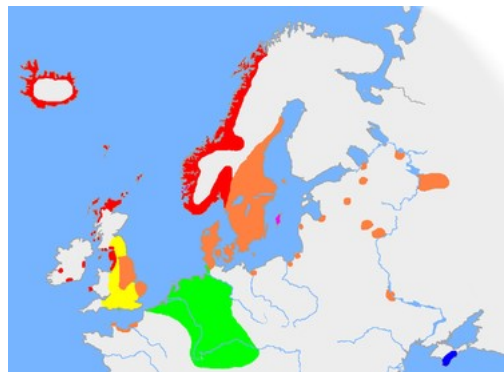


Old Gutnish

Old Gutnish was the dialect of Old Norse that was spoken on the Baltic island of Gotland. It shows sufficient differences from the Old West Norse and Old East Norse dialects that it is considered to be a separate branch. Gutnish is still spoken in some parts of Gotland and on the adjoining island of Fårö.

The root *Gut* is identical to *Goth*, and it is often remarked that the language has similarities with the Gothic language. These similarities have led scholars such as Elias Wessén and Dietrich Hofmann to suggest that it is most closely related to Gothic. The best known example of such a similarity is that Gothic and Gutnish called both adult and young sheep *lamb*.

The Old Norse diphthong *au* (e.g. *auga* "eye") remained in Old Gutnish and Old West Norse, while in Old East Norse – except for peripheral dialects – it evolved into the monophthong *ó*, i.e. a long version of *ø*. Likewise the diphthong *ai* in *bain* (bone) remained in Old Gutnish while it in Old West Norse became *ei* as in *bein* and in Old East Norse it became *é* (*bén*). Whereas Old West Norse had the *ey* diphthong and Old East Norse evolved the monophthong *ó*) Old Gutnish had *oy*.



The approximate extent of Old Norse and related languages in the early 10th century:

- ☐ Old West Norse dialect
- ☐ Old East Norse dialect
- ☐ Old Gutnish
- ☐ Old English
- ☐ Crimean Gothic
- ☐ Other Germanic languages with which Old Norse still retained some mutual intelligibility

Proto-Germanic	Old Gutnish	Old West Norse	Old East Norse
* <i>augô</i> (eye)	<i>auga</i>	<i>auga</i>	<i>auga</i> > <i>óga</i>
* <i>bainą</i> (bone)	<i>bain</i>	<i>bein</i>	<i>bæin</i> > <i>bén</i>
* <i>hauzijaną</i> (to hear)	<i>hoyra</i>	<i>heyra</i>	<i>høyra</i> > <i>hóra</i>

Most of the corpus of Old Gutnish is found in the Gutasaga from the 13th century.

Language sample

Citation:

Þissi þieluar hafði ann sun sum hit hafði. En hafða cuna hit huita stierna þaun tu bygðu fyrsti agutlandi fyrstu nat sum þaun saman suafu þa droymdi hennj draumbr. So sum þrir ormar warin slungnir saman j barmj hennar Oc þytti hennj sum þair scriþin yr barmi hennar. Þinna draum segði han firi hasða bonda sinum hann riap dravm þinna so. Alt ir baugum bundit bo land al þitta warða oc faum þria syni aiga. þaim gaf hann namn allum o fydum. guti al

gutland aigha graipr al annar haita Oc gunfiauþ þriþi. þair sciptu siþan gutlandi i þria þriþiunga. So at graipr þann elzti laut norþasta þriþiung oc guti miþal þriþiung En gunfiauþ þann yngsti laut sunnarsta. siþan af þissum þrim aucap̃is fulc j gutlandi so mikit um langan tima at land elptj þaim ai alla fyþa þa lutaþu þair bort af landi huert þriþia þiaup̃ so at alt sculdu þair aiga oc miþ sir bort hafa sum þair vfan iorþar attu.

Standardised Old Gutnish:

Þissi Þieluar hafþi ann sun sum hit Hafþi. En Hafþa kuna hit Huita Stierna. Þaun tu bygþu fyrsti a Gutlandi. Fyrstu nat sum þaun saman suafu þa droymdi henni draumbr. So sum þrir ormar varin slungnir saman i barmi hennar ok þytti henni sum þair skriþin yr barmi hennar. Þinna draum segþi han firi Hafþa, bonda sinum. Hann riap̃ draum þinna so: Alt ir baugum bundit, bo land al þitta varþa ok faum þria syni aiga. Þaim gaf hann namn allum ofydum. Guti al Gutland aiga, Graipr al annar haita ok Gunfiauþ þriþi. Þair skiptu siþan Gutlandi i þria þriþiunga so at Graipr þann eldsti laut norþasta þriþiung ok Guti miþal þriþiung en Gunfiauþ þann yngsti laut sunnarasta. Siþan af þissum þrim aukap̃is fulk i Gutlandi so mikit um langan tima at land elpti þaim ai alla fyþa. Þa lutaþu þair bort af landi huert þriþia þiaup̃ so at alt skuldu þair aiga ok miþ sir bort hafa sum þair ufan iorþar attu.

Employing normalised Old Norse orthography:

Þissi Þjelvar hafði ann sun sum hít Hafði. En Hafða kuna hít Hvítastjerna. Þaun tú byggðu fyrsti á Gutlandi. Fyrstu nátt sum þaun saman sváfu þá droymdi henni draumr; só sum þrir ormar varin slungnir saman í barmi hennar, ok þýtti henni sum þair skriðin yr barmi hennar. Þinna draum segði han firi Hafða bónda sínum. Hann raið draum þinna só: "Alt ir baugum bundit, bóland al þitta varða uk fáum þría syni aiga." Þaim gaf hann namn, allum ófýddum; Guti, al Gutland aiga; Graipr, al annar haita; ok Gunnfjaun þriði. Þair skiptu síðan Gutlandi í þría þriðjunga, só at Graipr þann eldsti laut norðasta þriðjung, ok Guti miðal þriðjung, en Gunnfjaun þann yngsti laut sunnarsta. Síðan, af þissum þrim aukaðis fulk í Gutlandi sum mikit um langan tíma at land elpti þaim ai alla fýða. Þá lutaðu þair bort af landi hvert þriðja þjauð só at alt skuldu þair aiga ok mið sír bort hafa sum þair ufan jorðar áttu.

Translation: in Icelandic:

Son hann Þjálfi átti sem hét Hafði. Og kona Hafða hét Hvítastjarna. Þau tvö byggðu fyrst manna á Gotlandi. Fyrstu nótt sem þau þar saman sváfu þá dreymdi hana draum; sá hún þrjá orma vafðir saman í barmi hennar, og þótti henni sem þeir skriða niður barm hennar. Þennan draum sagði hún Hafða bónda sínum. Hann réð draum þann svo: "Allt er baugum bundið og verður allt land þitt búið og munum við þrjá syni eiga." Þeim gaf hann nöfn ófæddum, Goti sem Gotland á að eiga; Greipur sem annar hét; og Gunnfjón sá þriðji. Þeir skiptu síðan Gotlandi í þrjá þriðjunga, þá fékk Greipur sá elsti norður þriðjunginn, og Goti miðju þriðjunginn, en Gunnfjón sá yngsti fékk suður þriðjunginn. Seinna, af þessum þremur

jókst eftir langan tíma svo fólk í Gotlandi það mikið að landið gat ekki öllum veitt fæði. Þá létu þeir fara burt af landi þriðja hvern þegn, og allt máttu þau eiga og með sér burt hafa sem ofanjarðar áttu.

Translation:

This Thielvar had a son called Hafthi. And Hafthi's wife was called Hvitstjarna. Those two were the first to settle on Gotland. When they slept on the island for the first night, she dreamed that three snakes lay in her lap, and she thought they were sliding off her lap. She told this to Hafthi. He interpreted her dream and said: "Everything is bound with bangles, this island will be inhabited, and you will bear three sons." Although, they were not yet born, he named them Guti, who would own the island, Graip and Gunfjaun. The sons divided the island into three regions, and Graip, who was the eldest, took the north, Guti the middle, and Gunfjaun, who was the youngest, took the southern third. After a long time, their descendants became so numerous that the island could not support all of them. They drew lots and every third islander had to leave. They could keep everything they owned but the land.

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