English Linguistics I

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GHENT
UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF ARTS
AND PHILOSOPHY

Course organisation

- 45-hour course
- Worth 5 credits
- 12 weeks of lectures
  - 2x1h15
  - Wednesday morning (8.30-11.15)
  - Auditorium 2, Franz Cumont
- 2 weeks of seminars in smaller groups
  - See Ufora
  - Stick to your schedule

Assessment

- Continuous assessment: 10%
  - Assignment in heuristics
  - Mandatory (if you do not hand in a paper, you automatically fail the entire course)
- End-of-term evaluation: 90%
  - Two-part written exam
   - Multiple-choice
    - Open questions

Ufora

- ufora.ugent.be
- Your name (upper right corner)
- "notifications"
- Scroll down to "immediate notifications"
- Check what you need
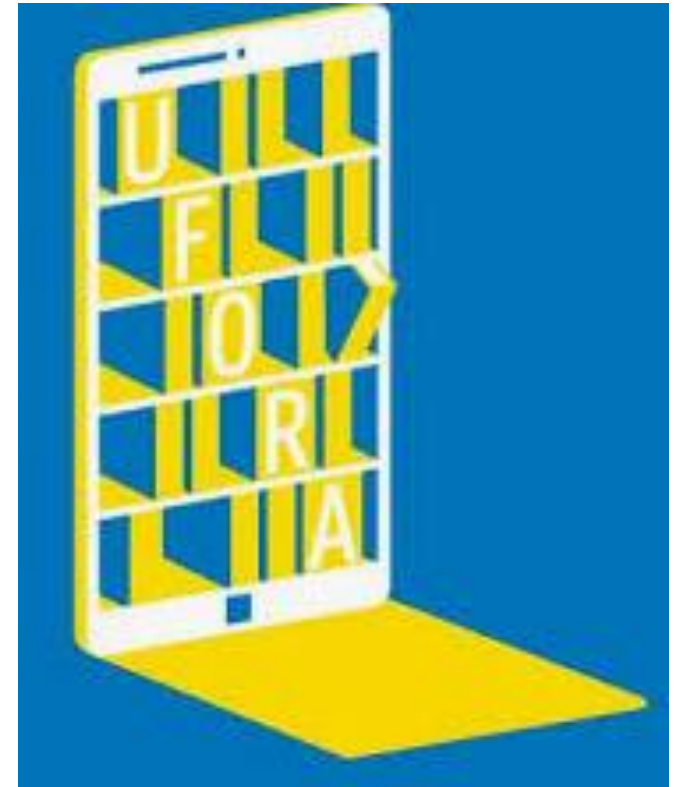
Study materials

Lecture:

- PowerPoint slides (cf. Ufora)
- Your own notes
- *The Cambridge Encylopedia of the English Language* (David Crystal)
  - Not obligatory, but strongly recommended
  - Contains most of the information
  - Good to have for your entire education
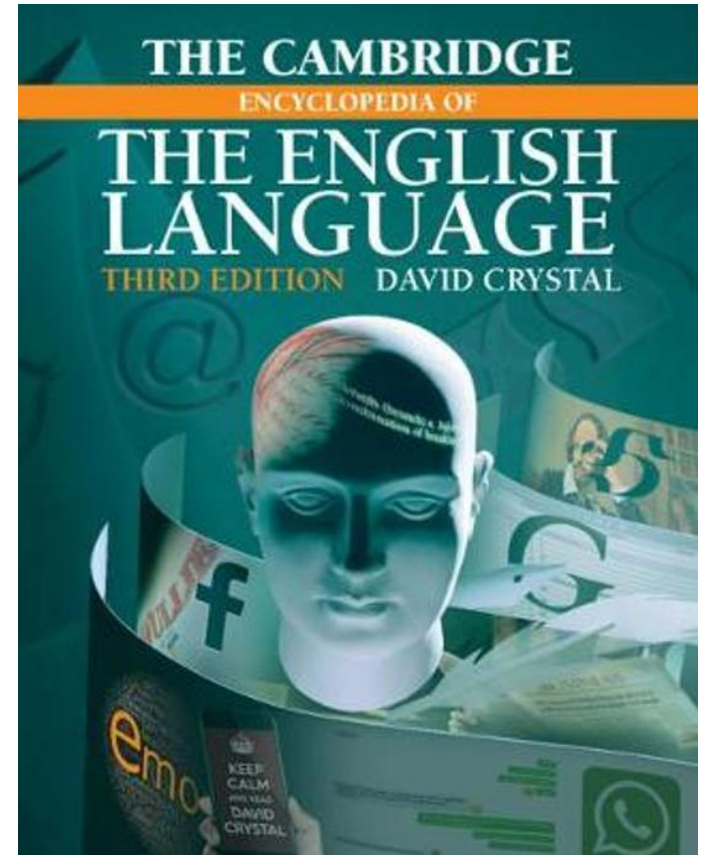
Study materials

Heuristics:

- Textbook
- Your own notes
- *The Craft of Research* (Booth, Colomb & Williams)
  - Not obligatory, but nice to have
  - Contains useful information
  - Will need for 2nd year
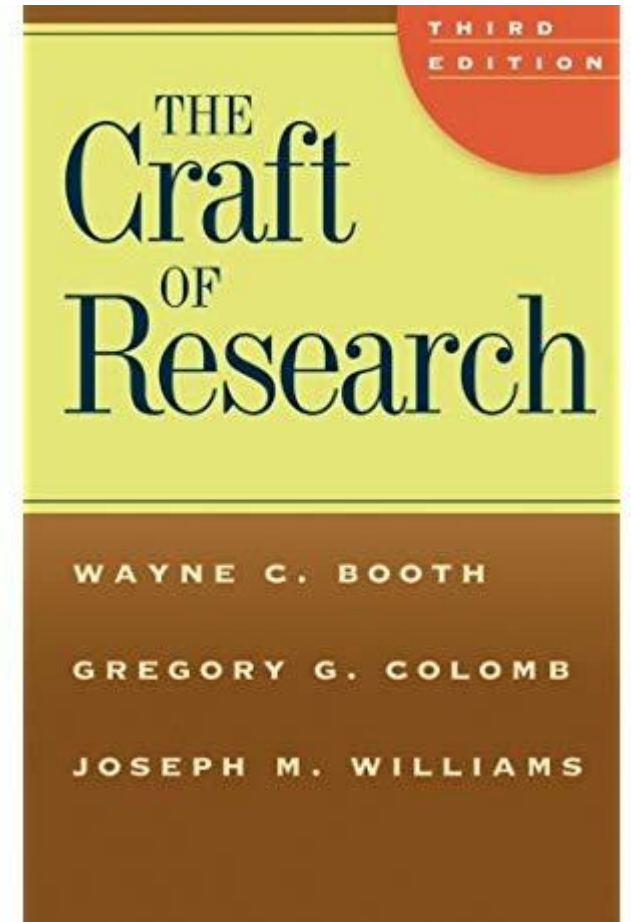
Aim of the course

While most college-educated persons have had significant exposure to physics or biology, linguistics remains **terra incognita** to all but a few. To the layman, a linguist means merely someone **proficient in several languages**; people at cocktail parties have no notion that to ask a linguist "How many languages do you speak?" is like asking a garage mechanic "How many cars do you own?"
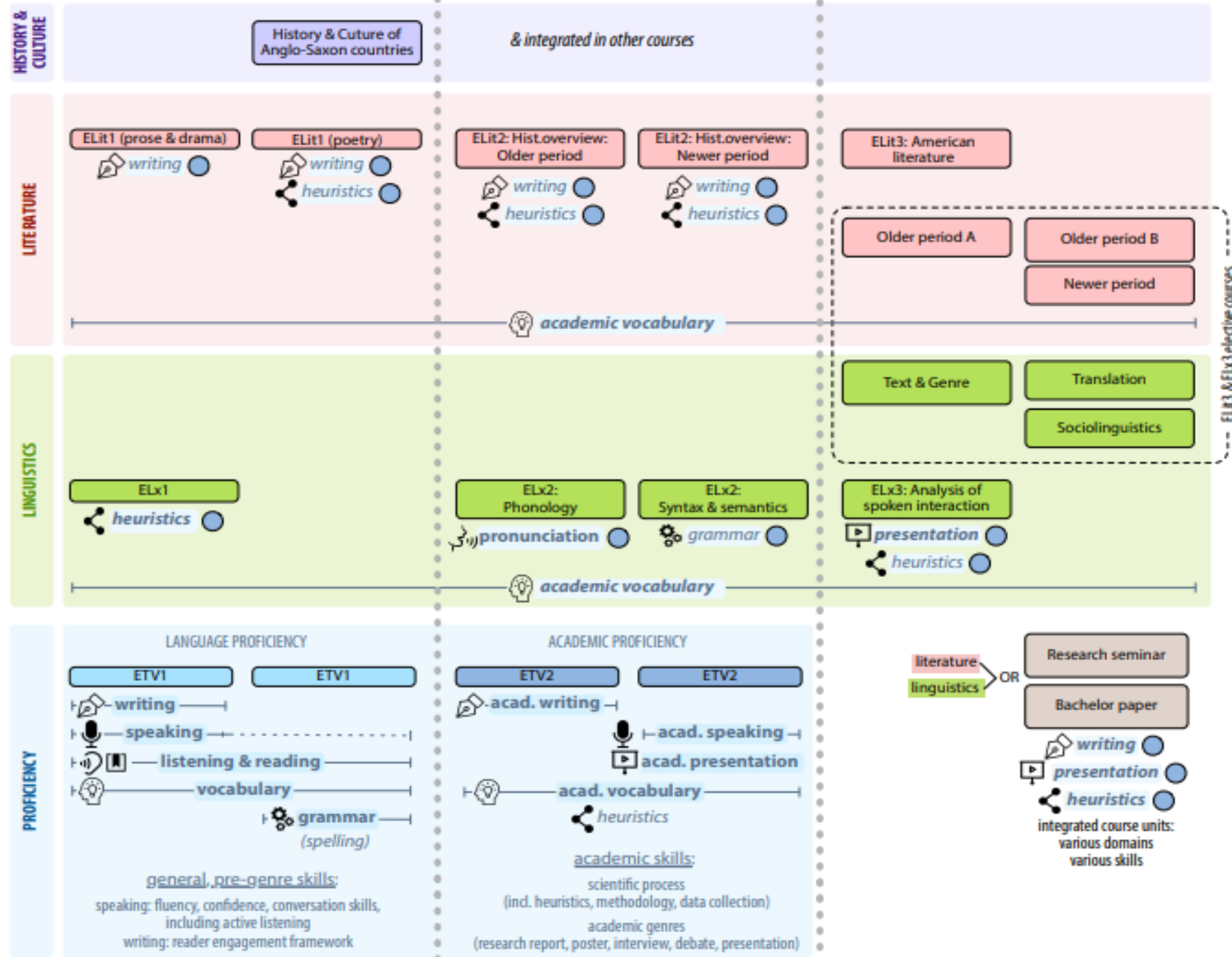
(Bickerton 2014)

Aim of the course

Many students connect linguistics with **grammar**, which, in turn, triggers thoughts of identifying parts of speech – nouns, verbs, and conjunctions. If these students were not particularly successful at determining whether a word was an adjective or an adverb in the past, they figure that now it will get even harder.

(Freeman & Freeman 2014: 1)

Aim of the course

- What this course is NOT about:
  - General overview of linguistic theories
  - General introduction to proficiency in English
- What this course IS about:
  - Introduction to the linguistics of English
  - Overview of different linguistic subfields which take English as object of study
- Aim (<Course specifications):
  - to provide you with socio-historical and subdiscipline-oriented insights into the how and why of studying the English language as a contemporary world phenomenon and as the object of linguistic research

Position of the course

HISTORY & CULTURE

History & Culture of Anglo-Saxon countries — & integrated in other courses

LITERATURE

- ELit1 (prose & drama) — *writing*
- ELit1 (poetry) — *writing*, *heuristics*
- ELit2: Hist.overview: Older period — *writing*, *heuristics*
- ELit2: Hist.overview: Newer period — *writing*, *heuristics*
- ELit3: American literature
  - Older period A | Older period B | Newer period

academic vocabulary

LINGUISTICS

- Text & Genre | Translation | Sociolinguistics
- ELx1 — *heuristics*
- ELx2: Phonology — **pronunciation**
- ELx2: Syntax & semantics — *grammar*
- ELx3: Analysis of spoken interaction — *presentation*, *heuristics*

ELit3 & ELx3 elective courses

academic vocabulary

PROFICIENCY

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

- ETV1 | ETV1
  - writing
  - speaking
  - listening & reading
  - vocabulary
  - grammar (spelling)

general, pre-genre skills:
speaking: fluency, confidence, conversation skills, including active listening
writing: reader engagement framework

ACADEMIC PROFICIENCY

- ETV2 | ETV2
  - acad. writing
  - acad. speaking
  - acad. presentation
  - acad. vocabulary
  - heuristics

academic skills:
scientific process
(incl. heuristics, methodology, data collection)
academic genres
(research report, poster, interview, debate, presentation)

literature / linguistics → OR

- Research seminar
- Bachelor paper
  - *writing*
  - *presentation*
  - *heuristics*

integrated course units:
various domains
various skills

week	lecture	seminar	Deadlines
Week 1: 25/01	Historical linguistics: Old English Introduction to heuristics		
Week 2: 2/10	Historical linguistics: Middle English		
Week 3: 9/10	Historical linguistics: Early Modern and Modern English		
Week 4: 16/10	Sociolinguistics: Regional varieties of English (1)		Identify topic Find academic paper
Week 5: 23/10	Sociolinguistics: Regional varieties of English (2)	Seminar week 1	
Week 6: 30/10	Sociolinguistics: Social varieties of English		
Week 7: 6/11	Phonology and orthography		
Week 8: 13/11	The lexicon and beyond		Write a short paraphrase
Week 9: 20/11	Morphology and syntax	Seminar week 2	
Week 10: 27/11	Translating English		
Week 11: 4/12	Translating English		
Week 12: 11/12	Summary + exam info		
Week 13: 18/12	!! subject to change		Deadline heuristics paper

Historical linguistics of English
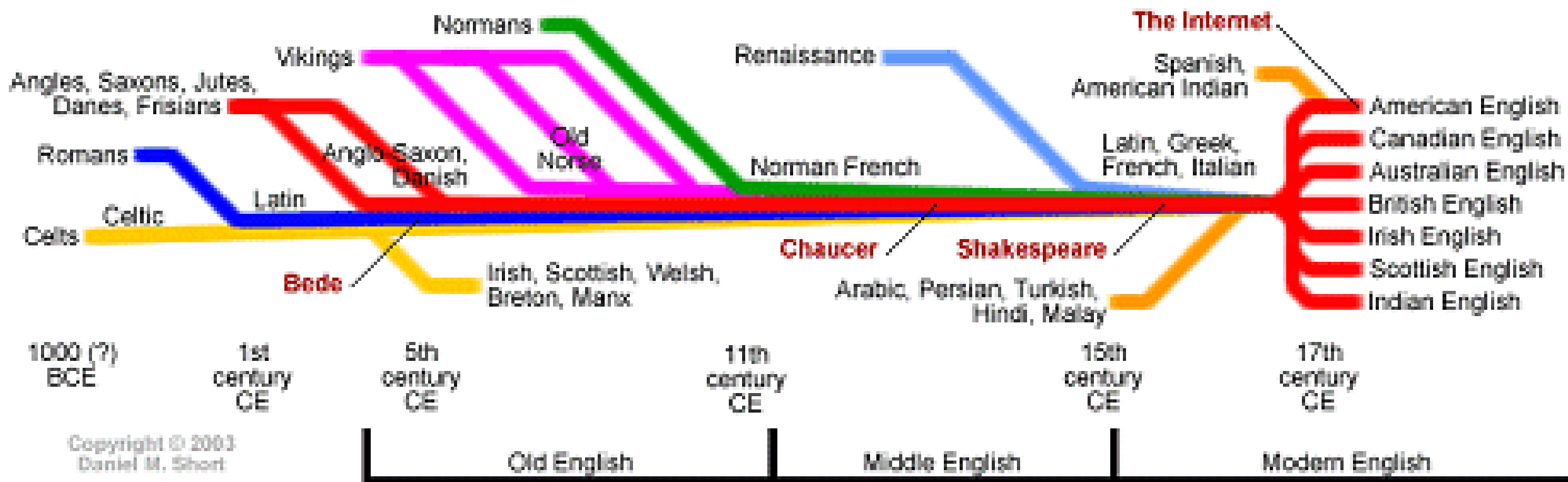
Diachrony:
Study across time

Synchrony:
Study at one time

Historical linguistics of English: Old English

1. The name and periodisation of the language
2. Where does the language come from?
3. What did the language look like?
4. What was the lexicon and grammar like?
5. Where is the language preserved? Old English literature
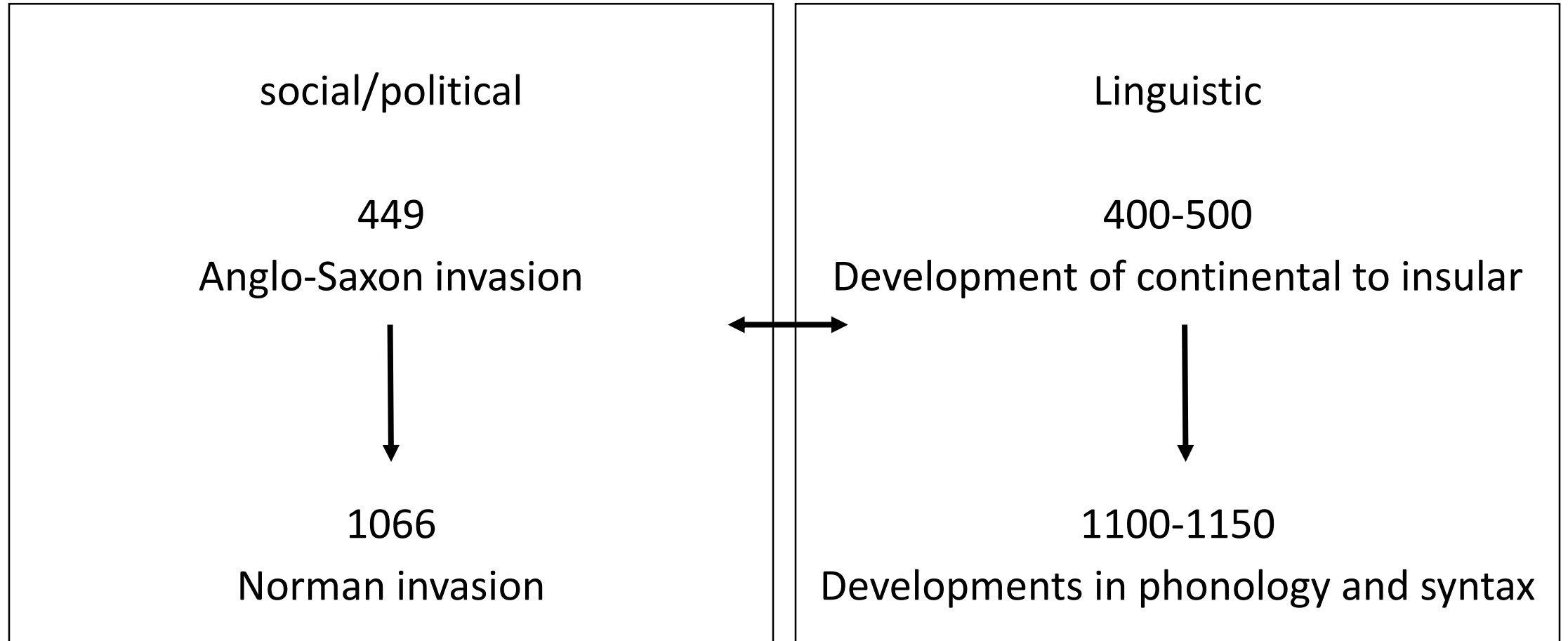
Old English: The name of the language

Old English

- Emphasizing continuity
- Emphasizing language, rather than culture
- Pre-Old → Middle → Modern

- In Old-English texts: "englisc"

Anglo-Saxon

- Emphasizing differences
- Emphasizing culture, rather than language
- Celtic → Anglo-Saxon → English

Old English: Periodisation

social/political

449
Anglo-Saxon invasion

1066
Norman invasion

Linguistic

400-500
Development of continental to insular

1100-1150
Developments in phonology and syntax

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

A short history: Sources

1. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle
   - Originally written in Old English
   - In the south-west of England
   - Around 9th century
   - Annals describing past and current events
   - Eight separate manuscript versions
     → local variations reflecting local interests
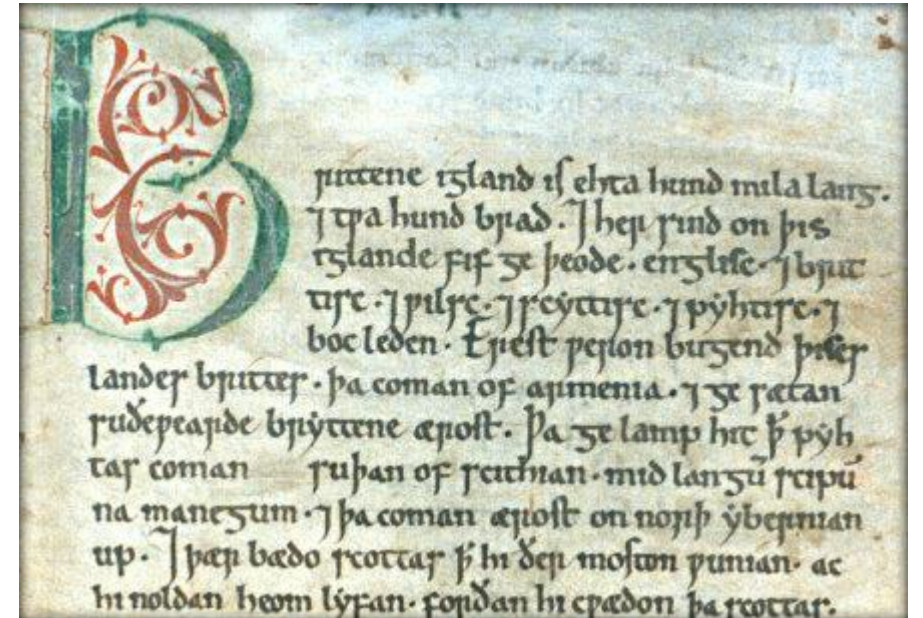
Opening Peterborough Chronicle, describing the British Isle.

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

A short history: Sources

2. Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*
   or *Ecclesiastical History of the English nation*
   - Written in Latin
   - In Northumbria
   - Completed in 731
   - Account of the history of Christianity
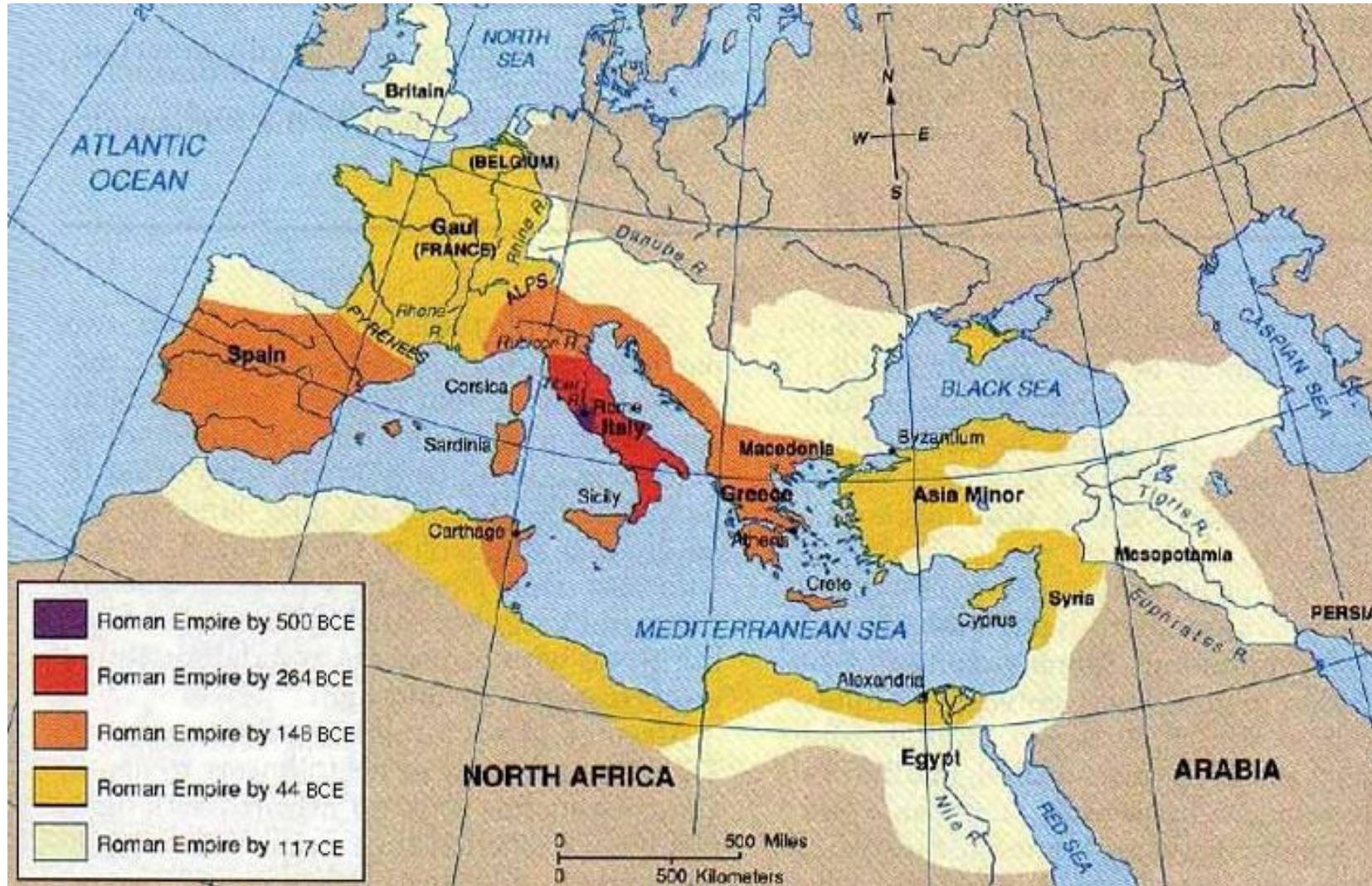   from its beginning to Bede's day

Moore manuscript, fol 128v, showing Caedmon's hymn.

Old English:
Where did the language come from?
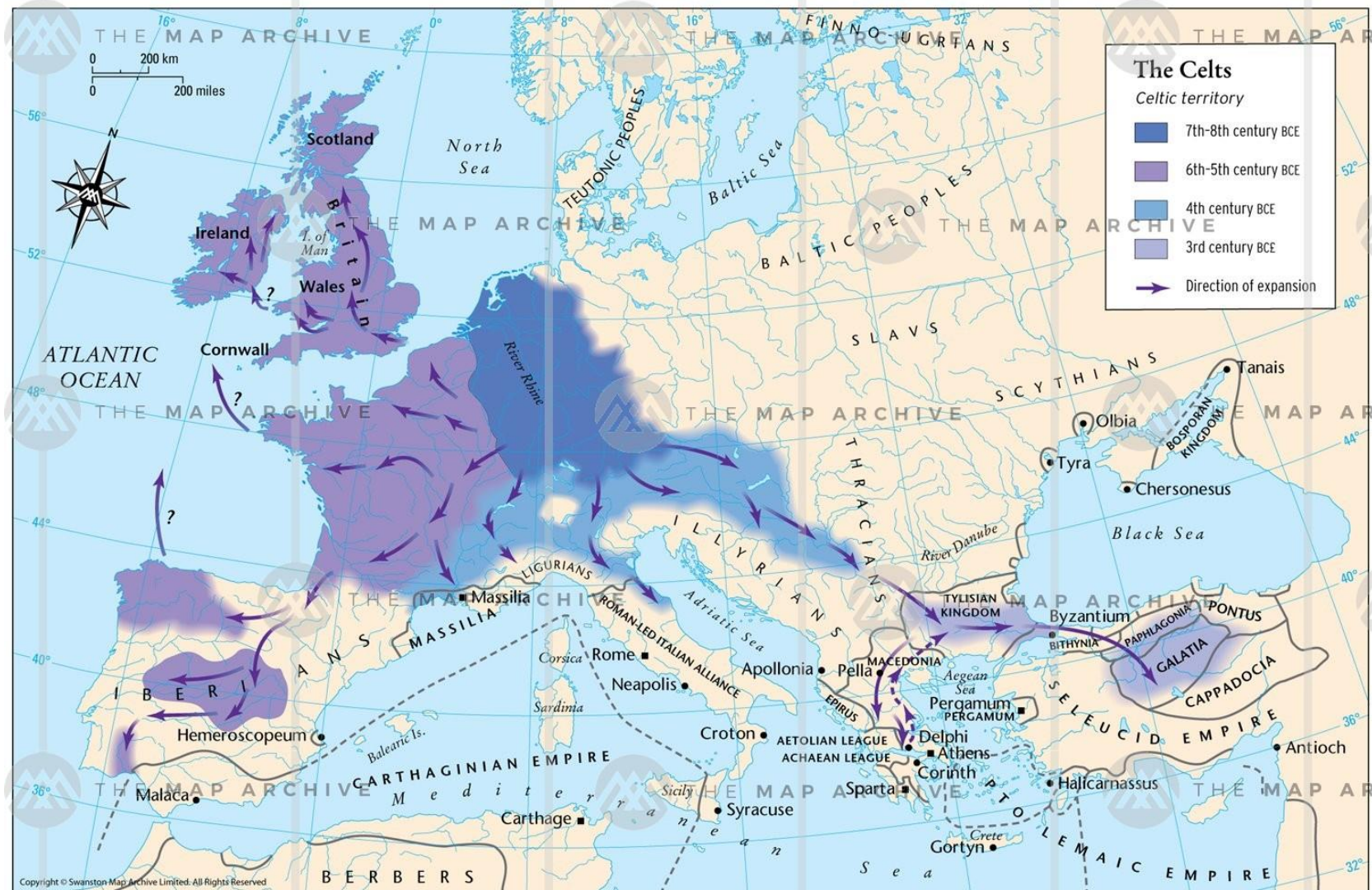
Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Roman rule (43AD – 406AD)

The Parker Chronicle explains:

> *47. In this year Claudius, the second Roman emperor, invaded Britain and conquered most of the land. He also subjected the Isle of Orkney to the rule of the Roman Empire.*

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Roman rule (43AD – 406AD)

Official language = Latin, spoken by

- Roman civil officials
- Military officers and settlers
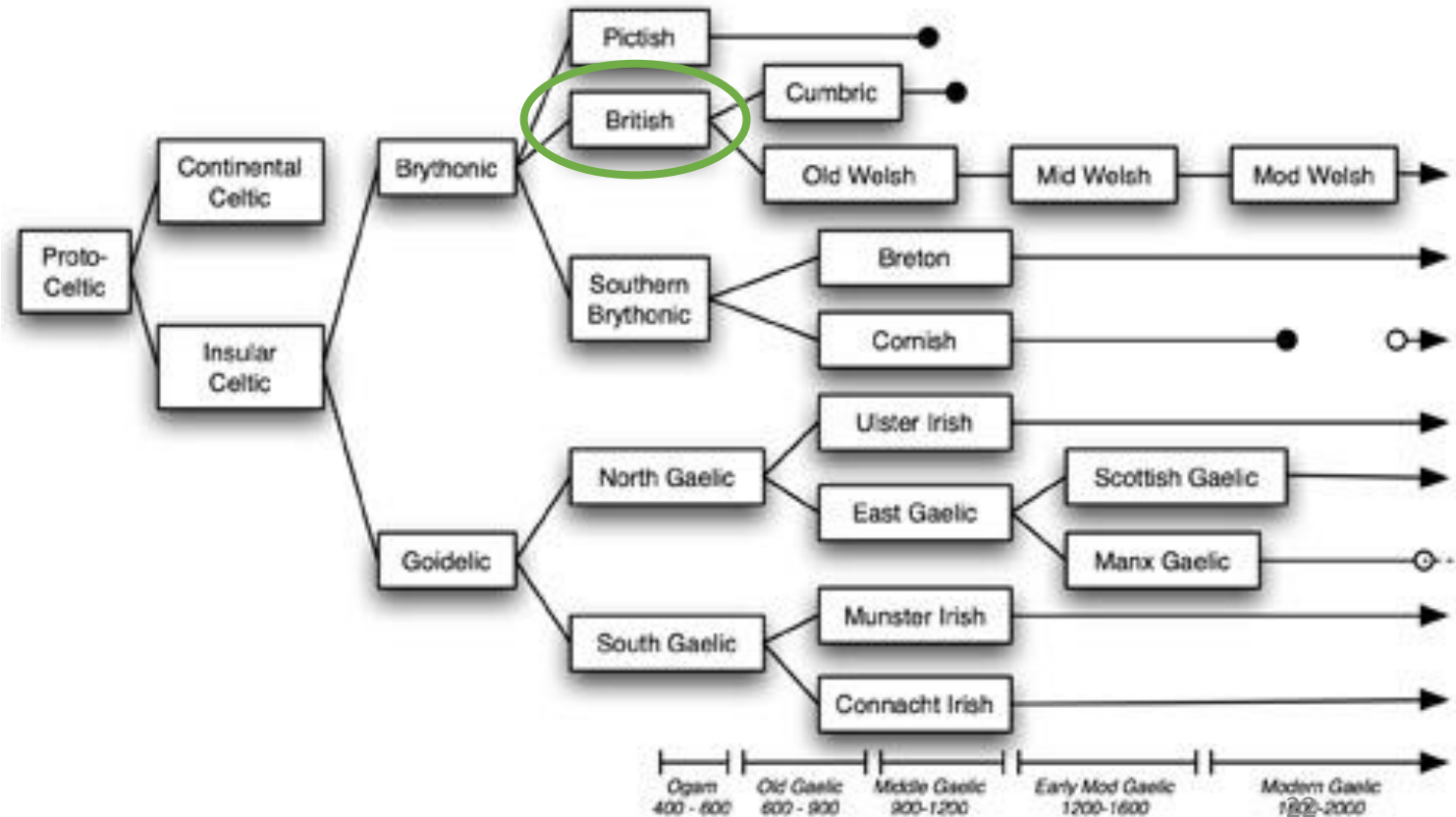- Britons who had dealings with Romans
  → Romano-British

Hadrian's wall.

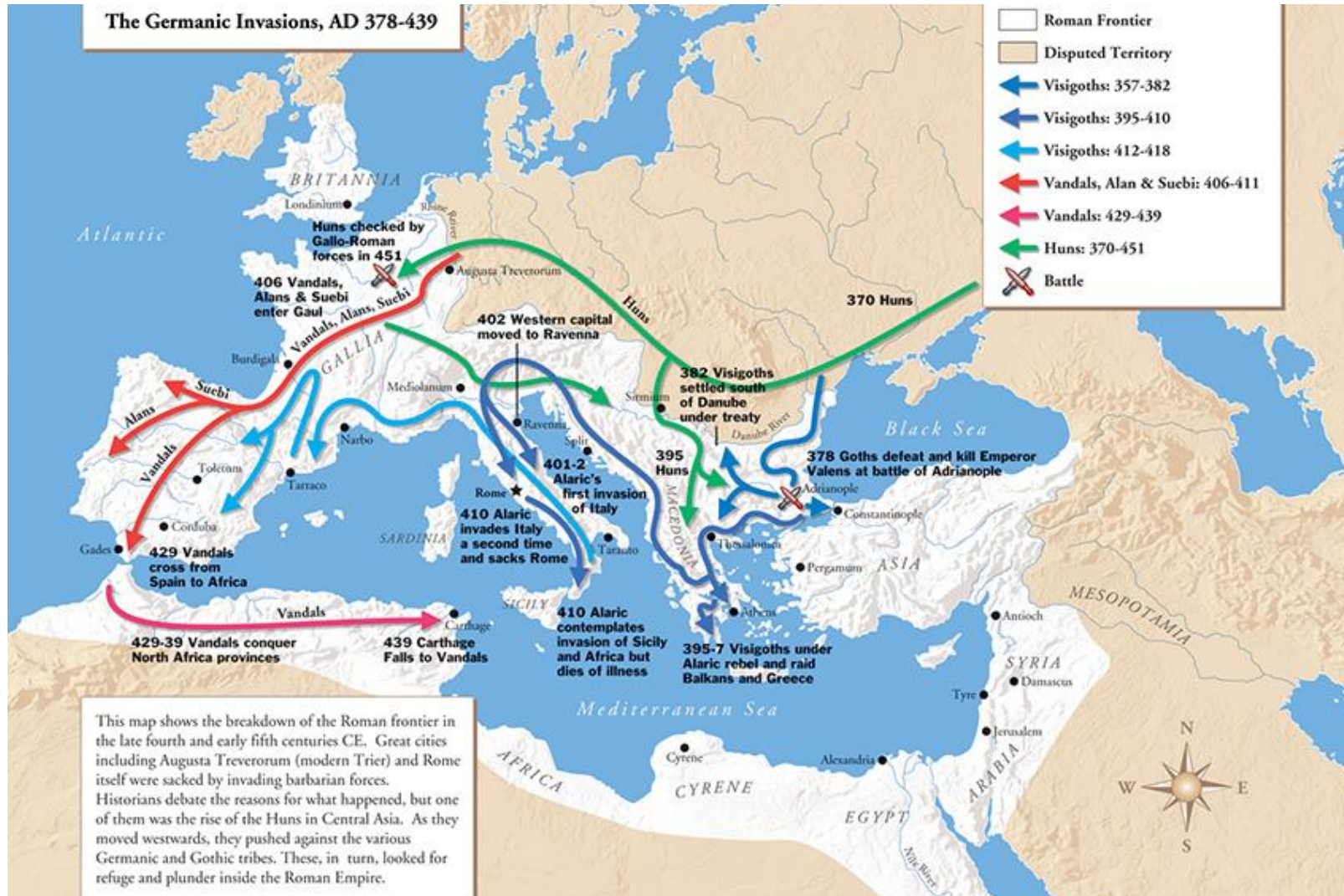# Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Roman rule (43AD – 406AD)

Native language = British

- **Celtic** language
- Modern descendants
  - Welsh
  - Breton
  - Cornish
  - Irish Gaelic
  - Scots Gaelic

Old English:
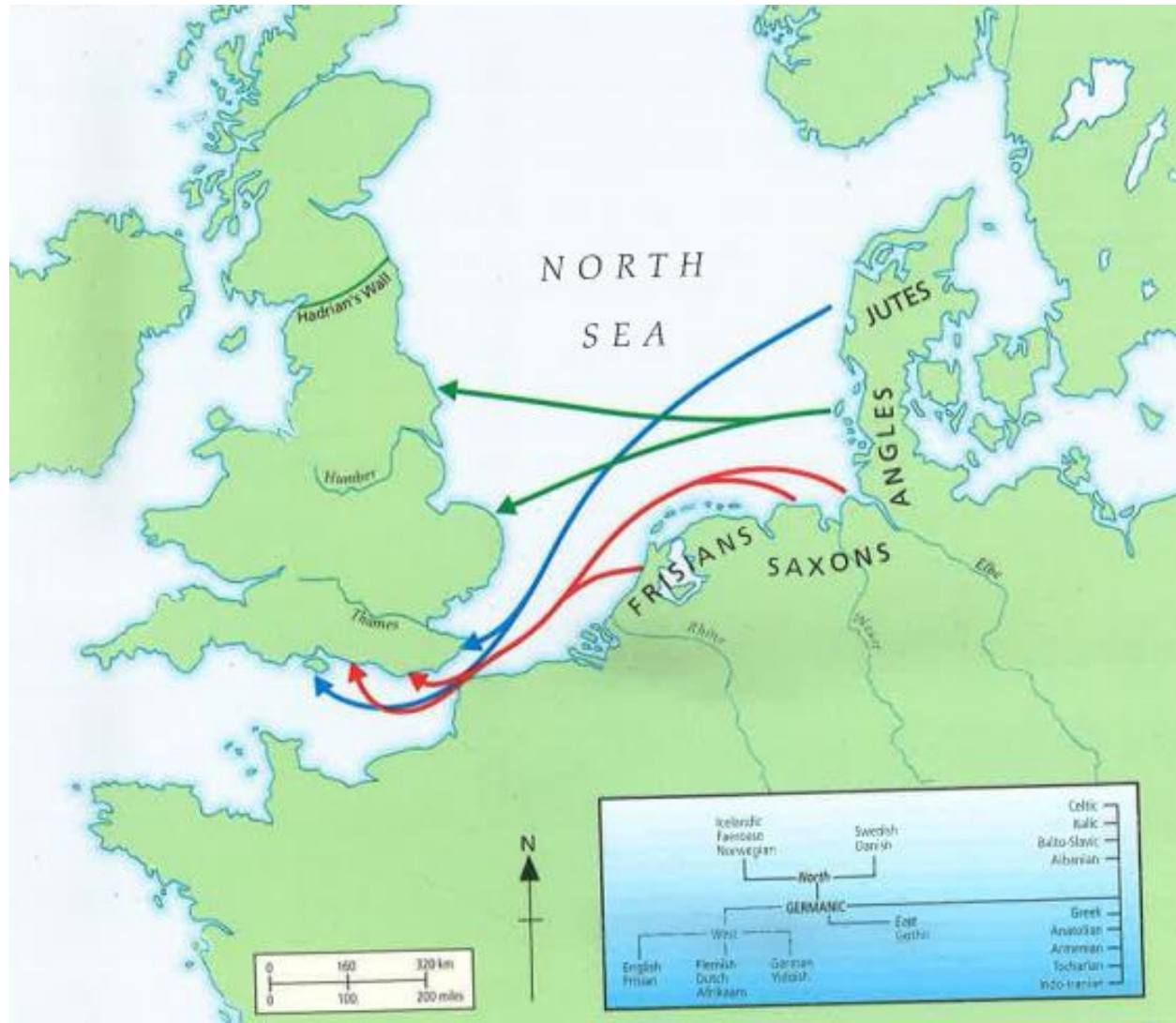# Where did the language come from?

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

The Peterborough Chronicle explains:

> **443**. *In this year the Britons sent overseas to Rome & asked the Romans for forces against the Picts, but they had none there because they were at war with Attila, king of the Huns & then the Britons sent to the Angles & made the same request to the princes of the Angles.*

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Old English: Where did the language come from?

The Peterborough Chronicle explains:

> **449**. *In this year Martianus and Valentinus came to power and reigned seven years. In their days **Vortigern** invited the **Angles** here and they then came hither to Britain in **three ships**, at a place called Ebbsfleet. King Vortigern **gave them land** in the south-east of this country, on condition that they **fought against the Picts**. They fought the Picts and were victorious wherever they fought. Then they sent to Anglen, and ordered the Angles to **send more help**, and reported the **cowardice** of the Britons and the **fertility** of the land. So the Angles at once sent a **larger force** to help the others. ...*

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

*… These men came from three Germanic nations – the Old **Saxons**, the **Angles** and the **Jutes**. From the Jutes came the people of Kent and the Isle of Wight – that is, the people who now live in the Isle of Wight, and the race among the West Saxons who are still called Jutes. From the Old Saxons came   the men of Essex, Sussex and Wessex. From Anglen, which has stood waste ever since, between the Jutes and Saxons, came the men of East Anglia, Middle Anglia, Mercia and the whole of Northumbria.*

Old English:
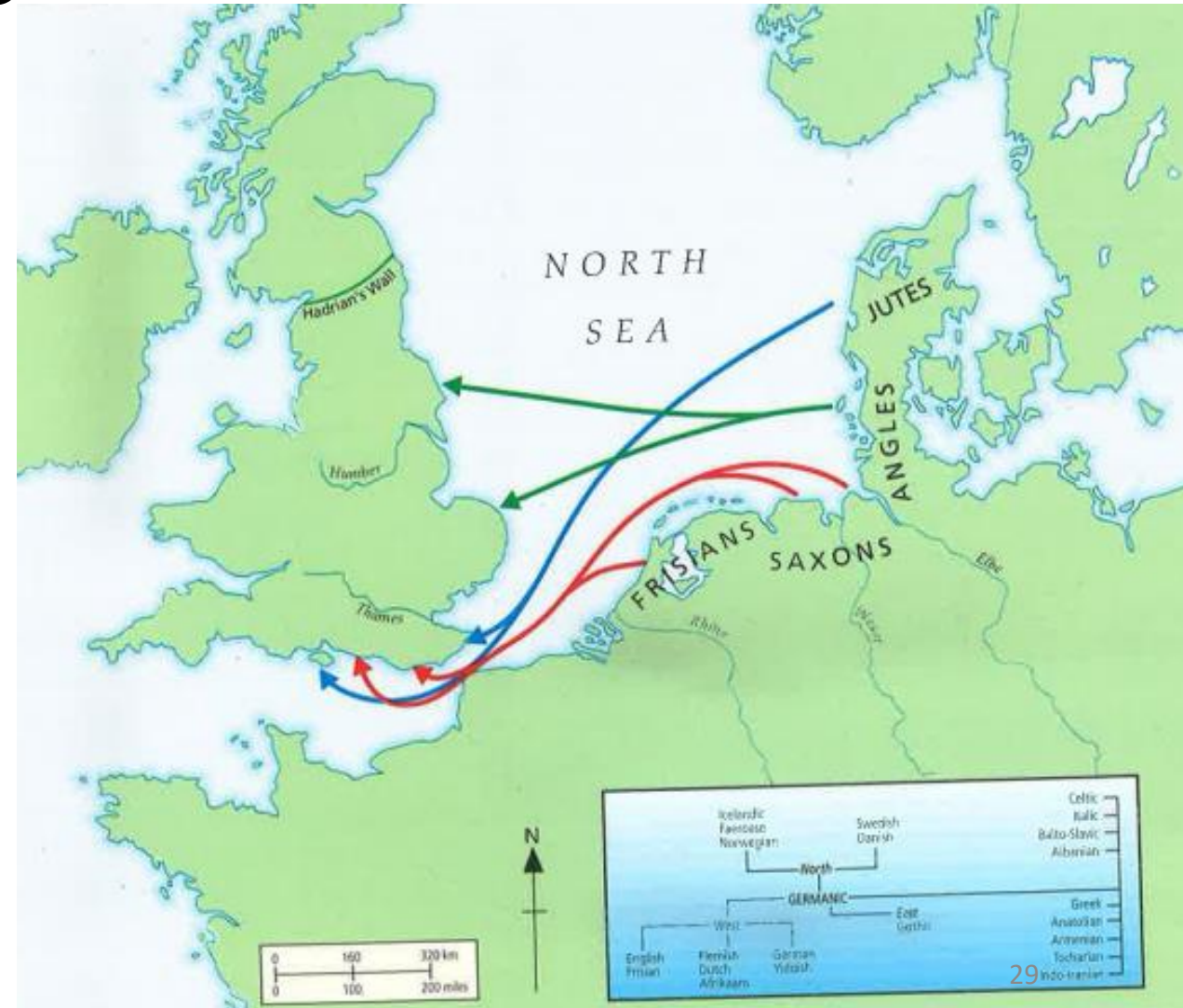# Where did the language come from?

Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum* explains:

*It was not long before such **hordes of these alien peoples** crowded into the island that the natives who had invited them began to live in **terror** ... They began by demanding a **greater supply of provisions**; then, seeking to provoke a quarrel, threatened that unless larger supplies were forthcoming, they would terminate the treaty and **ravage** the whole island. ... These heathen conquerors devastated the surrounding cities and countryside, extended the conflagration from the eastern to the western shores without opposition, and established a **stranglehold** over nearly all the doomed island. A few wretched survivors captured in the hills were **butchered** wholesale, and others, desperate with hunger, came out and surrendered to the enemy for food, although they were doomed to lifelong **slavery** even if they escaped instant massacre. Some **fled** overseas in their misery; others, clinging to their homeland, eked out a wretched and fearful existence **among the mountains, forests, and crags**, ever on the alert for danger.*

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Roman rule (43AD – 406AD) - Anglo-Saxon invasions (ca. 449)

- Waves of migration of Angles, Saxons and Jutes to England
- Gradual deposition of the native Celts, who were pushed back to the western parts (Cornwall, Wales)

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

- Little influence of the indigenous language in Old English
  - No integration between Brits and Anglo-Saxon people
  - Low social status of Brits (slaves)
- Lexical influences that did survive:
  - Geographical names
    (e.g., **Avon**, Carlisle, …)
  - Geographical features
    (e.g., Old English *cumb*, meaning small valley,
    hollow in names like **Batcombe**, Eastcombe,
    Cumwhitton, Cumdivock, …)

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Old English: Where did the language come from?

2nd invasion: Christian missionaries

- Led by Augustine AD 597
  - sent by Pope Gregory to convert the Anglo-Saxons
- Beginning of literary age in a rapidly growing number of monastic centres
  - Latin manuscripts (esp. Bible and religious texts)
  - Old English manuscripts
  - glossaries (Latin – Old English)
  - early inscriptions and poems (AD 700), e.g. Cædmon's hymn
 - Beowulf (manuscript AD 1000, probably composed 8th c.)

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Latin: lasting source of influence

- Early loans: contact & trade with Romans
  - Candle, belt, street, mass, …

- Later loans: conversion to Christianity
  - Hymn, grammar, priest, chalice, …

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

- Wars within
  - Several "kings of England"
  - Different parts of the country
  - Eventually King Alfred of Wessex
- Wars from without
  - Invading Vikings (8th century onwards)
  - From raids to permanent settlements
  - Truce between King Alfred and King Guthrum in Treaty of Wedmore (886) = Danelaw
  - 10th century: King Cnut, king of England, Denmark, and Norway
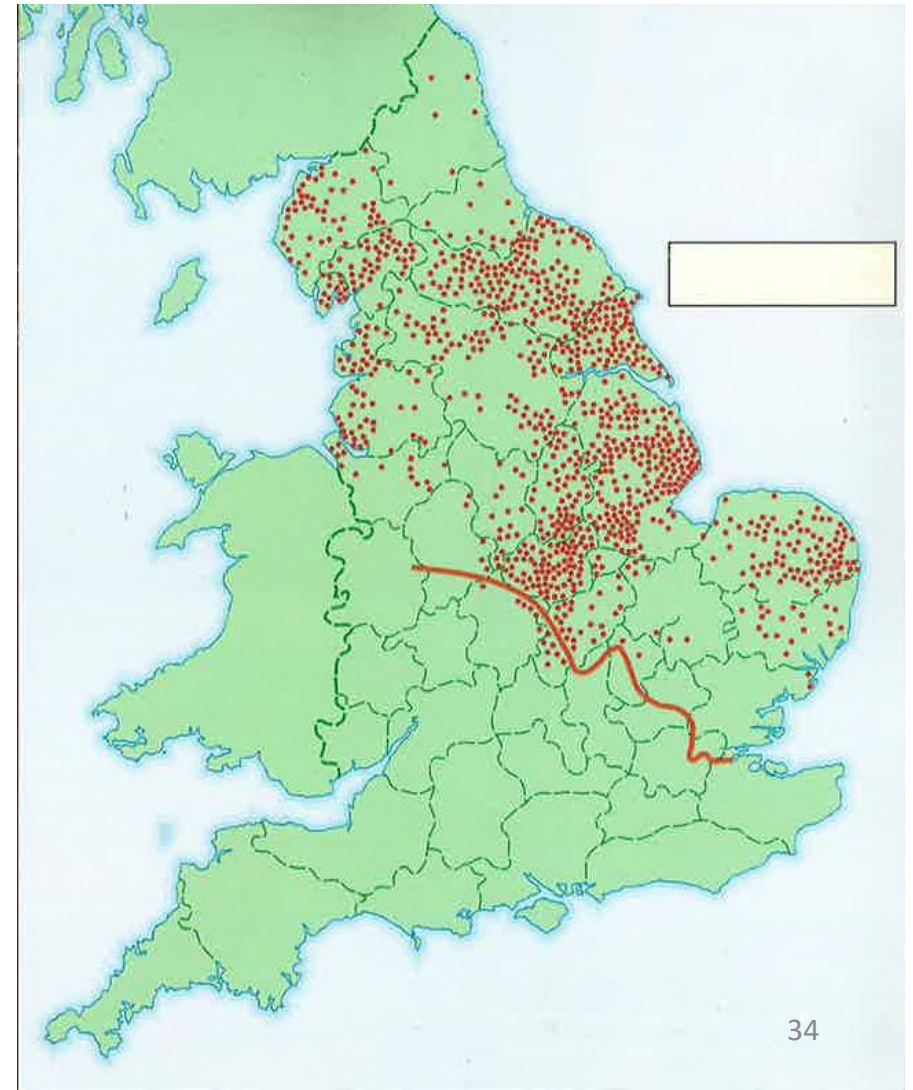
Old English:
Where did the language come from?

Scandinavian influence on the language

- Close contact and assimilation
- Lexical influence:
  - Many basic vocabulary came into the language (over 1800)
    - Words with sk-: skirt, whisk, …
      - Old English *heofon* → Scandinavian *sky*
  - Place names
    - -by
    - -thorp
    - -thwait
    - -toft
  - Patronyms: -ing → -son
    - Ellie Gould**ing** vs Boris John**son**

Old English: Where did the language come from?

Scandinavian influence on the language

- Close contact and assimilation
- Grammatical influence
  - Personal pronouns
    - Scandinavian *they, them, their* instead of Old English *hie, hira, him*
  - Verb *to be*
    - Scandinavian *are* instead of Old English *sindon*
  - Verb conjugation
    - 3rd person singular –s in present tense instead of Old English *-ð*

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

King Alfred's influence on the language:

- Christian texts accessible ➜ translations into Old English

- During his reign Anglo-Saxon Chronicles
  - Year-by-year list of events
  - From Christ till contemporary events

Opening Peterborough Chronicle, describing the British Isle.

Old English:
Where did the language come from?

King Alfred's influence on the language:

- Need for a standard language
  - Before 4 main dialects:
    1. Mercian: between Thames and Humber
       O before nasal (mon, lond)
    2. Northumbrian: north of Humber → Bede
       O before nasal (mon, lond)
    3. Kentish: present-day Kent + Isle of Wight
    4. West-Saxon: south of Thames → King Alfred
       ie (*giet* versus *get*)

Old English:
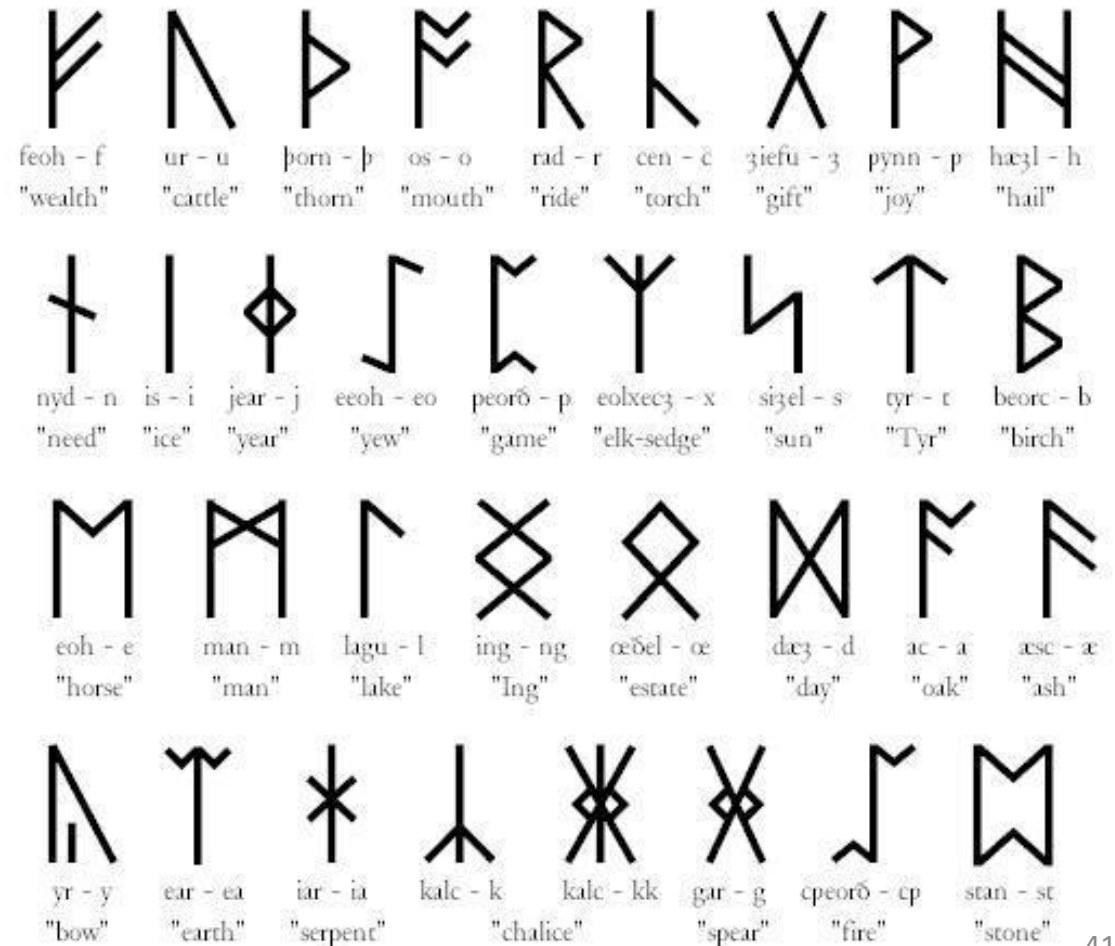# Where did the language come from?

THE INDO-EUROPEAN FAMILY OF LANGUAGES
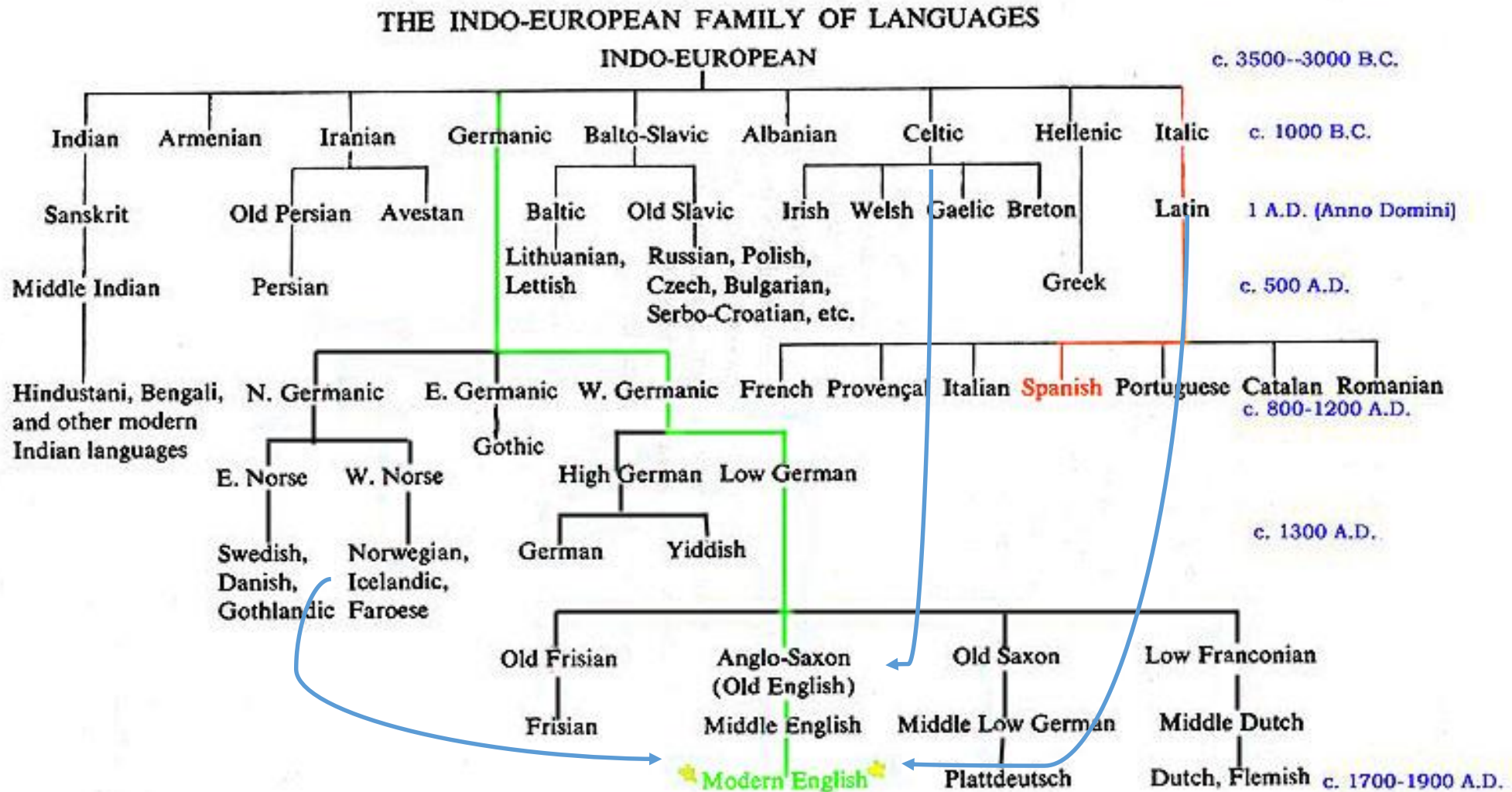
Old English
What did the language look like?

Old English:
What did the language look like?

Runic alphabet:
- Old English "run"
  - Whisper
  - Mystery
  - Secret
  - Letter
- Continental alphabet:
  - Fuþark
  - 24 characters
- British alphabet:
  - Fuþork
  - 33 characters

feoh – f "wealth" ur – u "cattle" þorn – þ "thorn" os – o "mouth" rad – r "ride" cen – c "torch" ȝiefu – ȝ "gift" pynn – p "joy" hæȝl – h "hail"

nyd – n "need" is – i "ice" jear – j "year" eeoh – eo "yew" peorð – p "game" eolxecȝ – x "elk-sedge" siȝel – s "sun" tyr – t "Tyr" beorc – b "birch"

eoh – e "horse" man – m "man" lagu – l "lake" ing – ng "Ing" œðel – œ "estate" dæȝ – d "day" ac – a "oak" æsc – æ "ash"

yr – y "bow" ear – ea "earth" iar – ia "serpent" kalc – k "chalice" kalc – kk gar – g "spear" cpeorð – cp "fire" stan – st "stone"

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Image created by J.D. Higgins. Tpee xyviii Sept 2004

Old English:
What did the language look like?

Few original texts survived

- Inscriptions on mostly on weapons, jewellery, etc.
  - 5th or 6th c.
  - by those who owned or made them
- Carved inscriptions
  - E.g., Franks casket
  - E.g., Ruthwell Cross
  - E.g., Brussels Cross

Old English:
What did the language look like?

- Northumbrian, 7th or 8th c. (cf. Enc. p. 9)

- Whale bone box

Fisc flodu   ahof on ferg-
enberig
'Flood/tide lifted fish unto cliffbank'

Old English:
What did the language look like?

Ruthwell Cross
- Northumbrian, 8th c.
- Dumfries
- cf. Enc. p. 9

The Dream of the Rood

Krist wæs on rodi
Christ was on the cross
ic wæs miþ blodæ bistemid
I was with blood bedewed

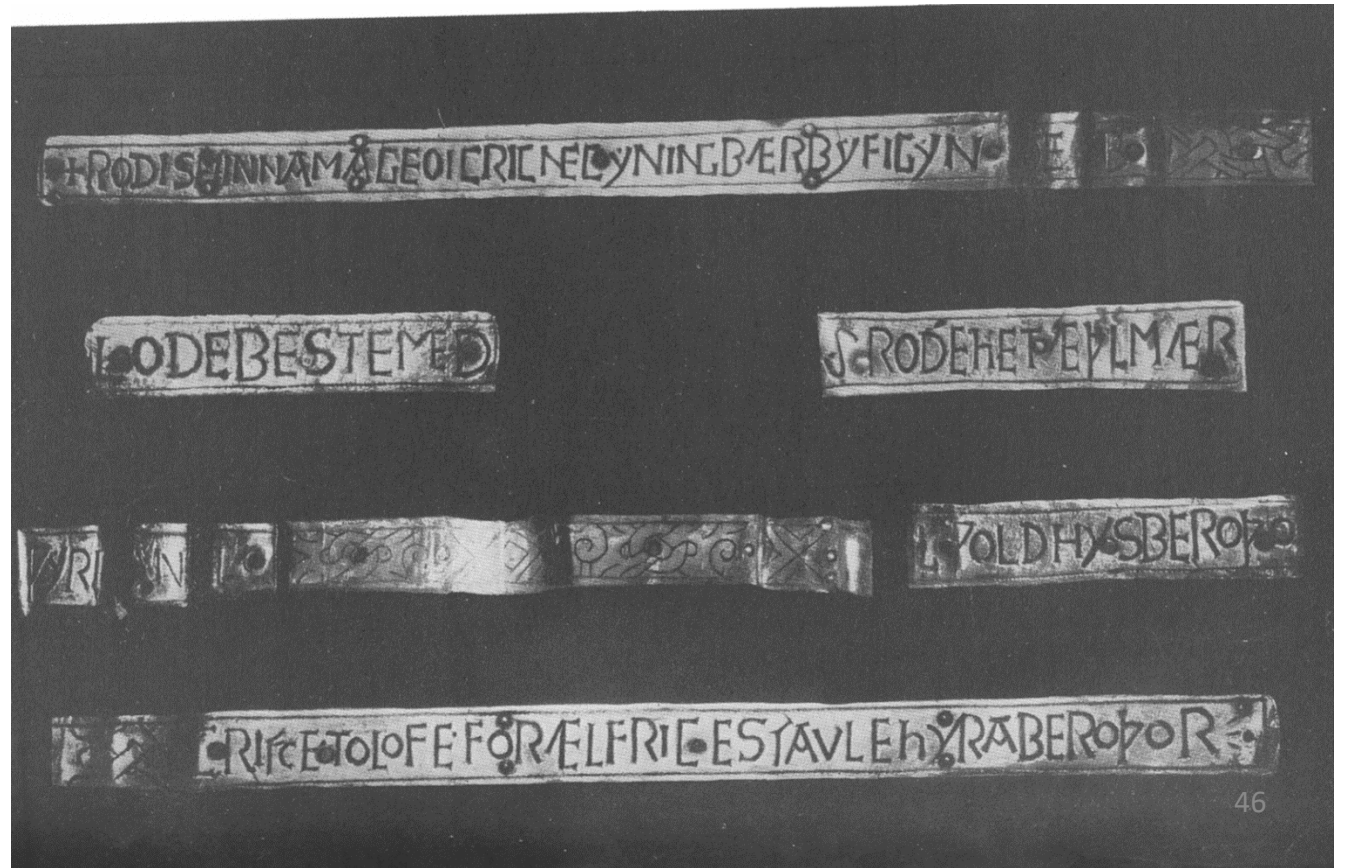# Old English:
What did the language look like?

Brussels Cross

- Cathedral of Saint Michael and Saint Gudula

- Late West-Saxon

- Beginning 11th c.

- No runes, but Roman alphabet
  (yet runes are still in evidence until the 11th c., especially in the north)
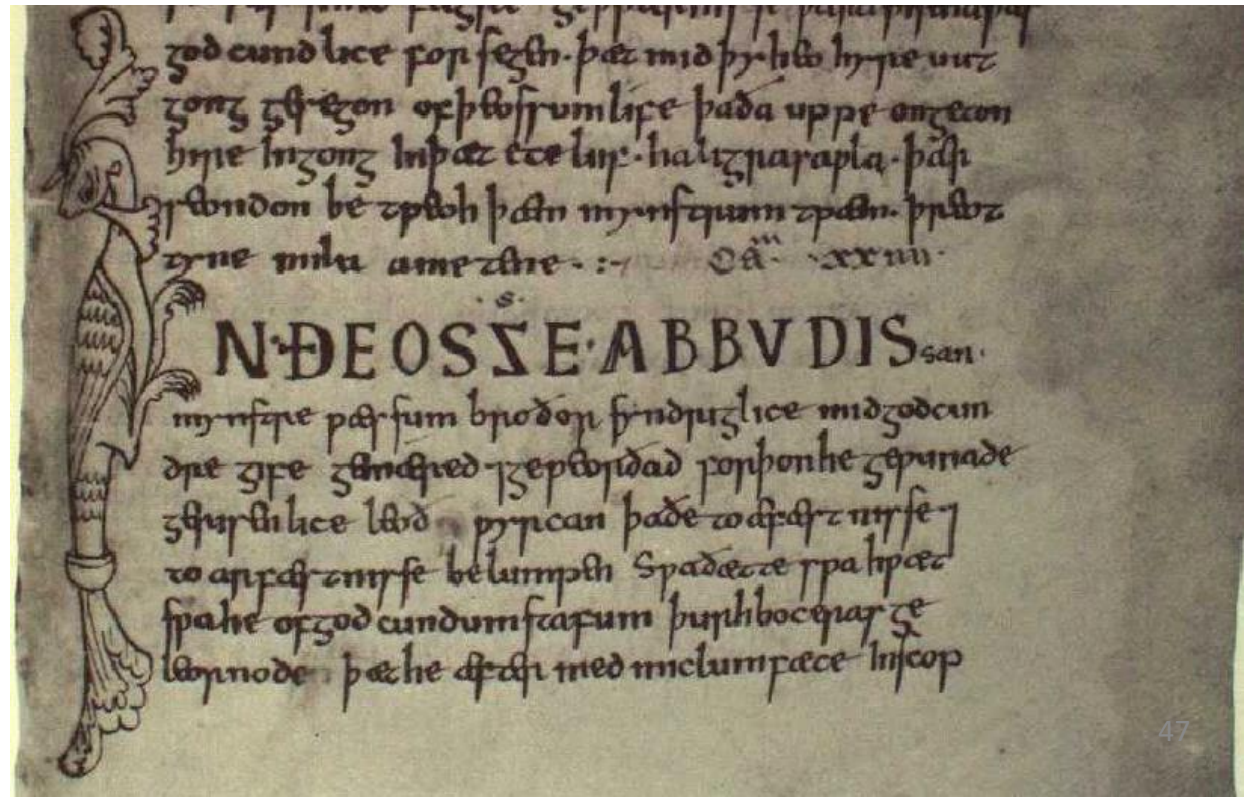
Old English:
What did the language look like?

Rod is mīn nama. Gēo ic
rīcne cyning bær byfigynde,
blōde bestēmed

Old English:
What did the language look like?

From runic alphabet to Roman alphabet

- Institutionalisation of Christianity
- Some sounds not present in Roman alphabet
- Borrowed from runes
  - ƿ wyn (w): sƿa
  - ȝ yogh (g): ȝod
  - þ thorn (th): þæt
  - ð that or eth (th): ðeosse
  - æ ash: wæs

Old English:
What did the language look like?

Other things of note

- No punctuation marks
- No capital letters (or used differently)
- Abbreviations:
  - ond = $_7$ (e.g. $_7$swarede),
  - that = þ
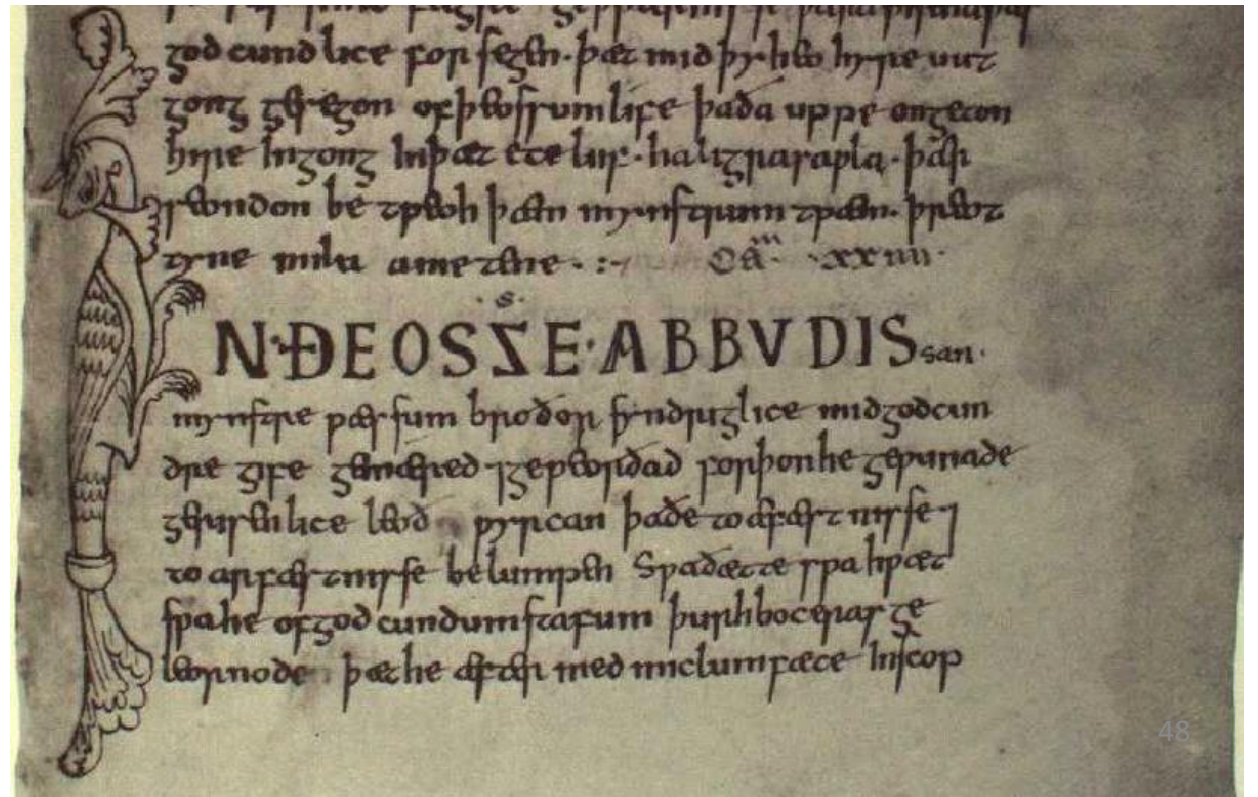
Old English:
What did the language look like?

… and what did it sound like?

- You say what you read
  - Old English *cniht* vs Modern English *knight*

- Familiar sounds to other Germanic languages
  - Old English *fugol* vs Modern Dutch *vogel*

- Word stresses
  - Cf. literature

Diachrony:

Study across time

Old English
What was the lexicon like?

Old English:
What was the lexicon like?

- Majority of words close to present-day English
  - singan, grette, ondswarede, onslepte, cwæð (*quoth*)
  - Modern English: …?
- With prefix ge- (cf. Dutch past participle)
  - e.g. geleornode, geseted, geseah, gehyrde
- Most prepositions and pronouns identical in form (but not always in meaning)
- Some semantic changes
  - *fugol* = bird, not fowl
  - *wīf* = woman, not wife
  - *deor* = animal, not deer

Diachrony:

Study across time

Old English: What was the lexicon like?

Some very strange words

- Disappeared:
  - neata, swefn, beboden, frumsceaft, þa, se, onfeng, forlet

- Compound words:
  - weoruldhade: world-hood = secular life
  - gebeorscipe: beer-ship = banquet
  - frumsceaft: first creation
  - endebyrdnesse: ende (end)-byrd (birth, rank)-nesse = order
  - gōdspel: gōd (good) – spel (tidings)= gospel

- Present participles:
  - gongende, sprecende, Scyppendes

Diachrony:

Study across time

Old English
What was the lexicon like?

Vocabulary very different from today

- 85% of Old English vocabulary not in use anymore
- Loan words:
  - 3% in Old English; preferred coining new words through compounding
  - >70% in Present-Day English (starting from Middle English onwards)

Composition of modern English by languages of origin (top 2% vocabulary)

Frequency list courtesy of wordfrequency.info

Language of origin by percentage

Most frequently used words in English
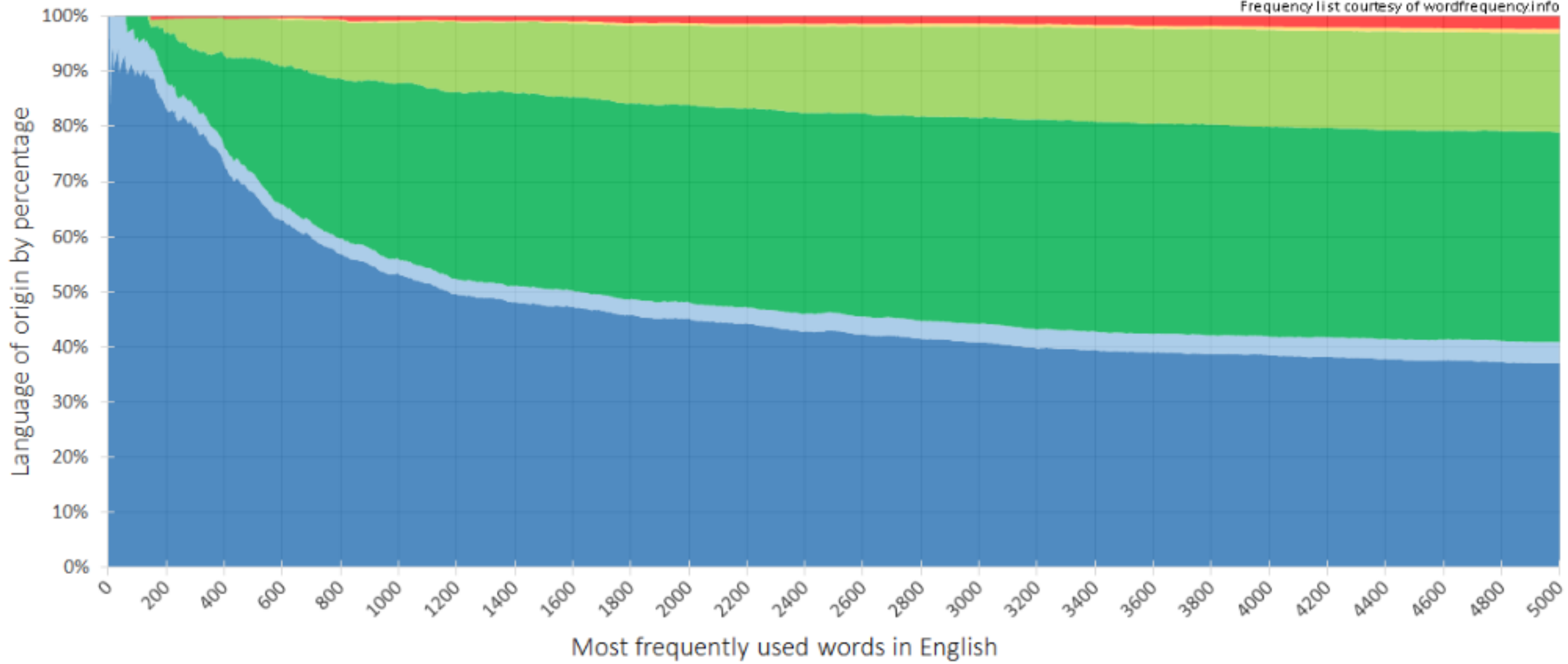
■ Anglo-Saxon ■ Other Germanic (Old Norse, Dutch...) ■ French ■ Latin* ■ Greek ■ Other/unknown

* of direct Latin origin or not sufficiently different from root

made by Andreas Simons

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Old English:
What was the lexicon like?

Kennings:
- *swan-rad, hron-rad, hwæl-weg*
- *ban-hus*
- *beado-leoma*

⇒Meaning?

- sea: 'swan-road' *(swan-rad)*,
         'whale-road' *(hron-rad)*,
         'whale-way' *(hwæl-weg)*
- body: 'bone-house' *(ban-hus)*
- sword: 'battle-light' *(beado-leoma)*

Synchrony:

Study at one time

Old English:
What was the lexicon like?

Kennings

i.e., a poetic compound, made up of two or more nouns standing for another noun, occurring in ancient Germanic languages, notably Old Norse (Icelandic) and Old English. According to the strictest definitions it must be metaphorical in that the poetic compound must not be literally identical to any of its components.

Old English
What was the grammar like?

Old English:
What was the grammar like?

Inflected language

1. Cases: nominative, accusative, genitive, dative, and instrumental
   - Nouns
   - Adjectives
   - Personal pronouns
   - Demonstrative pronouns
   - Articles
   ➔ Relatively free word order:
   - se guma geseah þone bodan
   - þone bodan geseah se guma
   - Geseah þone bodan se guma
   - Se guma þone bodan geseah
   (the man   saw   the messenger)

Diachrony:

Study across time

Old English:
What was the grammar like?

Inflected language

1. Cases ➔ Relatively free word order

2. Elaborate verb systems:

   - markers for
     - Person
     - Number
     - Tense
   - 4 types
     - Strong (changes vowel in past)
     - Weak (adds dental in past)
     - Present-preterite
     - Irregular

Diachrony:

Study across time

Old English: What was the grammar like?

Inflected language

1. Cases ➜ Relatively free word order

2. Elaborate verb systems

3. Grammatical gender (rather than natural)

   - Se wifman, the woman → grammatically masculine

     - Adjectives will also be masculine

     - Pronouns will also be masculine (here: he)

   - Implication:

     - Declension not only by case

     - But also by gender

Diachrony:

Study across time

Old English literature

Old English literature

- "The history of early English prose is a record of unprecedented decisions to compose in the vernacular. In many sphere of intellectual, religious, and practical life, the English, unlike the contemporaries on the Continent, chose their **native tongue as the favored instrument of expressions**.

- England has a **code of laws** early in the seventh century, and it was writing in the English of that day. Bede's eight-century **translation** of the Gospel of Saint John, now unfortunately lost, was the first rendering of the New Testament into a post-classical European language after Ulfilas's fourth-century version.
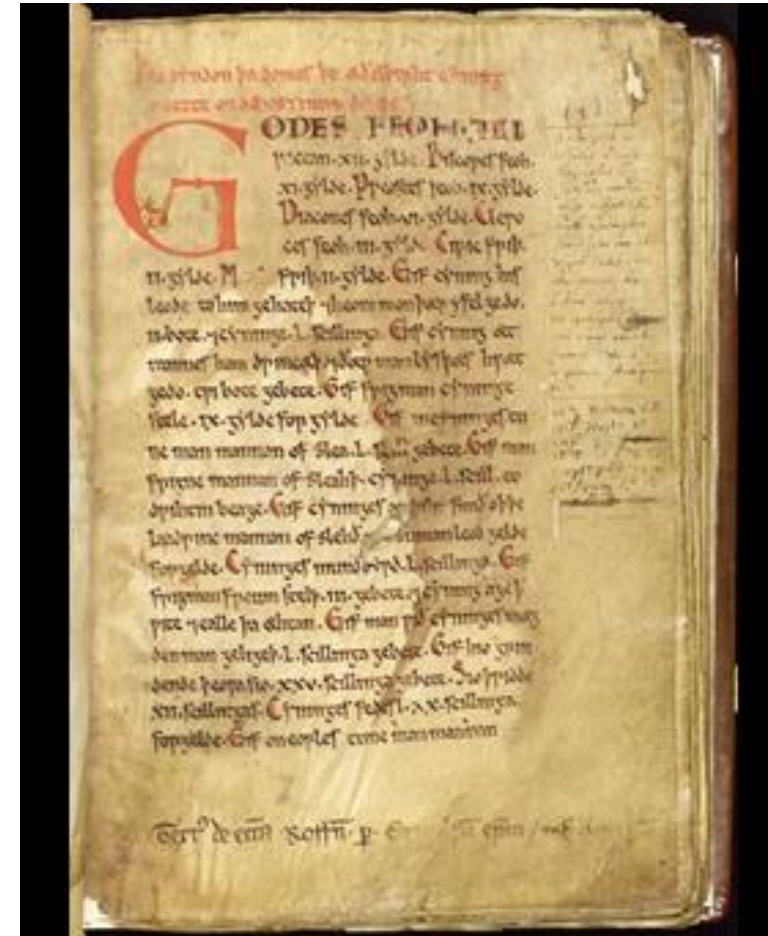
Old English literature

- In the tenth century Aelfric produced the first **Latin grammar** using the vernacular language (…). Many more examples could be cited, for the tradition of native composition was deeply imbedded in English culture from the seventh to the eleventh centuries.

- **The fact remains that England, almost alone in the early Middle Ages, created a national prose literature of astonishing scope and variety.**

(Greenfield & Calder, 1986: 38)

Old English literature

1. Prose
   - Anglo-Saxon Chronicles
   - Bede's History
   - Translations
   - Homiletic writings and other religious prose
   - Fiction
   - Scientific and medical writings
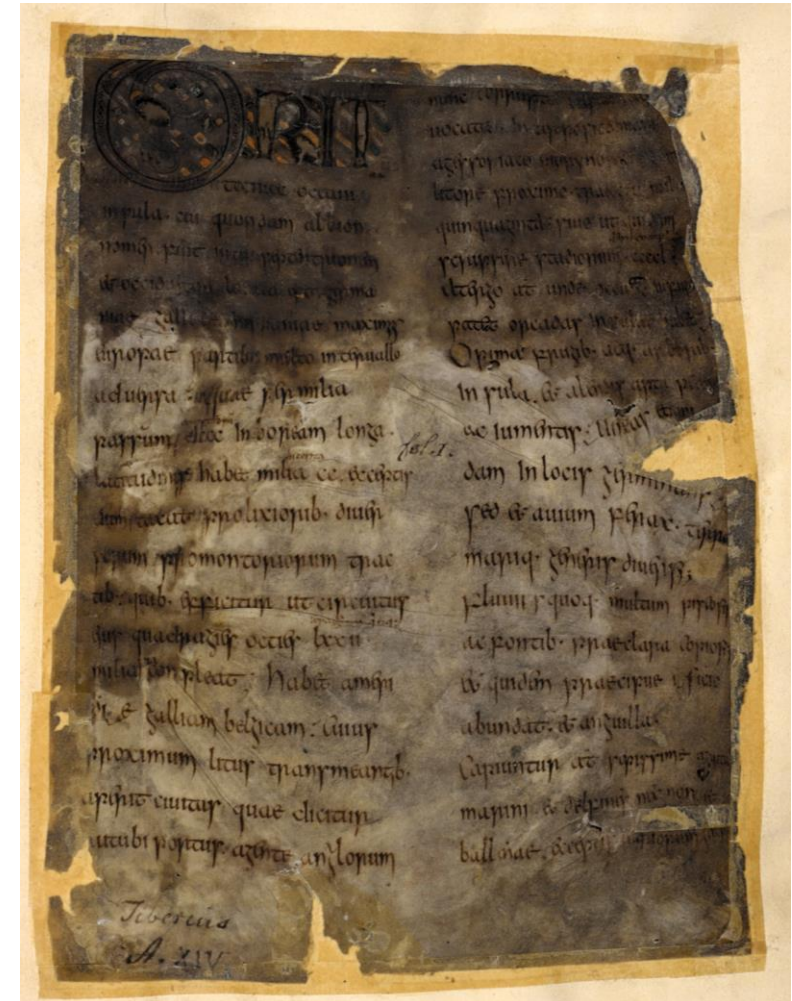   - Laws, charters and wills

The laws of king Æthelberht of Kent
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Old English literature

1. Prose
2. Poetry
   - Some 30,000 lines
     - Christ & Satan
     - Dream of the Rood
     - The Seafarer
     - Riddles
     - The battle of Maldon
   - Alliterative verse
   - Caedmon's Hymn = baptism of Germanic alliterative verse for Christian purposes

Cædmon's Hymn
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Old English literature: Cædmon's hymn

<u>Wæs</u> hē se mon in weoruldhāde <u>geseted</u> oð þā tīde þe hē wæs gelyfdre ylde, ond hē <u>næfre nænig </u>lēoð geleornade. Ond hē for þon oft in gebēorscipe, þonne þær wæs blisse intinga gedēmed, þæt hēo ealle sceolden þurh endebyrdnesse be hearpan singan, þonne hē geseah þā hearpan him nēalēcan, þonne ārās hē <u>for</u> scome from þæm symble ond <u>hām</u> ēode tō his hūse.

Old English literature: Cædmon's hymn

Þā hē þæt þā sumre tīde <u>dyde</u>, þæt hē forlēt þæt hūs þæs gebēorscipes ond ūt wæs gongende tō nēata scipene, þāra heord him wæs þære neahte beboden, þā hē ðā þær in gelimplicre tīde his leomu on reste gesette ond onslēpte, <u>þā stōd him sum mon</u> æt þurh swefn ond <u>hine</u> hālette ond grētte ond <u>hine be his noman nemnde</u>: 'Cædmon, sing mē hwæthwugu.'

Old English literature: Cædmon's hymn

Þā ondswarede hē ond cwæð : 'Ne con ic nōht singan; ond ic for þon of þeossum gebēorscipe ūt ēode, ond hider gewāt, for þon ic nāht singan ne cūðe.' Eft hē cwæð, se ðe mid hine sprecende wæs : 'Hwæðre þū meaht mē singan'. Þā cwæð hē: 'Hwæt sceal ic singan ?' Cwæð hē : 'Sing mē frumsceaft.' Þā hē ðā þās andsware onfēng, þā ongon hē sōna singan in herenesse Godes Scyppendes þā fers ond þā word þe hē nǣfre gehyrde, þāra endebyrdnes þis is :

Old English literature: Cædmon's hymn

Nū wē sculon herigean heofonrīces Weard,
Meotodes meahte ond his mōdgeþanc,
weorc Wuldorfæder, swā hē wundra gehwæs,
ēce Drihten, ōr onstealde.
Hē ærest scēop eorðan bearnum
heofon tō hrōfe, hālig Scyppend.
Þā middangeard monncynnes Weard,
ēce Drihten, æfter tēode
fīrum foldan, Frēa ælmihtig.

Old English literature: Caedmon's hymn

Now we ought to praise the Guardian of the heavenly kingdom,
The might of the Creator and his conception,
The work of the glorious Father, as he of each of the wonders,
Eternal Lord, established the beginning.
He first created for the sons of men
Heaven as a roof, holy Creator;
Then the middle-earth, the Guardian of mankind,
The eternal Lord, afterwards made
The earth for men, the Lord almighty.

Treharne, E. (Ed.). (2004). *Old and Middle English c. 890-c. 1400: An anthology*. London: Blackwell Publishing.

Old English literature

1. Prose

2. Poetry

3. Epic poetry:
   - Beowulf
   - Widsiþ

Beowulf
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