



# HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH

Kristína Macejová



# POSITION OF ENGLISH IN THE WORLD

- 3rd most common native language
- Global lingua franca
- Official language of 60 states, EU, world organizations
- Most popular second language



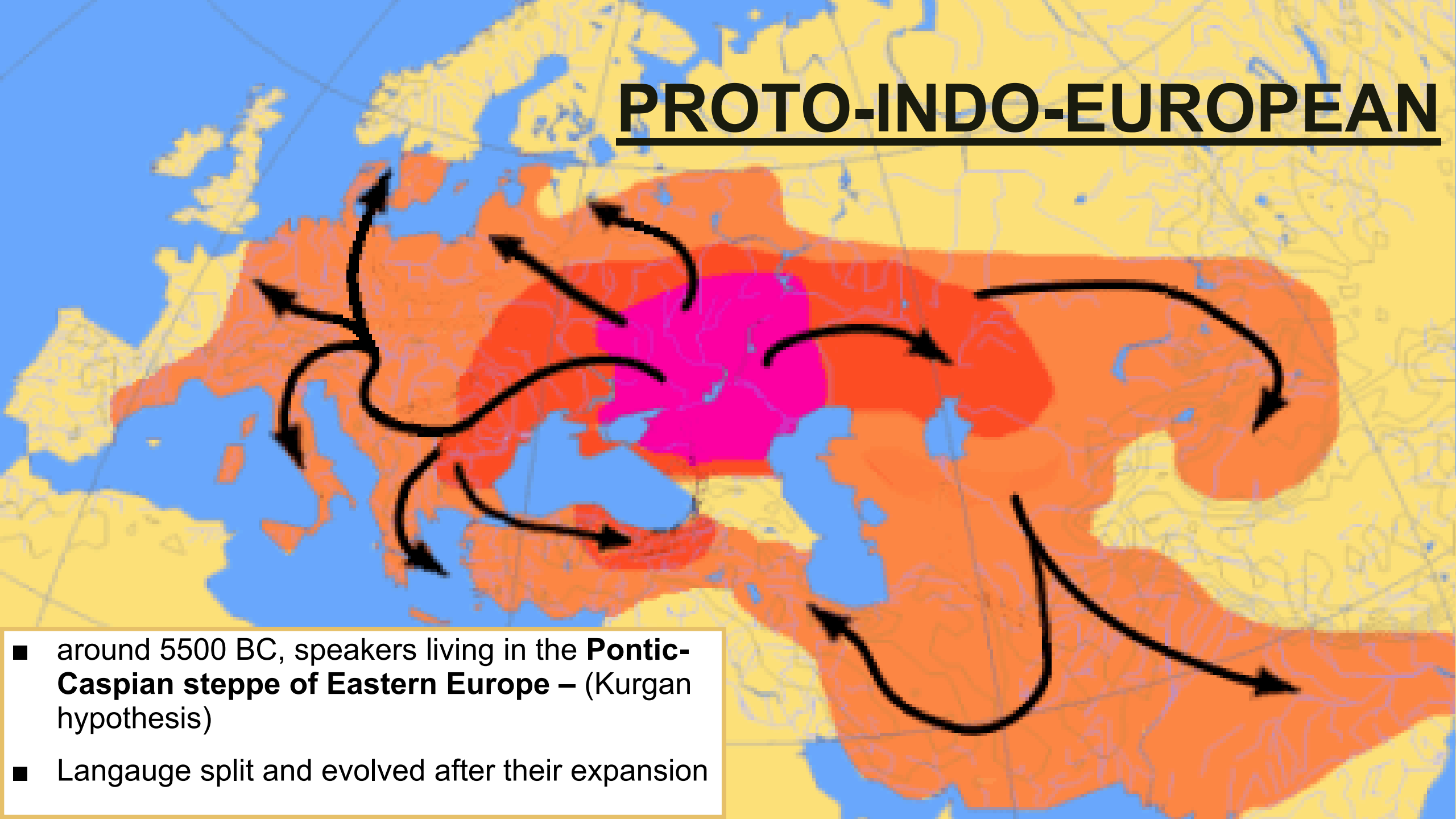
# Periodization of the English Language

BC *Before Christ* (= BCE *Before the Common Era*)

AD *Anno Domini* (= CE *the Common Era*)

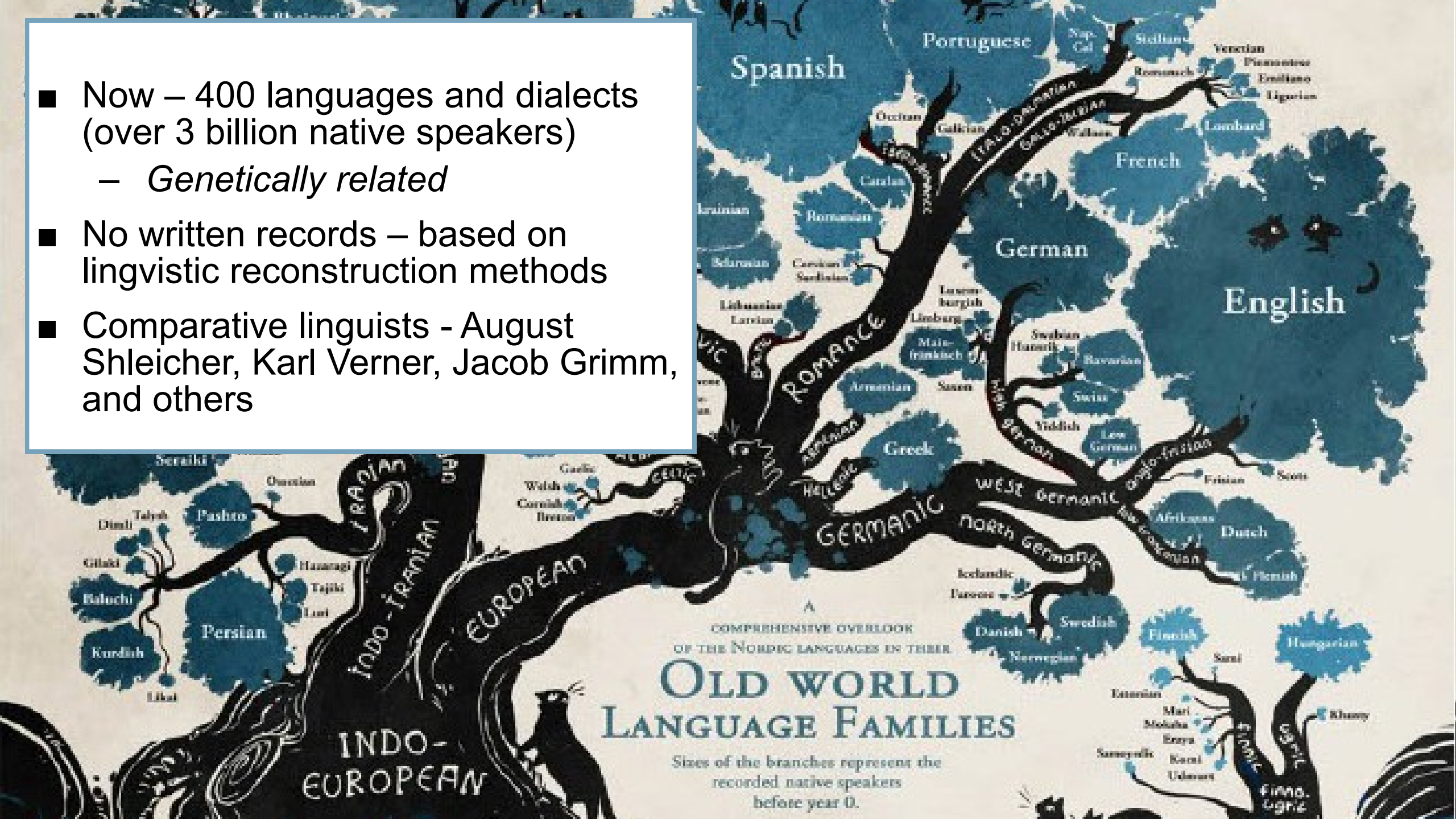
<b>Periods of development</b>	<b>Beginning</b>
Proto-Indo-European	5500 BC??? diverging cca 4 000 BC
Proto-Germanic → Pre-Proto-Germanic Proto-Germanic	3500 BC 3500 BC 500 BC
<b>Old English</b>	<b>450 AD</b>
<b>Middle English</b>	<b>1100/1150 AD</b>
<b>Modern English</b> Early Modern English Modern English	<b>1500 AD</b> 1500 1700/1800 →

# PROTO-INDO-EUROPEAN



- around 5500 BC, speakers living in the **Pontic-Caspian steppe of Eastern Europe** – (Kurgan hypothesis)
- Language split and evolved after their expansion

- Now – 400 languages and dialects (over 3 billion native speakers)
  - *Genetically related*
- No written records – based on linguistic reconstruction methods
- Comparative linguists - August Shleicher, Karl Verner, Jacob Grimm, and others



# BRANCHES OF PIE

	Indo-European Branches	Indo-European Languages	
1.	Anatolian	Hittite, Luwian, Lydian	
2.	Tocharian	Tocharian	
3.	Germanic	East	Gothic
		North	Eastern Group: Swedish, Danish, Norwegian Bokmål Western Group: Icelandic, Norwegian Nynorsk
		West	Anglo-Frisian Group: English, Frisian Low Germanic Group: Flemish, Dutch, Afrikaans High Germanic Group: German, Yiddish
4.	Italic (< Latin)	East	Romanian
		Central	Italian, Sardinian
		West	French, Catalan, Spanish, Portuguese
5.	Celtic	Continental	Gaulish, Lepontic, Celtiberian
		Insular	Goidelic Group: Irish Gaelic, Scots Gaelic, Manx Brythonic Group: Cumbrian, Welsh, Cornish, Breton
6.	Armenian	Armenian	

7.	Balto-Slavic	Baltic	Latvian, Lithuanian
		Slavic	Eastern Group: Belarusian, Russian, Ukrainian Southern Group: Bulgarian, Macedonian, Serbian, Croatian, Slovene Western Group: Polish, Slovak, Czech, Upper & Lower Sorbian
8.	Hellenic		Greek
9.	Indo-Iranian	Indo-Arian	Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, Marathi, Panjabi
		Iranian	Avestan, Pashto, Persian, Kurdish
10.	Albanian		Albanian

The division into the:  
 - branches – based on genetic relationship – a **common ancestor**

- subdivision – shared **innovations**

# PROTO-GERMANIC (500 BC)

- Common ancestor to all Germanic languages
- Runic Vimose inscriptions from 200 AD (Denmark) – only written records available
- Grammar:
  - 6 cases: (*N, G, D, A, Vocative, and I*)
  - 3 numbers – *sg, pl, dual,*
  - 3 genders – *feminine, masculine, neuter*
  - *Two voices*
  - *Three moods*



# SOUND CHANGES FROM PIE TO PG AND OLD ENGLISH

## Grimm's Law

Proto-Indo-European			Proto-Germanic		
1	2	3	1	2	3
p	b	b <sup>h</sup>	f [f]	p	þ [v]
t	d	d <sup>h</sup>	þ [θ]	t	đ [ð]
k	g	g <sup>h</sup>	χ [x]	k	ʒ [ɣ]
k	g	g <sup>h</sup>			
k <sup>w</sup>	g <sup>w</sup>	g <sup>wh</sup>	χ <sup>w</sup> [x <sup>w</sup> ]	k <sup>w</sup>	ʒ <sup>w</sup> [ɣ <sup>w</sup> ]

- (1) PIE **voiceless stops** transformed into **voiceless fricatives** (spirants)  
 p > f: lat. piscis > OE fisc (“fish”)
- (2) PIE **unaspirated voiced stops** transformed into **unaspirated voiceless stops**  
 d > t: lat. duo > OE twā (“two”)
- (3) PIE **aspirated voiced stops** transformed into **unaspirated voiced fricatives** (spirants)  
 b<sup>h</sup> > ʒ : sans.bhrātar > OE brōpor (“brother”)





## OLD ENGLISH (450 AD)

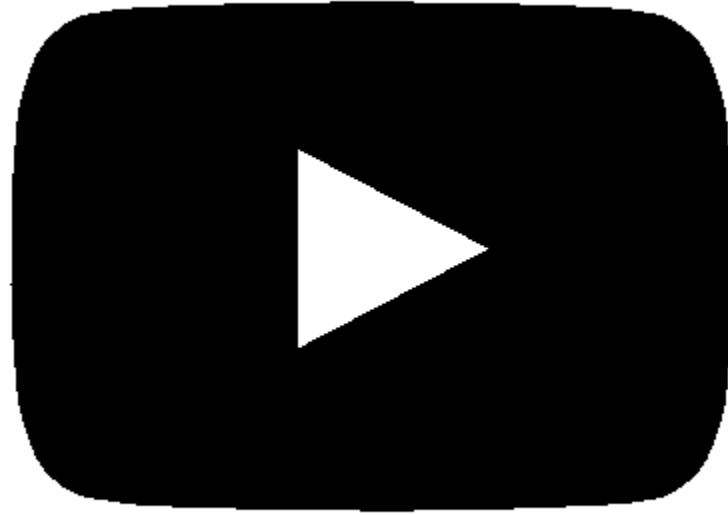
- arrival the **Germanic tribes** in 449 AD from the north-west part of Europe
  - *Angles, Saxons, Jutes*
- Anglo-Saxons – most influential in the further development of the country and language
  - **terms of kinship** (*brōðor, mōdor, sunu*)
  - **names of natural phenomena** (*sunne, mōna, mere* ‘sea’)
  - *sċirġerēfa* (*sċir* ‘shire, county’ + *ġerēfa* ‘chief’, ultimately shortened to *sheriff*)

# OTHER INFLUENCES



- **Romans (43 AD – 409 AD)**
  - *towns, e.g. OE *ċeaster* ‘Roman fortified town’ from *L castra*,*
  - survives in place-names: Chester, Winchester, Leicester
- **Christianization in 7th-8th cent**
  - *Religion and the Church: abbot, apostle, balsam, creed, disciple, font, martyr, mass*
  - *Household and clothing: candle, cap, silk, sponge*
- **Viking invasion**
  - *introduction of non-palatalized pronunciations in words like skirt, kettle, give, or egg*

**LORD'S PRAYER**  
**IN OLD AND MIDDLE ENGLISH**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lol78Eh3UD8>

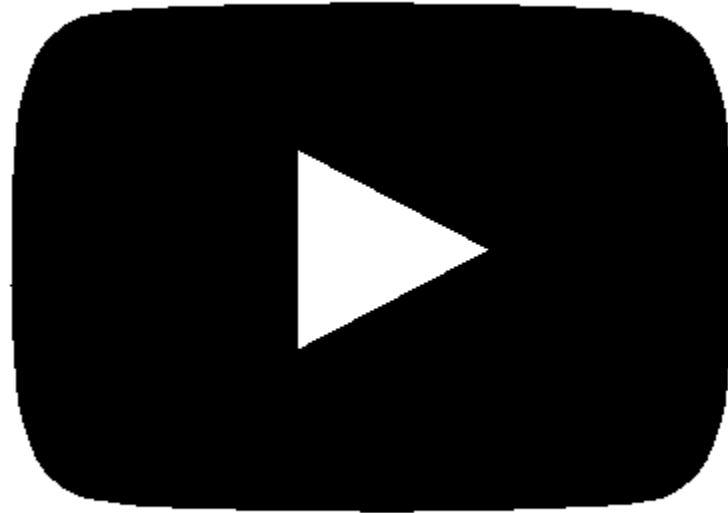
# MIDDLE ENGLISH (1100/1150 AD)

- **Norman Conquest of 1066** – strong influence on language and culture
- Normans seized political, economic, military, and religious power
- Population continued to speak Eng, as the Norman Lords spoke French
- After loss of Normandy – **forced to adapt to English**

# CHANCERY STANDARD

- After 1400, London has become the new political and cultural centre, replacing Winchester → **Chancery Standard**
- Reduction of unstressed syllables
  - *Inflectional system simplified*
  - *Word order → less flexible*

# The Canterbury Tales (Prologue) in Middle English



[https://www.yo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVG77xTPH6E)

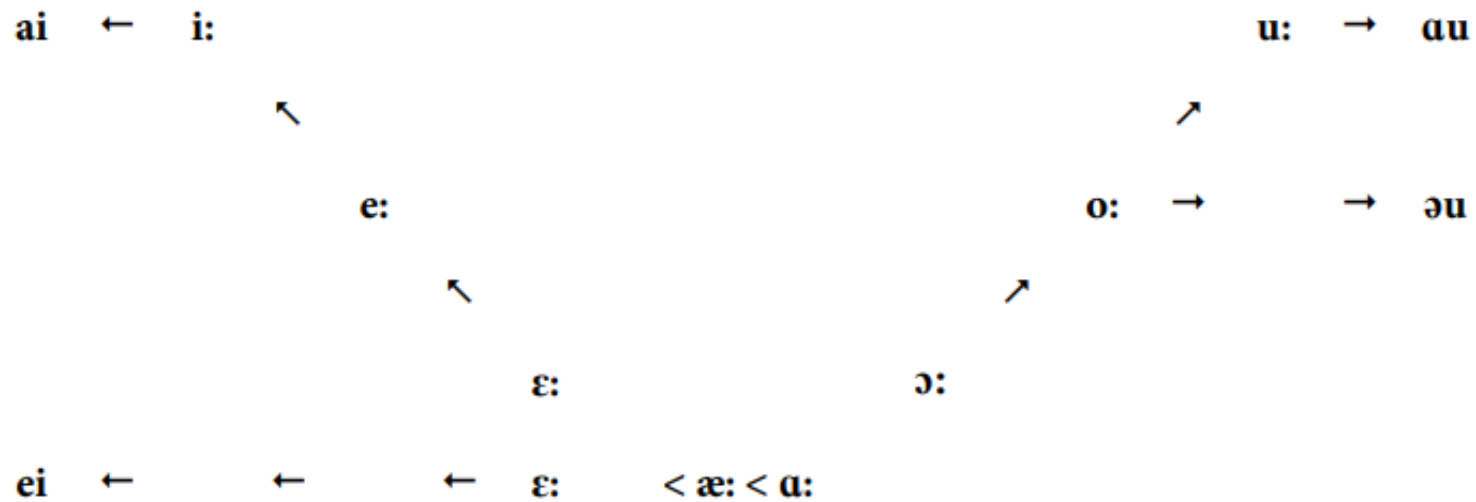
[nVG77xTPH6E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVG77xTPH6E)

# EARLY MODERN ENGLISH (1500 AD)

- 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> – centuries of reformation but also of learning and discovery
  - *New science, expansion of the colonial empire, colonization of North America*  
→ *American English*
- Rapid expansion of printing industry



# THE GREAT VOWEL SHIFT

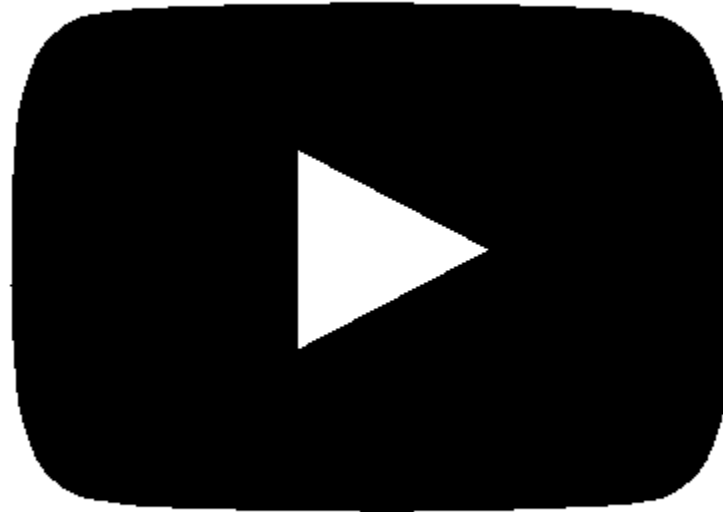


## Stages of the Great Vowel Shift

[i:] > [ii] > [ei] > [əi] > [ai]	(ca. 1400 – 1750)	( <i>time, sky</i> )
[u:] > [uu] > [eu] > [əu] > [au]	(ca. 1400 – 1750)	( <i>house, now</i> )
[e:] > [i:]	(ca. 1400 – 1500)	( <i>see, degree</i> )
[o:] > [u:]	(ca. 1400 – 1500)	( <i>do, goose</i> )
[ɛ:] > [e:] > [i:]	(ca. 1500 – 1700)	( <i>sea, lead</i> )
[ɔ:] > [o:] > [ou] > [əu]	(ca. 1650 – 1950)	( <i>stone, home</i> )
[ɑ:] > [æ:] > [ɛ:] > [e:] > [ei]	(ca. 1400 – 1800)	( <i>name, make</i> )



# SHAKESPEAREAN PLAYS AND SONNETS



- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kt011101010> – Twelfth Night at The Globe
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nD6Of-pwKP4> – Sonnet 18, David Tennant

# SOURCES

Chamonikolasová, J. (2014). *A Concise History of English*. Masaryk University.

Pictures from the book:

- Periodization of English language: study materials from the course: Historical Development of English by Jana Chamonikolasová, '*Origin, development and global spread of English*' presentation, 2023
- Grimm's Law table – study materials from the course: Historical Development of English by Jana Chamonikolasová, '*Sound changes from Proto-Indo-European To Proto-Germanic and Old English*' - Jiří Lukl, Jana Chamonikolasová, 2023

Thank you for your attention !

