

GSAS Workshop in Indo-European and Historical Linguistics

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Friday, March 23

5:00 - 6:30 pm

Boylston Hall Room 335

On the History of Germanic *ga-

Abstract

The Germanic prefix *ga- is generally traced back to PIE *ko(m)(-). This makes good semantic sense, given that the usages of *ga- in the Germanic languages seem to closely parallel those of Latin co(m)-. However the phonology poses problems that cannot be easily solved. In this talk I will argue instead that *ga- can be derived from PIE *gho, a contrastive sentence particle that can be seen in Ved. ghā(/a) and likely also in the Slavic pronominal m/nGsg. ending *-ogo.