

[0847] The emergence of Old Frisian *sīa “to seep, trickle”**

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1.1. Karl, Freiherr von Richthofens’ *Altfriesisches Wörterbuch* of 1840 contained no such verb as *sīa** “to seep or trickle”. It first made its appearance in an article by Otto Bremer of 1893, entitled ‘Zu von Richthofens altfriesischem Wörterbuch’. There, Bremer discussed the sequence <ute sin> in the General Register of Fines¹ in the two Hunsingo manuscripts (whose contents are almost identical): *gef hit [thet age] is al ute sin* ... “if it [the eye] is all/completely XX” (cf. the diplomatic print by Hoekstra 1950: 77, H2 XI item 47 and 162, H1 XIX item 47).

In line with the general consensus, Bremer interpreted the sequence as the past participle of a strong verb: *ut-esin*.² While mentioning other possibilities, he suggested that it belonged to an otherwise unattested Old Frisian verb **sīa* = germ. *sīhwan* “seihen, tröpfelnd fließen”, and proposed reading the form in H as *ūt-esīn* and translating it as ‘ausgelaufen’ (1893: 333–34). The interpretation fits the context and has the advantage of not requiring emendation, as did rival analyses.

In addition, Bremer took the noun (-)*siāma*, -*sīma*, found mainly as the second element of compounds (*brein*-, *gristel*-, *lith*-, *lungen*-), to be a derivative of this verb (on the formation, see Ahlsson 1960: 152, 158, 231, 238; Meid 1967: §107).

1.2. Bremer’s suggestion was taken up and given currency by N. Otto Heinertz in a treatment that must count as the locus classicus (1915: 331–33). Heinertz noted that it had become clear that the derivative (-)*siāma* referred to some kind of fluid³ and added support to Bremer’s semantic

1. Compare, in the first instance, Nauta 1941.

2. Von Richthofen listed the sequence, as *ut esin*, under **utsia** (1840b: 1120) S[=J] 384, 21 [= Buma—Ebel 484 §5], H 86, 5 which he did not gloss, giving a cross-reference to **sia**, sense 2 ‘verwunden’.

However, von Richthofen’s *sia* “verwunden” as a subsidiary meaning of “to sew” (the unifying concept being “to pierce”) has long been discarded and most of the forms he cited (from predominately West Frisian texts) have been assigned to the strong verb O(W)Fris. *s(k)iāta* “to shoot”, ModWFr. *sji(e)tte*. See Hettema 1888: 52–54 (cf. also Bremer 1893: 333).

3. Von Richthofen interpreted -*siāma* in keeping with his understanding of the verb (cf. fn2) and took it to mean a “wound” (1840b: 1011). Bremer 1893: 334 glossed it ‘eine

analysis of the verb by citing the Latin parallel passage in the Hunsingo manuscripts *Pro oculo qui totus defluxit* ... (Hoekstra 1950: 96, H2 XIX item 27 and 120, H1 XIX item 27), commenting: ‘es ist also von keinem Fallen oder Sinken, sondern von einer Flüssigkeit die Rede’ (332). Heinertz also referred to earlier discussions of the form.⁴

Heinertz’s has become the standard view. Nauta and Buma–Ebel translate the passage “Wenn es [*das Auge*] ganz ausgeflossen ist, ...” (1941: 69/48; 1969: 97, H2 XIV 45).⁵ His analysis is reflected in such a wider Germanic reference work as Elmar Seebold’s *Vergleichendes und etymologisches Wörterbuch der germanischen starken Verben* (1970: 389–91, s.v. SEIHW-A- ‘seihan’).⁶ When intransitive, it meant “(of a liquid) to seep, trickle”; when used transitively, it meant “to strain or filter (a liquid)”.

verwundung’. However, a passage in the Fivelgo manuscript, which was not printed by von Richthofen, led to a revision. F IX item 336 (ed. Buma–Ebel 1972: 120): *Hwersa thio vnde alle tyd epen is and thi siama thervte rent...* “Wenn eine Wunde immer offen ist und der X herausläuft...”. Siebs 1901: 1287 wrote ‘aofries. *siama* (Bedeutung unsicher; etwa »Eiter, Flüssigkeit?«)’ citing this passage, as did His 1901: 306 n2 (‘ganz bestimmt eine Flüssigkeit’); van Helten 1905/06: 289–90 (‘Fisteleiter’); and Heinertz 1915: 332 (‘irgend eine Flüssigkeit’). Sjölin 1970: 321 (‘Fisteleiter’). Buma and Ebel render it ‘Fisteleiter’.

4. Of treatments Heinertz misses, we may just note that Jacobs 1900: 61 lists the ppp. *utesîn* H 86/5 under class 1, adding on page 64 ‘gaat terug op **utegisigin* d.i. uitgezegen’ to the verb *sîga* “to sink”. In this, like van Helten 1894: 424, Jacobs follows Günther’s analysis of 1880, where Günther booked *utesîn* as a past participle (22) and commented ‘*utesîn*, von v. R. nicht erklärt, rechne ich = *ûtesigen*†) zu *sîga*, alts. ags. *sîgan* sinken’ (23). Jacobs seems to have missed Bremer’s attribution to *sîa*. Van Helten, although he mentions Bremer’s article (1894: 424), overlooked or chose to ignore his findings, cf. Heinertz 1915: 332 (who gives an incorrect reference to van Helten’s discussion, however).
5. Unfortunately, the word list to Hoekstra’s edition merely reads ‘**utsia**, *part. praet.* utesin XI. 70’, with no definition and no cross-reference (1950: 216b).
6. Seebold’s entry for this verb can be modified to the extent that the Old English past participle *afig(a)en*, glossing FRUXUM, the only item under his item -FEIG-*A- “(rösten)” (1967: 191), belongs under SEIHW-A-, once emended to **asig(a)en*, an Anglian past participle form, as first argued by Meritt (1968: 32–34). See Bammesberger 1998 for full discussion and references. It is also tempting to suppose that Old Norse *sía* is the strong verb gone weak, rather than a different formation found only here.

Seebold’s section on derivatives does not list OFris. (-)*siāma*, -*sīma* “fluid, pus”(cf. §1.1 and footnote 3) or *ūtsīon(e)** “outflow, watercourse” (cf. §1.3). It also lacks a venerable etymology for “sea” as PGmc. **saig^w-i-* (or **saig^w-a-*, equivalent to Old

1.3. Buma further proposed (1982: 43–45) that the West Frisian noun *utionsa*, plural of *ūtsion(e)** “outflow; watercourse”, found in the Codex Unia and some charters (spelled *wtsi(j)oen*, *wtsiaen*) is also a derivative of *sīa** (cf. Ahlsson 1960: 10–11). He also identified descendants of the word in the modern Frisian dialect of Terschelling (Frisian Skylge), *sien*; and, as a substratum word, in North Holland Dutch dialect, *sjaan*. This derivative suggests the verb could also mean “flow” rather than just “trickle”.

1.4 In the matter of Frisian congeners of PGmc. **sīh^wan*, philological analysis of the Old Frisian corpus has replaced a blank with the recognition of a past participle and two nominal derivatives. This note proposes assigning three Old Frisian third singular present indicative forms to *sīa** “to seep or trickle”.

2.0. In the Emsigo Fines, a third singular verb-form (-)*sith* appears in the following contexts. I give the text according to Fokkema’s editions of the so-called Second and Third Emsigo manuscripts (1953 and 1959), accepting his emendation in the third passage.

2.1.1. E2 III item 29 (Fokkema 1953: 20): *Hal brede older thiu sith...*

2.1.2. E3 I item 36 (Fokkema 1959: 24): *Thiu hal bred ol ther hiu sith...*

2.2. E3 I item 171 (Fokkema 1959: 29): *Huasa vndad werth anda sin lungen, thets him wr sith* [MS *wr sich*]...

2.3. E1 contains no equivalent text, cf. VII items 33 to 39 (Sipma 1943: 81).

2.4. The passages can be glossed respectively “(The) cerebral membrane (meninx) so that it Xes” and “Whoever is wounded in his lungs, so that it Xes (for) him”.

Indic *séka*- “discharge, outflow, gush”, Greek (τρυγ-)οιπος “(must-)strainer”, and Lithuanian *saikas* “measure (for fluids)”, all from the Indo-European root **seik^w-*, a derivative of **sīh^wan*, that was revived by Meid 1982 (although it receives a mention in Kluge–Seebold 2002: s.v. *See*). One might further follow Koivulehto (1967, 1973) in adding **saih^w-a-* “tub”, originally “*the vessel into which a liquid is strained”. Janda (2000: 136–37) takes a different approach to “sea”, attaching it to the root **sah²i-* “to bind”. Also missing is OFris. *sīl* “drainage ditch; sluice” etc., cf. Kluge–Seebold 2002: s.v. *Siel*; already Falk–Torp 1909: 439–440.

3.1. Von Richthofen, in his dictionary, classified the first two instances (§§2.1.1, 2.1.2; 214–215/9 in his edition, 1840a) as third singular present indicative forms of **sitta** “sitzen”, sense 3) “sich befinden” (1840b: 1019b). The third passage (§2.2; 227/2 in his edition, 1840a) is listed under **ursia**: 1) “sehen” (1840b: 1115).

Fokkema, in the glossary to his edition of E2, follows von Richthofen, giving *sith* under ‘**sitta** zitten, bevinden. praes. ind. 3 s. *sith*’ (1953: 118a).

3.2. Fokkema changed his mind between editing E2 and E3. The glossary to E3 cites the instance in §2.1.2 under ‘**sia** (< siga?) etteren’ (1959: 87b) and that in §2.2 under ‘**ursia** veretteren’, citing the emended form *ursith* for MS *wr sich* (1959: 97a).

Fokkema made no comment on why he revised his view, but it was possibly in the light of van Helten’s treatment of *wr sith* in the passage quoted in §2.2 (which only occurs in E3) on page 353 of his *Zur Lexicologie des Altostfriesischen* of 1907. There, van Helten assigned it to a proposed verb *ūrsīga**, suggesting a translation ‘so dass sie ... ihm verfliesst’ [sic; influenced by Dutch *vervloeien*? — PVS]. However, van Helten gave the inexact parallel of supposed *ūtsīga** ‘herausfallen’ which he regarded as the verb behind the *ūt-esīn* discussed in §1 (citing his discussion 1894: 424), thereby ignoring Bremer’s results (cf. footnote 8). Van Helten’s proposed semantics were not the same as Fokkema’s “etteren”, however.

3.3.0. Buma-Ebel follow Fokkema’s revised interpretation, translating the passages as follows:

3.3.1. E2 III 30 (Buma-Ebel 1967: 110): *Halbrede, older thiū sith...* E3 I 36 (Buma-Ebel 1967: 170): *Thiū halbred, olther hiu sith...* “Wenn die Hirnhaut eitert...”.

3.3.2. E3 I 171 (Buma-Ebel 1967: 182): *Huasa vndad werth anda sin lungen, thets him wrsith* [MS *wr sich*]... “Wenn jemand so an seiner Lunge verwundert wird, daß sie ihm vereitert...”

3.4. The treatment of the verb-forms that interest us in Holthausen–Hofmann 1985 is as follows. Holthausen’s original entry on page 92b ‘†*sīa* 1. stv. seihen, tröpfeln, P.P. *esīn*’ clearly reflects the work of Bremer and Heinertz (the obelos indicating a word lacking in von Richthofen’s dictionary). Hofmann inserted a question mark in the margin, which probably indicated that he did not find any attestations as a simplex verb (cf. 1985: xxi).

Bremer's and Heinertz's analysis of *ūt-esīn* is represented in the comment to Holthausen's original entry on page 122a '[ut-]sīga stv. auslaufen', with Hofmann noting '*ūt-sīa*? (überliefert Part. Prät. *ūt-esīn*)', 180 comment 3 to page 122.⁷ Holthausen's *-sīga* agreed with Günther's, van Helten's and Jacobs' interpretation of *ūt-esīn* (cf. footnote 4).⁸ Holthausen does not appear to have a specific entry for *ūr-sīa*, as found in the passage cited in §2.2.

4.1. Assigning these (-) *sith* forms to *sīa** "to seep or trickle" suggests that the semantics are to be understood in the first instance as "oozes, trickles" or "weeps" (OED sense 4d: 'of a sore, etc.: To exude a serous fluid') used of wounds discharging liquid, which would often be septic. This could easily lead to a sense "suppurate, turn septic". Such an eventuality would constitute a worsening of the injury, or, at the least, a failure to heal. However, it is not certain that the meaning "turn septic" is present in the examples discussed here.

We may note that the instance of *sith* cited in §2.1 follows a listing of three of the four *-sīāma* compounds: *brein-*, *gristel-*, *lith-* (cf. §1.1). This at least suggests the general semantic context, if not a conscious figura etymologica. The instance in §2.2, referring as it does to the lungs, corresponds to the fourth compound *lungensiāma* (a point also made by van Helten 1907: 353).

4.2.0. Interestingly, *sīon*, *sēon*, the English cognate of *sīa**, is also used in connection with sores and wounds, which supports the assignment of the Frisian *sith* forms to this verb. Compare the following examples.

4.2.1. Leechdoms, ed. Cockayne 1864–66: II 102/9:

Wið seondum omum... "for oozing/weeping eruptions of the skin (erysipelas)"

7. Anne Popkema, who is preparing Hofmann's unfinished *Altfriesisches Handwörterbuch* for publication, kindly informs me that Hofmann's card index system gives under †*sīa* a bald reference to E3 (with no citation or reference given). However, this apparently refers only to the passage cited in §2.2, which contains the prefixed form. Under *ūr-sīa*, there is also a reference to van Helten's discussion of *ursiga*, 1907: 353. The card-index system also contains an entry for *utsiga* for the past participle *esīn* in H, with the comment '= *utsia* H ?'. See the Appendix. Hofmann had evidently not worked up these sections. However, it is clear that he had — at least partly — anticipated the assignment of (-) *sīth* to *sīa*.

8. However, in view of Bremer's and Heinertz's analyses, Holthausen's treatment must count as a retrograde step.

4.2.2. Old English Orosius, ed. Bately 1980: 25/30:

eall [pæt] folc wæs on blædran, 7 þa wæron swiðe hreowlice berstende 7 þa worms utsionde. “all the people were in blisters and they were bursting very grievously and the pus oozing out” — Latin, ed. Arnaud-Lindet 1990–91: 56: 1.10.11 *post uesicas efferuescentes ulceraque manantia et, ut ipsi dicere maluerunt, ‘scabiem ac utiliginem’ totis corporibus erumpentem*).

4.2.3. Ælfric Lives of the Saints 20 (Æthelthryth), ed. Skeat 1881–1900: I 20/64:

hi cwædon þa sume pæt se læce sceolde asceotan pæt geswell; þa dyde he sona swa, and pær sah ut wyrms. “Then some said that the doctor should lance the swelling; he immediately did so and pus trickled (squirted?) out”.

4.3. It would be well not to jump to conclusions about exclusive English–Frisian usage in connection with sores, wounds and the like, as this agreement could well be an artifact of the attestation in the other West Germanic languages.

5. Third singular *sīth* is not out of place to a class 1 strong ‘contract verb’, from earlier **sīhip*. Compare also the Old English cognate early Anglian *siid* in the Erfurt Glossary E147/384 and Corpus Glossary E461/800, “strains” glossing EXCOLAT.

6.1. We may note that the verb appears to be confined to Ems Frisian. The Emsigo Fines are found only in the Emsigo manuscripts, but the parallel transmission for the passage in the General Register of Fines shows a variety of phrasing (as can be determined by consulting the texts in Nauta 1941, which can readily be compared by means of his table on page 81; cf. also von Richthofen’s texts, 1840a: 86–87/5):

L = H2 XIX item 27:	<i>Pro oculo qui totus defluxit ...</i>
H2 XI item 47:	<i>Gef hit [thet age] is al ut-esin ...</i>
R1 V item 23: ⁹	<i>Ief hit [thet age] is al ute-kwnken ...</i>
E1 VI item 38:	<i>Gef hit [thet age] is al ute</i>
F X item 47:	<i>Thet age alegader vte ...</i>
N item 29: ¹⁰	<i>Dat oghe myt allen alse ogenappel vthgefallen is ...</i>

9. According to Nauta’s numeration (1941: 55, 81); item 2e in the numeration of Buma (1961: 108) and Buma-Ebel (1963: 60).

10. In Nauta’s numeration (1941: 61, 81); Borchling 1908: 172 lines 1–2.

R1 (Weser Frisian) has substituted another verb, while E1 and F have no verb at all, giving *ute* an absolute sense. Assuming that L, H2 and R1 represent the ‘original situation’ by having a verb, the form has either been lost in transmission in these two Ems Frisian texts or consciously left out because the lexeme was obsolete and the text could make sense without it. In the Low German version, another verb with a different meaning but the same pragmatic import has been used.

6.2. The (-)*siāma*, -*sīma* derivatives (mentioned in §1.1) are also found only in Ems Frisian texts, including their Low German versions, e.g. Borchling 1908: 54 §2, 71 §71. However, this is not true of *utsion(e)** (§1.3) and *sīl* (footnote 6).

7. Appendix: Hofmann’s record cards (lightly edited; cf. footnote 7)

7.1.

†**sīa** stv. seihen, tröpfeln
[Holthausen S.92: stv.!]

E₃

P.P. esīn ur-

[ahd. *sīhan*, P.P. *sigan*]

7.2.

ur-sīa vereitern
E₃ Ao 353 ūrsīga

7.3.

ūt-sīga stv. auslaufen
= utsia H ? Ao 356¹¹

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West Kensington
London

11. In addition to Anne Popkema (cf. footnote 7), I should like to thank Han Nijdam and the editors of Us Wurk for helpful suggestions.

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