.	geba	geþa
	acc.	geba	geþa
	gen.	gebā/-u/-o	geþa/-e/-u
	dat.	gebu/-o	geþu/-o/-a/-e
plur.	nom.	geba/-ā	geþa
	acc.	geba/-ā	geþa
	gen.	gebōno	geþono
	dat.	gebōm-/n/-on	geþon

All *ō*-stems in OHG/OS are feminine. This class contains several abstract nouns ending in *-unga*, e.g. *manunga* ('Mahnung'/'reminder'), *korunga* ('Körung'/'temptation'), and *-ida*, e.g. *hreinida* ('Reinheit'/'purity').

The nom/acc sg are syncretic, as is the case with *a-* stems. Both OHG and OS see considerable vocalic variation in the gen and dat with reduction over time, such that they also appear syncretic. In general, in OHG/OS, vowels in inflectional endings are unreliably spelled, hence the number of variants in the paradigm.

***jō-* stems**

		OHG	OS
<i>jō</i> -stem		Germanic *<i>sundjō-</i> 'Brücke'	
fem			
sing.	nom.	sunta	sundia
	acc.	sunta	sundia
	gen.	sunta	sundia/-e/-u
	dat.	suntu	sundiu/-o/-a/-e
plur.	nom.	sunta	sundia
	acc.	sunta	sundia

	OHG	OS
gen.	suntōno	sundono
dat.	suntōm/ -ōn	sundon

Unlike the *a-* and *ja-* stems, where the suffix differs in the nom/acc sg, there is little difference between the *ō-* and *jō-* stem paradigms, and are often indistinguishable. Usually only early forms with ⟨i⟩ or ⟨e⟩, or those with Umlaut of the root vowel (e.g. *helliu*) can be identified as such (Jones, 2011). Abstract nouns ending in *-nissa* belong to this class.

*i-*stems

	OHG	OS
<i>i</i> -stem masc	Germanic *leudi- ‘Leute’	
sing. nom.	liut	liudi
acc.	liut	liudi
gen.	liutes	liudes/-ias
dat.	liute	liudi/-e/-ie
inst.	*liutu	liudi/-iu
plur. nom.	liuti	liudi/-ios
acc.	liuti	liudi/-ios
gen.	liutio/-o	liudio
dat.	liutim/-in	liudiun

	OHG (long stem)	OS (long stem)	OHG (short stem)	OS (short stem)
<i>i</i> -stem fem	Germanic *fardi- ‘Fahrt’		Germanic *stadi- ‘Stadt’	
sing. nom.	fart	fard	stat	stedi
acc.	fart	fard	stat	stedi
gen.	ferti	ferdi/-e	steti	stedi/-e
dat.	ferti	ferdi/-e	steti	stedi/-e
ins.	-	-	steteo	-
plur. nom.	ferti	ferdi	steti	stedi
acc.	ferti	ferdi	steti	stedi
gen.	fertio	ferdio	steteo/-io	stedio
dat.	fertim/-in	ferdium/-un	stetim/-in	stedium

There are *i*-stems of all genders, although the number of neuters is very small. These are the parallel development of what becomes the Latin third declensions, for example (e.g. *turris*, *turrim*); whilst the declensions in Latin (and PIE) are the same for masculine and feminine, a gender divergence emerges in Gmc.

Masculine *i*-stems include abstract nouns derived from verbs, such as *scrit* (‘Schritt’) and *wurf* (‘Wurf’) (Jones, 2011). Feminine *i*-stems include all feminine nouns whose nominative singular ends in a consonant. This declension notably includes abstract compounds in *-scaf(t)*, e.g. *lantscaf*, *-heit*, e.g. *tumpheit* (‘Dummheit’), *-t*, e.g. *gift*, *fluht* (ibid). *i*-stem endings same in singular as the *a*-stems, therefore a number of *i*-stems form their plural with *a*-stem endings (although there are not many instances of the converse) (Braune and Heidermanns, 2018: §194.A1).

A key feature of this class is that the etymological /i/ is still visible in the fem dat/gen sg and the plural of all genders. When the root contains /a/, i-umlaut is visible (see fem. *krefiti* above).

An innovation in OHG is that most *i*-stems with a short root syllable no longer have the *-i* suffix, unlike in OS (and OE), e.g. OHG *biz*, *slag* v OS *biti*, *slegi* (Braune 2018: §217-218). This also provides dating evidence for the ordering of umlaut and apocope; apocope must have happened first and the nom and acc are umlautless. The fem gen and dat sg are endless in OHG; in OS, nearly all of the feminine paradigm is syncretic.

A small number of short-root OHG *i*-stems still have *-i* in the nom/acc sg: *hugi*, *mezzi*, *risi*, *quiti*. OS retains the etymological *-i* in short stem nouns of this class.

The instrumental case in the feminine is found in very old OHG texts with a locative function; *steteo* is one example (Braune and Heidermanns, 2018: §218.A3).

***u*-stems**

		OHG	OS			OHG	OS			OHG	OS
<i>u</i>-stem		Germanic *<i>sedu</i>- ‘Sitte’(f)		fem	Germanic *<i>handu</i>- ‘Hand’		neut	Germanic *<i>feh-u</i>- ‘Vieh’			
masc											
sing.	nom.	situ	sidu/-o	hant	hand	fihu	fehu				
	acc.	situ	sidu/-o	hant	hand	fihu	fehu				
	gen.	sites	sidies/-eas	henti	*hendies	fehes	fehes				
	dat.	site	sidie/-e	henti	hendi	fehe	fehe				
	inst.	sitiu/-u		-	-	fihiu	fehu				
plur.	nom.	siti	sidi	henti	hendi	fihu	*fehu				
	acc.	siti	sidi	henti	hendi	fihu	*fehu				
	gen.	siteo/-o	sidio/-o	hento	hando	feho	*feho				
	dat.	sitim/-n	sidun/-iun	hant-um/n, -on	handon	fehun	*fehun				

This is the smallest of the vocalic classes. There are *u*-stems of all genders, although the number of neuters is very small. Most *u*-stems merge with other classes; masculines become *a*-stems, feminines become *i*-stems.

Consonantal stems

***az-/iz*-stems**

		OHG	OS
<i>az/iz</i>-stem		Germanic *<i>lambaz-/iz</i>- ‘Lamm’	
neut			
sing.	nom.	lamb	-
	acc.	lamb	-
	gen.	lambes	-
	dat.	lambe	-
	ins.	lambu, -o	
plur.	nom.	lęmbir	-
	acc.	lęmbir	-
	gen.	lęmbiro	-
	dat.	lęmbirum	-

az-/iz-stems derive from PIE nouns in which the thematic stem suffix was *-es/-os* in both the singular and plural (e.g. Latin *genus*, *generis*). In Gmc, the reflex of these stem suffixes was *az-/iz-* and in OHG *-ir-*. The endings are identical to those of the *a*-stems, with the exception of the *-ir-* in the plural.

This class dies out in OS. Former nouns of this class merge with other strong verb classes (e.g. *lamb* > *a*-stem).

Important morphological effects in the history of German can be traced to this class. The *-ir(-)* infix/suffix triggers umlaut in the stem and the *-ir(-)* is interpreted as a secondary marker of plurality; this pattern spreads to other classes (e.g. neuter *a*-stems) and triggers new plural formations: *feld* > *feldir* (NHG *Felder*); *rad* > *redir* (NHG *Räder*).

n-stems ('weak' nouns)

		OHG	OS			OHG	OS
<i>an</i> -stem		Germanic <i>*budan-</i> 'Bote'				Germanic <i>*hertan-</i> 'Herz'	
masc				neut			
sing.	nom.	bote	bodo	herza	herta		
	acc.	boton	bodon	herza	herta		
	gen.	boten	boden/-an	herzen	herten		
	dat.	boten	boden/-an	herzen	herten		
plur.	nom.	boton	bodon/-un	herzun	hertun		
	acc.	boton	bodon/-un	herzun	hertun		
	gen.	botono	bodono	herzōno	hertono		
	dat.	boton	bodon/-un	herzōn	hertun		

		OHG	OS			OHG	OS
<i>ōn</i> -stem		Germanic <i>*tungōn-</i> 'Zunge'		<i>īn</i> -stem		Germanic <i>*hauhīn-</i> 'Höhe'	
fem				fem			
sing.	nom.	zunga	tunga	hōhī(n)	-		
	acc.	zungūn	tungun	hōhī(n)	-		
	gen.	zungūn	tungun	hōhī(n)	-		
	dat.	zungūn	tungun	hōhī(n)	-		
plur.	nom.	zungūn	tungun	hōhī(n)	-		
	acc.	zungūn	tungun	hōhī(n)	-		
	gen.	zungōno	tungono	hōhīno	-		
	dat.	zungōm	tungun	hōh-īm/n	-		

The *n*-stems are what become the modern German 'weak' nouns (which is also sometimes the term used in OHG/OS literature). Masculines are numerically the most common in OHG/OS. Most of the *an*-/*ōn*-stems are *nomina agentis*; *īn*-stems tend to be deadjectival abstract nouns. OS does not have feminine *īn*-stems, as these merge with feminine *i*-stems.

The weakening of unstressed syllables in MHG makes the paradigms uniform, except for the nom sg. In modern German, only weak masculines remain (apart from the neuter *das Herz, dem Herzen*). Most are recognisable with the *-e* ending (e.g. *der Bote, der Knabe*), others are subject to complete paradigmatic levelling with an *-n* in the singular too (e.g. *der Garten, der Schaden*).

There was a large increase in number of consonantal stems in Gmc, where the nasal was added to existing nominal forms. The motivation for this remains unclear (Ringe, 2017: 221).

er-stems ('kinship' noun)

		OHG	OS			OHG	OS
<i>er</i> -stem		Germanic <i>*brōþer-</i> 'Bruder'		fem		Germanic <i>*swester-</i> 'Schwester'	
masc							
sing.	nom.	bruoder	brōðar	swester	swester		
	acc.	bruoder	brōðar	swester	swester		
	gen.	bruoder(es)	brōðar	swester	swester		

		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
	dat.	bruoder(e)	brôðar	swester	swester
plur.	nom.	bruoder(a)	brôðar	swester	swester
	acc.	bruoder(a)	brôðar	swester	swester
	gen.	bruodero	*brôðaro	swestero	*swestero
	dat.	bruoder-um/n, -on	brôðarun	swester-um/n, -on	swestron

The *er*-stems are a small class of kinship nouns. The other nouns in this class are *fater*, *muoter*, and *tohter*. The gen pl is not attested in any OS kinship term.

In OHG, the masculines exhibit zero inflection throughout their paradigm (except the gen/dat pl), although in later texts they begin to inflect like *a*-stems. Similarly, the feminines begin to inflect like *ō*-stems.

Athematics ('root' nouns)

		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
masc		Germanic *man- 'Mann'		fem	Germanic *naht- 'Nacht'
sing.	nom.	man	man	naht	naht
	acc.	man	man	naht	naht
	gen.	man, mannes	*man, mannes	naht	nahtes
	dat.	man, manne	man, manne	naht	naht
plur.	nom.	man	man	naht	naht
	acc.	man	man	naht	naht
	gen.	manno	manno	nahto	nahto
	dat.	mann-um/m, -om/n	mann-um/m, -om/n	nahtum/n, -on	nahtun/-on

This is a very small class of nouns where the inflectional endings are directly added to the root (with no intervening thematic element). *Man* is the only OHG masculine root noun. Previous class members (e.g. *fuoz*, *zan*) become *i*-stems. The majority of athematics in OHG are feminine (e.g. *turi*, *itis*, *buoh*) which—like the masculines—merge with *i*-stems over time.

Participial stems

		OHG	OS
Germanic *frijōnd- 'Freund'			
sing.	nom.	friunt	friund
	acc.	friunt	friund
	gen.	friuntes	friundes
	dat.	friunte	friunde
plur.	nom.	friunt, -a	friund/-os/-a
	acc.	friunt, -a	friund/-os/-a
	gen.	friunto	friundo
	dat.	friuntum/n, -on	friundun/-on

Two nouns belong to this class, both of which are masculine: *friunt* and *fiant*. These eventually merge with the *a*-stems. The uninflected forms of the nom/acc pl are relics of an old participial declension, which predated the declension of OHG present participles (Jones, 2011). More members of this class are extant in OS than OHG: *hēliand*, *lerand*, *waldand*, *wigand*, etc.

Adjectives

Adjectives inflect in two different ways in OHG and OS: strong or weak. This division should be familiar to speakers of modern German. The weak endings, which concord with those of the *n*-stems, tend to be used after the demonstrative pronoun, and in comparatives and superlatives (although strong endings are sometimes used for the nom and acc sg). The use of strong and weak endings after possessives varies. In most other cases, strong endings (sometimes termed ‘pronominal’ inflection as the endings often concord with the form third person pronouns) are used. For further particulars in OS, see Schuhmann (n.d.: 56).

Strong inflection

		Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
<i>a</i> -stem		OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
sing.	nom.	jung(ē ^r)	iung	jung(iu)	iung	jung(aʒ ⁵)	iung
	acc.	jungan	iungan	junga	iunga	jung(aʒ)	iung
	gen.	junges	iunges/-as	jungera	iungara/-aro	junges	iunges/-as
	dat.	jungemo/-emu	iungemo/-emu	jungeru/-ero	iungaro/-aru	jungemo/-emu	iungemo/-emu
	ins.	jungo/-u	iungu	-	-	jungo/-u	iungu
plur.	nom.	jung(e)	iunge/-a	jung(iu)	iunge/-a	jung(iu)	iung(e)
	acc.	junge	iunge/-a	jungiu	iunge/-a	junge	iung(e)
	gen.	jungero	iungero/-aro	jungero	iungaro/-ero	jungero	iungero/-aro
	dat.	jungēm	iungun/-on	jungēm	iungun/-on	jungēm	iungun/-on

By and large, the inflection patterns match those of the strong noun classes. There are *a*-, *ja*-, *wā*-, *ō*-, *jō*-stem formations, depending on the adjective in question (and historically *i*- and *u*-stems, which are visible in Gothic, but do not survive into OHG/OS).

An innovation in OHG is that there are two forms of strong adjectives: a pronominal inflected form and a shorter nominal inflected form without an ending, shown respectively with and without brackets in the above table. OS only has the shorter forms in the nominative singular. In attributive usage, both forms are equally valid: *jung(ē^r) man*, *jung(iu) magd*, *jung(aʒ) kind*. In predicative setting, the short form is often used (but not always): *der man ist jung(ē^r)*.

Weak inflection

		Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
sing.	nom.	jungo	iungo	junga	iunga	junga	iunga/-e
	acc.	jungon/-un	iungon/-an	jungūn	iungun/-on/-an	junga	iunga/-e
	gen.	jungen/-in	iungen/-an/-on	jungūn	iungun	jungen/-in	iungen/-an/-on
	dat.	jungen/-in	iungen/-an/-on	jungūn	iungun/-on/-an	jungen/-in	iungen/-an/-on

⁵ Note that ⟨ʒ⟩ is standard handbook orthography for the fricative outcome /ʒ/ < Gmc. /t/ of the SCS, particularly at the end of words and sometimes at the start of a word after a long vowel.

		Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
pl.	nom.	jungon/-un	iungon/-an	jungūn	iungon/-an	jungon/-un	iungon/-an
	acc.	jungon/-un	iungon/-an	jungūn	iungon/-an	jungon/-un	iungon/-an
	gen.	jungōno	iungōno	jungōm	iungōno	jungōno	iungōno
	dat.	jungōm/- ōn	iungum/-un	jungōm/- ōn	iungum/-un	jungōm/-ōn	iungum/- un

Weak endings are a Germanic innovation. The endings are predictable based on the declension patterns of the consonantal stems. There are vocalic alternations, but, again, these are highly variable.

Pronouns and determiners

Personal pronouns

	Singular		Dual		Plural	
	OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
1 st person						
nom.	ih	ik/ic	-	wit	wir	wī
acc.	mih	mî, mik	-	unk	uns	ûs, unsik
gen.	mīn	mīn	-	unkero	unsēr	ûser
dat.	mir	mî	-	unk	uns	ûs

	Singular		Dual		Plural	
	OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
2 nd person						
nom.	du	thû	-	git	ir	gî
acc.	dih	thî, thik	-	ink	iuwih	eu
gen.	dīn	thīn	-	inkero	iuwēr	iuwaro
dat.	dir	thî	-	ink	iu	eu, iu

		Singular		Plural	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
3 rd person					
Masc	nom.	er	hê	sie	sia, sie
	acc.	inan	ina	sie	sia, sie
	gen.	sīn	is, es	iro	iro
	dat.	imu/imo	imo/imu	im, in	im
Fem	nom.	siu	siu	siu	sia, sie
	acc.	sia	sia, sie	sie	sia, sie
	gen.	ira (-u, -o)	iru, ira	iro	iro
	dat.	iru (-o)	iru, iro	im, in	im
Neut	nom.	iz	it, et	sio	siu, sia, sie
	acc.	iz	it, et	sie	siu, sia, sie
	gen.	es	is, es	iro	iro
	dat.	imu, imo	imo/imu	im, in	im

OS still has a dual number although this is lost in OHG by the time of the earliest records. There is some evidence from Bavarian MHG of dual pronouns (*ez, enc, enker*), which implies that the dual likely existed in OHG, but went unrecorded (Fulk, 2018: 186). In OS, the dual is sometimes used for the plural, foreshadowing its eventual loss (Fulk, 2018: 185).

The 3rd person gen sg *sīn* is originally the reflexive pronoun; the original gen sg is lost. In the 1st person and 2nd person, OS acc and dat are syncretic.

The nom sg masc pronoun in OS has initial *h-*, which is consistent with the other WGmc languages. By contrast, this pronoun in most OHG dialects is *er*, likely deriving from PGmc **iz* (Fulk, 2018: 192). In WGmc, final **-s* was retained, but **-z* lost, apart from in OHG where it rhotacises (ibid). In Franconian dialects of OHG, the form *her*, with both initial *h-* and final *-r*, is common.

Reflexive pronouns

		Singular	
		OHG	OS
3 rd person			
Masc/ neut	nom.	-	-
	acc.	sih	-
	gen.	sīn	sīn
	dat.	-	-

The reflexive only exists in the acc and gen sg. in OHG, and only in the gen in OS, where the acc has been lost. There is no feminine reflexive pronoun in either language variety. Accusatives are ‘retained’ in OHG unlike OS; the reflexive only exists in the gen in OS.

Possessive pronoun

		Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
nom sg							
sing.	1	mīnēr	mīn	mīniu	mīn	mīnaʒ	mīn
	2	dīner	thīn	dīniu	thīn	dīnaʒ	thīn
	3	sīner	sīn	-	-	sīnaʒ	sīn
dual	1	-	unka	-	unka	-	unka
	2	-	inka	-	inka	-	inka
pl.	1	unserēr	ūsa	unseriu	ūsa	unseraʒ	ūsa
	2	iuwerēr	euwa	iuweriu	euwa	iuweraʒ	euwa
	3	-	-	-	-	-	-

These inflect like strong adjectives. They only exist in the masc and neut in the 3rd person, not the feminine, as the 3rd person form is formed from the reflexive pronoun (which also only exists for masc/neut). There is also no possessive pronoun for any 3rd person plural. The gen of the personal pronouns is used instead (*ira, iro*).

Contracted forms are found in Franconian dialects of OHG, e.g. *unsēr* without intervening *-er-*.

Demonstrative

		Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS

		Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS	OHG	OS
Singular	nom.	der	the, thie (se)	diu	thiu	daʒ	that
	acc.	den	thena, thana	dia	thia	daʒ	that
	gen.	des	thes	dera	thera	des	thes
	dat.	demu/-o	them(u)	deru/-o	theru/-o	demu/-o	them(u)
	ins.	diu	thiu	-	-	diu	thiu
Plural	nom.	dē/die	thea/thia/thie	dio	thea/thia/thie	diu	thiu
	acc.	dē/die	thea/thia/thie	dio	thea/thia/thie	diu	thiu
	gen.	dero	thero/-a	dero	thero/-a	dero	thero/-a
	dat.	dēm/-n	them/then	dēm/-n	them, then	dēm/-n	them, then

The demonstrative paradigms barely differ in OHG/OS, apart from in the usual phonological ways: *th* > *d* and variable final vowels. The masc nom sg form *se* (cf. OE *sē*) appears four times in OS (in the *Hēliand*) (Gallée et al., 1993: 239). Some forms exhibit diphthongisation (*thie*).

Interrogatives

		Masculine/ Feminine		Neuter	
		OHG	OS	OHG	OS
Singular	nom.	wer	hwē, hwie	waʒ	hwat
	acc.	wenan/wen	hwena/-e	waʒ	hwat
	gen.	wes	hwes	wes	hwes
	dat.	wemu/-o	hwem(u)	wemu/-o	hwem(u)
	ins.	-	-	wiu	hwiu

There are no plural interrogatives in OHG/OS. The masculine and feminine are identical which creates an animacy—rather than gender—opposition.

Returning to the Lord's Prayer

Old Saxon (emended)	<i>Tatian</i> (East Franconian) ⁶	<i>Freisinger Paternoster</i> (Bavarian) ⁷
Fadar ūsa	Fater unser	Fater unsēr,
thu bist an himila	thū thār bist in himile	dū pist in himilum,
giuūihid sī thīn namo	sī giheilagōt thīn namo	kauūihit sī namo dīn.
Cuma thīn rīki.	queme thīn rihhi	piqueme rīhhi dīn.
Uuerde thīn uuilleo	si thīn uuillo	uuesa dīn uuillo,
sō sama an erdo, sō an himila ist	sō her in himile ist, sō sī her in erdu	sama sō in himile est, sama in erdu.
Gef ūs hiudu *brōd (rād),	unsar brōt tagalihhaz gīb uns hiutu	Pilipi unsraz emizzigaz kip uns eogauuanna
endi alāt ūs...	inti furlāz uns...	enti flāz uns...

⁶ Edition Braune (XX: 56)

⁷ Ibid

Comparanda

OS	OHG	Difference	Notes
<i>Fadar</i>	<i>Fater</i>	Phonological	2CS
<i>ûsa</i>	<i>unser</i>	Phonological	<i>Nasalspirantengesetz</i> ; -r drop
<i>thu</i>	<i>dū</i>	Phonological	<i>th > d</i>
<i>an</i>	<i>in</i>	Lexical	
<i>himila</i>	<i>himile</i>	Phonological/orthographic	-a is phonological alternant, also find -e in OS
<i>geuuīhid</i>	<i>kauuihīt</i>	Phonological	2CS: [g] > [k]
<i>Cuma</i>	<i>queme</i>	Phonological	Anomalous phonological results in Gmc languages between [k ^w] and [k]
<i>riki</i>	<i>rihhi</i>	Phonological	2CS
<i>Uuerða</i>	<i>uuesa</i>	Lexical	'be' v 'become' verb, valid alternative in both OHG/OS
<i>an</i>	<i>in</i>	Lexical	
<i>uuilleo</i>	<i>uuillo</i>	Phonological	Postconsonantal /j/ retained in OS
<i>erðo</i>	<i>erdu</i>	Phonological	th > d in OHG; regular back vowel variation in suffix.
<i>Gef</i>	<i>gib</i>	Phonological	Alternative levelling of Verner's Law
<i>ûs</i>	<i>uns</i>	Phonological	<i>Nasalspirantengesetz</i>
<i>râd</i>	<i>brot</i>	Lexical	
<i>endi</i>	<i>inti</i>	Phonological	2CS
<i>alât</i>	<i>furlâz</i>	Lexical/Phonological	2CS
<i>ûs</i>	<i>uns</i>	Phonological	<i>Nasalspirantengesetz</i>

Contra Vermes (OS) & Pro Nessia (OHG)

Gang at, nesso,
go out worm

mid nigun nessiklinon
with 9 worms (diminutive)

at fana themo marge an that ben,
from marrow in the vein

fan themo bene an that fesk
from the vein into the flesh

ut fan themo flesgke an thia hud,
from the flesh in the skin

at fan thera hud an these strala
from the skin onto this stick

Drohtin, uerthe so
lord become so

Gang uz, nesso,
go out worm

mit niun nessinchilinin
with 9 worms (diminutive)

uz fonna marge in deo adra,
from marrow in the vein

vonna den adrun in daz fleisk
from the vein into the flesh

fonna demu fleiske in daz fel,
from the flesh in the skin

fonna demo velle in diz tulli
from the skin onto this stick

Ter Pater Noster

Comparanda

OS	OHG	Difference	Notes
<i>at</i>	<i>uz</i>	Lexical	
<i>mid</i>	<i>mit</i>	Phonological	2CS: [d] > [t]
<i>nigun</i>	<i>niun</i>	Phonological	
<i>nessiklinon</i>	<i>nessinchilinin</i>	Phonological/orthographic	2CS: [k] > [x]
<i>fana</i>	<i>fonna</i>	Phonological	
<i>that ben</i>	<i>deo adra</i>	Lexical/morphological	Accusative: <i>ben</i> neut (a); <i>adro</i> fem (ō). Gender difference
<i>themo bene</i>	<i>den adrun</i>	Morphosyntactic	Number difference (sing v pl)
<i>that fesk</i>	<i>daz fleisk</i>	Phonological/spelling?	

<i>ut fan themo flesgke</i>	<i>fonna demu fleiske</i>	Morphosyntactic; lexical; phonological; morphological	Number difference (sing v pl); <i>ut fan</i> v <i>fonna</i> ; <i>th</i> > [d];
<i>thia hud</i>	<i>daz fel</i>	Lexical/morphological	Accusative: <i>hud</i> fem (ō); <i>fel</i> neut (a). Gender difference

Part 2: OHG/OS Instrumental: *A Ninth-Century Case Study*

Table 4: The Instrumental Case throughout the OHG period

Time (century)	Status, according to Braune (2018), translated
8 th /9 th	“still common (in older sources without a preposition)”
9 th (<i>Tatian, Otfrid, Heliand</i>)	“often found in conjunction with the preposition <i>mit</i> ”
10 th	“the instrumental is suppressed by the dative with prepositions”
11 th	“only scattered relics remain”

Hildebrandslied

‘Means by which’

(1) Synthetic instrumental

Line 40 wili mih **din-u** **sper-u** werp-an
 want.2SG.NONPAST me.ACC **your-INS** **spear-INS** strike-INF
 You wanted to strike me with your spear.

(2) Prepositional instrumental

Lines 53-4 suert-u hauw-an, bret-on **mit** **sin-u** *bill-iu*
 sword-INS hit-INF hit-INF **with** **his-INS** *battle_axe-INS*
 ... *hit with a sword, subdue with his battle axe.*

(3) Prepositional dative

Lines 25-26 her was [...] degan-o dechisto **miti** *Deotrihh-e*
 he.NOM was.3SG.PAST [...] men-GEN finest **with** *Dietrich-DAT*
 He was the finest of soldiers with Dietrich.

(4) Synthetic instrumental

Lines 33-34 wuntan-e boug-a **cheisuring-u** gi-tan
 wind\PP-ACC ring-ACC **emperorgold-INS** PP-do
 ... *wound rings, made from emperor's gold*

Tatian

‘stedu’

(5a) stetit Ihesus in littore
 (Scribe δ) stuont ther heilant **in** **sted-iu**

(T236) stand\3SG.PRET DEM.NOM lord.NOM **in bank-INS**

Jesus stood on the river bank.

(5b) omnis turba stabat in littore
 (Scribe β) thiū menigi stuont **in themo sted-u**
 (T70) DEM.NOM crowd.NOM stand\3SG.PRET **in DEM.DAT bank-INS**

The crowd stood on the river bank.

(5c) secus litus sedentes elegerunt bonos
 (Scribe β) **bi sted-u** sitzen-d-e arlas-un thie quot-en
 (T77) **on bank-INS** sit-PTCP-NOM.PL collect\PRET-3PL DEM.NOM.PL good-NOM.PL

Sitting on the bank, they collected the good [fish].

Prepositional instrumental and dative: *fon*

(6a) cadunt de mensa dominorum suorum
 T85, γ uall-ent **fon disc-u** iro heron-o
 fall-3PL **from table-INS** their master-GEN.PL
...fall from the table of their masters

(6b) cadebant de mensa divitis
 T107, δ nidar-fiel-un **fon them-o disg-æ** the-s otag-en
 down-fall\PAST-3PL **from that-DAT table-DAT** that-GEN rich-GEN
...fell down from the table of the rich [one]

Hêliand

(7) Prepositional dative

erl-os antledd-un [...] **mid Iosep-e**
 men-NOM.PL leave\PRET-3PL [...] **with Joseph-DAT**
The men left with Joseph.

(8) Prepositional dative

god lioht **mid god-e**

good.ACC light.ACC **with** god-DAT

Good light with god.

‘Means by which’

(9) Prepositional instrumental

huo hie it **mid** is **uord-u** gi-sprak

how he.NOM it.ACC **with** his **word-INS** PERF-speak\3SG.PRET

...how he spoke it with his word.

(10) Prepositional dative and synthetic instrumental

mid is **maki-e** gi-heu **suerd-u** **thiu** **scarp-on**

with his **sword-DAT** PERF-strike\3SG.PRET **sword-INS** **DEM.INS** **sharp-INS**

...struck with this sword, the sharp sword.

(11) Prepositional dative

sia ni thurb-un **mid enig-on** **feh-e** cop-on

they.ACC NEG need-2PL **with any-DAT** **goods-DAT** buy-INF

You do not need to buy them with any goods.

Table 5: Analysis of distribution of the instrumental and dative

	1	2	3	4
State of Syncretism	<i>Limited</i>	<i>Balanced</i>	<i>Extensive</i>	<i>Total</i>
Synthetic instrumental case marking on nouns without preposition.	✓	✓		
Some instrumental marking after prepositions	✓	✓	✓	
Some dative marking after these same prepositions		✓	✓	✓
<i>Hildebrandslied</i>		✓		
<i>Héliand</i>		✓		
<i>Tatian</i>			✓	

Table 6: Distribution of the instrumental and dative according to preposition

Case form and context		<i>Héliand</i>	<i>Hildebrandslied</i>	<i>Tatian</i>
# words in text		~25000	459	~55000
Bare INS <i>a-/i-/u-</i>stems		51	3	0
INS <i>a-/i-/u-</i>stems	+ <i>mid/mit</i>	98	2	22
	+ <i>bi</i>	0	0	1
	+ <i>fona</i>	0	0	1
	+ <i>in</i>	0	0	4
	+ <i>nah</i>	0	0	1
INS Subtotal		149	5	29
1 INS token every __ words		468	92	2134
DAT_SG <i>a-/i-/u-</i>stems	+ <i>mid/mit</i>	9	2	7
	+ <i>bi, fona, in, nah</i>	56	6	190

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