

***anō** Runic: 𐌱𐌴𐌹 Pronunciation: /'ɑ.nõ:/

noun · feminine · ōn-stem

Meanings

(female) ancestor, foremother; especially a grandmother

Etymology

Continues the widespread Indo-European word for ‘grandmother’, best represented cautiously as a stem **h₂an(h)-*; Serangeli (2020: 208) more specifically reconstructs thematic *h₂énH-o-*, interpreting the geminate of Hittite 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎶𐎶 (*ha-an-na- /ḥanna-/*) as evidence for root-final **H*, while Olsen (2020: 81–82) notes that the gemination may instead be hypocoristic and that even initial **h₂* is not completely secure. The Proto-Germanic noun was remodeled into the productive feminine *ōn*-declension, a class arising through the Germanic amalgamation of inherited feminine **eh₂*-stems with **ōn*-stems (Kroonen 2011a: 36–37). Cognates include Ancient Greek ἀννίς (*annís*), Armenian հան (*han*), Hittite 𐎶𐎵𐎶𐎶𐎶 (*ha-an-na- /ḥanna-/*), and Latin *anus*; Lycian *xñnahe/i-* continues the same kinship stem, while Lithuanian *anýta* is a derivative of it (Blažek 2026: §1.3; Olsen 2020: 81–82; Serangeli 2020: 208). Old Prussian *ane* is traditionally included as a cognate, although its value as independent Baltic evidence is weakened by the alternative view that it was borrowed from Germanic (Blažek 2026: §1.3). The feminine noun is probably the historically older member of the Germanic pair: only Germanic securely attests a corresponding masculine **anô*, which is thus best regarded as a secondary masculine formation beside the inherited female kinship term.

Declension

Case	Singular	Plural
Nom.	anō	anōniz
Acc.	anōnu	anōnunz
Gen.	anōniz	anōnô
Dat.	anōni	anōmaz
Inst.	anōnē	anōmiz
Voc.	anō	anōniz

Descendants

- *anā (Proto-West Germanic)
 - ana (Old High German)
 - ane (Middle High German)
 - Ahne (German)

- *anā (Proto-West Germanic)
 - ana (Old Saxon)
 - āne (Middle Low German)
 - Ahn (Low German)

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