

Language and ancient history – with topics on ancient spirituality, sacred language, and linguistic change in Britain, Frisia and Denmark

Written and published by Linden Alexander Pentecost, 20th October 2022. I, Linden Alexander Pentecost, am born in the UK and am a UK resident. This book is protected by copyright. All photos and artwork included were also taken/created by the author and are copyrighted. This book is published on my UK-based website, www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk

This book contains 26 pages. This is page one, and also the title page and beginning of the contents, which is continued onto page two. Note that some of the topics discussed and included in this book are topics which I have discussed to some degree elsewhere, but all of the material in this book is unique and has not been published before. This book alone does not contain by any means the entirety of these topics, it is thus completely necessary to read my previous works if one wants to look at the whole of my research on these topics, this book only includes recent research which can be seen as additional to previous research and evidence, and is by no means conclusive or encompassing of that previous research. This research is ongoing and different information is published in different books.

Introduction

This book includes a wide variety of topics, which hopefully helps to give a wider and fascinating picture of the nature of language, ancient history and environment. This particular book begins with two articles that focus on spirituality and the 'sacred meaning of language' including with some visionary Sophia artwork on page 7 (The Shell Mountain article), before following on to discuss the enigma of how West-Germanic and North-Germanic languages interact and are historically related to one another in Britain (especially Northern England and in particular Cumbria), Frisia and in Denmark, but also more generally. This book also looks into detail at the coastlines of Morecambe Bay in England, Jutland in Denmark and the Wadden Sea in Holland and in Germany, to give an overview of potential new ideas and research with regards to how these landscapes have changed, and how the changes in landscape might have influenced and played a part in the distribution of languages and of general linguistic traits.

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Sápmi, joiking, Väinämöinen – and discovering a spiritual side to language

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, the 12th October 2022. Photo and artwork also by Linden Alexander Pentecost

Please note, that I have employed some creativity in the words I have used to relate some of this Finnish mythology, but I am, to the best of my ability, describing the well-known stories as they are understood.



*The photo above, I took close to lake **Duortnosjávri** in Sápmi. In Sámi traditions, and in Scottish Gaelic traditions, from what I understand, the aurora must be respected; from what I understand, it appears to us on its own terms, and from what I understand, we shouldn't go looking for it, or get too close. Nor should we whistle or point our fingers at the aurora. In Northern Sámi, the aurora is known as **guovssahas**, likely connected to the root **guovssu** – 'dawn'. Online, this word is often said to mean 'light that is audible', but I do not think this is the literal translation, from what I know anyways.*

However, there is truth in that the Sámi and other peoples have said that the light does make sound, talk even, and I think that scientists are starting to acknowledge these sounds more. This makes me think about how cuttlefish are able to communicate using light, a light that speaks. Perhaps if we want to understand the metaphysical language of the universe, we could learn a lot from cuttlefish.

*In Finnish, the aurora is known as **revontulet**, meaning 'fox fires', because the aurora was said to be created by a fox. As the fox dances across the horizon, it swishes its great tail in the snow, creating the green fire that flickers under the stars.*

The main content of the article is below

When we went to Helsinki eleven years, we also travelled to the Arctic areas of Finland, Norway and Sweden. During this trip, something changed in me. Something changed in me forever. A personal trait of mine is that, I tend to allow my worries and confusions to get me down, and take a lot of my energy. I do not blame this on any other, it is just a personal part of my psyche and is something I need to work on.

It was as though, my whole life until then had had a big wall, a 'wall' of my own fears, a protective wall. I didn't feel confident. I felt an intense desire to connect with ancient traditions and to discover my spirituality, but somewhere deep inside, I still felt like none of it could surely be real. Not for me. It was too good to be true. The previous week I had been sleeping bad, I had been confused by something. I went to Finland expecting it to be a continuation of that confusion. I would try to enjoy Finland I thought, but deep down, I didn't really feel like doing anything.

But the first time I went to Sápmi, it was as though that wall no-longer had any purpose. I was in vast forests, like I had never seen, and yet, they felt so special and familiar. I saw the midnight sun, the gradient in the night sky, of orange and yellow, which glows over the endless figures of pine trees, lakes and marshes. In this landscape, I began to feel such a joy, that my 'wall' ceased to exist.

I had never been here before, and yet, I felt more belonging, and more confidence in myself here than I had anywhere before. The landscape and geometry of the sky, spoke to my very soul. I had never thought such a thing could be real, yet, deep down, I had always known it was there. Like a song in my soul, just behind the veil, always just beyond my perception, yet always there.

I had always found nature beautiful, but this was different. Until then I had never conceived that the beauty and love I feel, could also be something that exists inside of me. But now, I believe that, if we can appreciate the beauty of something out there in the universe, then, no matter how distant it may seem: that beauty must also exist inside of us. I felt very confident on the rest of that trip. Not a confidence that came from my brain and imagination, this was a confidence that I felt within; something that my heart knew and that the Creator knew, whoever or whatever the creator is, or perhaps 'creators'..

You may be asking, what does this have to do with language? What I have just said would not generally be considered scientific in any sense. And the study of language is a pure science. Is it? I don't know, I will leave that question open. For me though, spirituality and personal experience, does have to do with language. For me I feel that learning about other languages and places, has always been a kind of magic in itself to me.

The joik

The Sámi peoples of Sápmi (Lapland), have a special form of singing called a *joik*. I don't know enough about Sámi traditions to be able to describe or say what a joik is, and I myself am not Sámi; so please keep in mind that my following description is how I understand the *joik* from my current level of experience.

I think that the *joik* is a lot more than just singing. The landscapes of Sápmi, the mountains, lakes, and ancient places, all have names in one or more Sámi languages. One could write a song about a place, but that is not the same thing as a joik. Because, from what I understand, a person does not joik about something, or somebody. A person joiks *them*. The important difference is that, a song is written *about* something. A joik on the other hand, from what I understand, simultaneously *is* that thing. So, if somebody was to joik about a particular special place, then they are also *singing* that place. The thing that the joik is about is simultaneously also present as the joik itself. What I believe about this, is that perhaps we do not create the joik, perhaps instead, when we joik, we are speaking something's true name. Which is arguably quite similar to the Aboriginal Australian concepts of song-lines.

In my opinion, perhaps music and sound are somehow connected to 'spirit', and perhaps, when we create sound and music, we are not actually inventing it; we are a part of it, speaking it, producing it, but not its origin, not its cause. Which leads to an interesting question about language. Did we even create language to begin with?

Or, like the song-lines and joiks, perhaps, is language something that we participate in, but not something which we ultimately created? For indigenous peoples around the world, everything in the cosmos is can be said to be alive, to have its own spirit. Animals are equal to us, and our so-called 'superior' intelligence is really I think just an extension of a cosmic, creative intelligence, of which we are a part of.

I cannot prove this scientifically. The idea that the sounds and words in our languages, could somehow be an extension of the universe's own music, is not an idea that might generally be found in a linguistics textbook. And yet, the same idea, that language itself is sacred, pops up in cultures all over the world. This is particularly prevalent in Finnish mythology. In Finnish mythology, the god Väinämöinen performs magic with his chanting and singing. J. R. R. Tolkien touches on similar themes in his Middle Earth books; that the world was created through sound and through singing. There are also both scientific and more metaphysical ideas which point to, in one way or another, the idea that everything in the universe exists as waves, sound or vibration.

I would like to finish this article with some questions.

If the universe has her own music, then are we also a part of that music? Like the animals, forests and seas, do we also have our own music, our own song? And if we have our own song, who wrote the music?

Below is a piece of artwork I did, depicting the Finnish god Väinämöinen, along with some of his background stories, and descriptions.



The photo above, is of some art I made, depicting the Finnish god Väinämöinen. Is the art good, in my opinion? Well to be honest, no. But to me the spirit of Väinämöinen is real and beautiful, and I hope that this is somehow expressed through the picture. Väinämöinen is the son of Ilmatar, the goddess of the cosmos, who came through the halls of heaven, down to the primordial sea, where, after shaping the land and creating the mountains, she finally gave birth to Väinämöinen. When Väinämöinen was born, he already had the appearance of an old man, connected presumably to his incredible wisdom.

*This art depicts something that might be referred to as **Väinämöisen paluu**, the return of Väinämöinen. In the mythology and traditions of Finland, Väinämöinen is sometimes said to have left our world. Before leaving, he sang for himself a copper ship; 'sang for himself' being in reference to that Väinämöinen is said to create things using his magic voice and words. But it is said that Väinämöinen will return to our world again, when he is needed, and I think thus that his music will also return to us. Perhaps it was never truly gone.*

*In this photo I have included pink clouds to indicate the rising of a new sun. In Finnish, there is a special word for this, **aamurusko**, literally 'morning red glow', with **rusko** being a particularly poetic word, to describe the appearance of a glowing red colour on the horizon; which I think is fittingly beautiful for describing a new beginning.*

There are no references in this article, as all of the information presented is in relation to my own experience and in relation to widely known cultural knowledge. Thank you for reading :)

The shell mountain

By Linden Alexander Pentecost



Photo above: an image I drew based upon my dream, possibly of the goddess Sophia or Ilmatar, or something expressing a similar myth.

In the traditions of some indigenous American peoples, from what I understand, our world is a kind of shell mountain. A shell mountain that stands within the ocean of space. I do not understand our collective mythology very well, but, from what I understand, this shell mountain is connected to the origins of the physical universe that we inhabit.

Thousands of miles away, on the western coast of Scotland, there are ancient piles of seashells, on ancient, sacred islands. Nobody knows exactly why people built these mounds of seashells, or what they represent. But archaeological evidence suggests that they may have had a symbolic purpose. They represented something that we have forgotten and no-longer really understand.

Shell middens are found on the west coast of Africa too. In the northwest of Canada, in South America, in Australia. The symbolism of these mounds is somehow deeply integrated into our ancient past.

In Finnish mythology, the goddess Ilmatar, comes down from the heavens at the centre of creation, coming down through the halls of space, until she lands in the great primordial ocean. After she has been alone for a long time, a duck sees her in the distance, and, thinking that she is an island, the duck lands upon her knee, and creates a nest.

From this nest the duck creates seven eggs. Six of the eggs are gold, the seventh egg is made of iron. As the duck and her eggs start to warm Ilmatar's knee, she moves her leg, licking the eggs off into the distance, and causing the duck to fly away. The six golden eggs hit the ocean and shatter, whilst the seventh egg is heavy. It does not break, and sinks to the bottom of the ocean.

But nothing was truly lost. Because the shattered pieces of egg shell became the stars, and the dome of the sky that shines in the night. The yolks of the eggs became the lands in the great sea of space, creating all of the islands and lands in the great ocean. The goddess Ilmatar then swims for hundreds of years, and the shape of her body moving through the water, creates waves, shaping the coastlines. She finds beaches, and lying upon them, she creates the shape of the land with her arms and legs.

I am not sure what happened to the seventh egg. But it is perhaps possible that the seventh egg, the iron egg, became the *Taivaannaula*. In Finnish the *Taivaannaula* is the 'sky-nail', from the words *taivas* – 'sky', and *naula* – 'nail'. The *Taivaannaula* is the central axis of our universe, the pillar from which all creation spins and spirals, outwards and inwards.

In Finnish, *Ilmatar* means 'air-ess', lady of the air, from the word *ilma* – 'air'. Like in many ancient mythologies, the original source of universal consciousness, the 'God' if you will, is connected to the movement of the air. The meaning is perhaps not that the air itself is the origin of God, but rather that the air and wind is the most ancient manifestation of consciousness and energy. The magical force within the air, what the Greeks called the *Ethar*, the fifth element, is the underlying music and waves of all creation. This is also perhaps why the word 'spirit' in English is connected to the Latin word SPIRO, which means 'I breath'.

The word 'soul' is slightly different to 'spirit', because the word 'soul' may connect to the Indo-European *sowal – 'sun', and also the ancient North-African word *sal, which means 'flood, water, salt'. This implies perhaps that if the 'spirit' is connected to the very breath of creation and of music, then the soul is connected to the cyclical movement of that energy, as a whirlpool in

the great ocean, or as the sun creates waves and creates a cyclical motion for the planets to move around. The word 'soul' is also perhaps connected to the word 'silk', as in a spider's web. So, if the 'spirit' is the underlying breath of creation, then perhaps the 'soul' is the spiralling pattern that is produced collectively by spirit.

The Finnish goddess *Ilmatar* is similar in many respects to the goddess *Sophia* from Greek and Gnostic mystical traditions. In Gnosticism, Sophia also goes from the centre of creation, invoking similar imagery to the journey of Ilmatar from the centre of creation. When Sophia moves through space, her giant energy becomes crystallised to form our planet. Thus, according to the Gnostic tradition, our planet, Mother Earth, is the goddess Sophia, in her physical form. Again one can see parallels between this and the Finnish traditions of Ilmatar.

I tell the Ilmatar story in the way which feels right to me, it is not necessarily exactly as it is told in Finnish mythology, but I hope that I have captured it to the best of my ability and with accuracy to how it has been told in Finland.

My dream of the goddess

The imagery in this dream does not directly correspond to *Sophia* or to *Ilmatar*, but essentially the myth expressed is largely the same.

In my dream, I saw a great being in the ocean, shaped somewhat like a great serpent, jellyfish or whale, perhaps a combination of. This great being opened her mouth, and from her mouth there swam fishes, and she gave life to the oceans.

After some time, I rose above the waters of a misty ocean, and I saw in front of me the stark black rock of an island, rising like a rounded pinnacle from the ocean. The island was covered in mist, but as I flew upward, I saw that within the mist was a kind of giant statue. And yet, she was not a statue, her form was alive, somehow organic. It looked as though her form was made of many complex 'cells' of shell, like segments of pearl that shone slightly in the mist. And yet I cannot exactly define their form of shape, for it did not quite make sense to my logical mind. I had never seen anything quite like this before.

As I flew upwards, I saw the enormity of the statue, her arms outstretched like an angel. The statue was so huge that, in places, there were entire

forests growing on the marbel-like shell of her body. A forest of dense green trees and moss grew on her shoulder, and below, the mists had collected into a waterfall. A waterfall which flowed from her arm and which simply dropped into the mist below. At the top of the goddess, there were things shaped like flowers, producing a gentle golden-pink light, which shone in the mist.

Why did I see this dream?

According to Gnostic tradition, the goddess Sophia wants to have a relationship with each of us, and, in a sense, we are all *from* her according to this tradition. Some gnostics have said that, how we do this is really very simple. Apparently, we do not need powerful magic, or meditation or a strict path in order to do this. We need only one thing, empathy.

According to these mystics, Mother Earth does not need us to become perfect, to develop a strict technique or to perfect ourselves spiritually. According to these mystics, all we ever need is to care, to feel empathy for our planet and for each other. Empathy, care and love. Of all the things we may think we can 'have' and 'possess', I believe that empathy, care and love, are the only things that are truly ever ours.

Although our world can seem like a harsh place, I don't believe that it is great power or great might that can guide us safely or answer the questions of our existence and being. The traditions seem certain about one thing. That if I believe in myself, if I care and feel empathy, then no matter how lost at sea I am, I will be guided through the storm.

Maybe it is like Fantasia from the *Neverending Story* by Michael Ende. Where all gods and beings are living in their own places across creation. Sometimes in the story, we tell the same story, in our own way. That may be how we keep all of the knowledge about everything, through words in our languages, and each of us telling a part of that story, a different aspect to all the universes.

(Note that I have previously discussed a little about this dream, albeit in much less detail, and without really understanding what the dream meant, in my print book: *Europe's minority languages and related topics – some essays*.)

Jutlandic, other languages in Denmark, and their relationship to language in Cumbria and elsewhere in England

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, October 2022.

In this article I will talk a little about Danish dialects, and share some rather exciting possibilities I have considered about the relationship of languages in England and in Denmark. Some of the information in this article goes beyond the traditional interpretation of Vikings, Germanic languages and England's history. Although I don't personally know the answers to any of these questions, I hope that my research is interesting, and that it will lead to a greater curiosity and investigation of our ancient cultures.

The Danish language generally refers to the standard varieties of Danish and their variants. Standard Danish is sometimes called Rigsdansk – 'king's Danish', and is based mainly on the dialects of the island of Sjælland, where the capital Copenhagen, København is located.

As well as Sjælland, Denmark also consists of several other islands, such as Bornholm, far to the east of Sjælland and in the Baltic Sea; and the islands of Fyn, Langeland and Lolland, which lie between Sjælland and Jutland, Jylland. Jutland is named after an ancient, and largely mysterious tribe called the Jutes. Jutland is the only part of Denmark which is connected to mainland Europe, and southern Jutland borders with the German province of Schleswig-Holstein.

Although the dialects of different parts of Denmark are generally considered types of Danish, and described under the name 'Danish', it might be more accurate to say, that they are a group of related, traditional languages.

The language on the Jutland Peninsula is quite significantly different to the Sjællandsk dialects, and to standard Danish. Although Danish is a North-Germanic language, Jutland was historically the home to at least two tribes; the Jutes and the Angles.

The Angles in Denmark likely spoke a West-Germanic language, more closely related to Frisian, Dutch and to Old English. Whereas Danish is a North-Germanic language, being more closely related to Norwegian, Swedish and Icelandic. The Angles and the Jutes also lived in England, and 'Angle' is where the name 'England' comes from. We know that in England, these people lived mainly on the east coast, and they left runic inscriptions in their Anglic language. This language is also considered a dialect of Old English, but was somewhat distinct from the Saxon languages, which arguably became the more standard basis for Old English. The Anglic language in

England was likely spoken especially in northeastern England, and here it is sometimes known as the Old Northumbrian language.

The language of the Jutes is less certain, but originally, I think it possible that a non-Indo-European language may have been spoken in Jutland, alongside West-Germanic and North-Germanic languages. I make this suggestion, because, the Danish dialects of Jutland contain some grammatical features that I do not think originate in Germanic languages. I hope to go into this in more detail in the future, it is an ongoing process of research.

Features of the Danish Jutlandic 'dialects' or languages

In Jutland, the language can be defined into several smaller dialect areas. There is the South-Jutlandic language, spoken close to the border with Schleswig-Holstein in Germany. Then there is the West Jutlandic language, and perhaps the North-West Jutlandic dialects of that. And then, there is also the North-East Jutlandic language.

A variety of Northeast Jutlandic is Vendelbomål. Standard Danish has two genders, the common gender (which includes words which are 'masculine' or 'feminine' in other dialects), and the neuter gender. The Vendelbomål Jutlandic language has three genders, masculine, feminine and neuter. This dialect is spoken in the eastern parts of Nørrejske Ø, or 'North Jutland Island', the island separated from the rest of Jutland by the Limfjorden. The Vendelbomål dialect is in many ways similar to the North-West Jutlandic dialect of Thy, known as Thybomål, located on the west of the Nørrejske Ø.

However, the West Jutlandic language, and for the most part, the South-Jutlandic language and Thybomål, differ from Northeast Jutlandic in that they has no genders in nouns. Also, like in the West Jutlandic language and for the most part in the South Jutlandic language, the definite article, the word for 'the', is placed before the noun, rather than as a suffix attached onto the ending of the noun. In these grammatical terms, Vendelbomål is more similar to the languages of Fyn, Sjælland, and more generally to the North-Germanic languages in Norway and Sweden.

In terms of the grammatical distinctions common to South Jutlandic, West Jutlandic and North-West Jutlandic, these languages are very unique among North-Germanic languages. This is one reason why I wonder if Jutlandic was influenced by a Non-Indo-European substrate language, because as far as I am aware, Jutlandic and English are the only North-Germanic languages where the nouns have no gender. And furthermore, this is arguably quite unusual in Western Indo-European languages as a whole. The examples

below will perhaps help to demonstrate how most Jutlandic dialects differ from other North-Germanic languages. Note that West Jutlandic is a variety of Jutlandic, distinct from Angeldansk, a form of South Jutlandic, which is also named 'Angel' after the same name that gave us the name 'England'.

<u>English</u>	<u>Norwegian</u>	<u>Trøndersk Norwegian (variant of)</u>	<u>Swedish</u>	<u>Danish</u>	<u>West Jutlandic</u>
a stone	ein stein	ein stein	en sten	en sten	æn stien
a sun	ei sol	i soL	en sol	en sol	æn sol
a house	eit hus	et hus	ett hus	et hus	æn hus

The table above demonstrates that in Norwegian for example, the word for 'a' has three different forms, depending on the gender of the noun. The standard Danish and Swedish languages combine the masculine and feminine genders into a common gender, so masculine and feminine nouns are the same. But West Jutlandic is different, because the word for 'a' stays exactly the same, and the nouns have no gender. Below is a continuation of the table.

the stone	steinen	steinen	stenen	stenen	æ stien
the sun	sola	soLa	solen	solen	æ sol
the house	huset	huse	huset	huset	æ hus

The continuation of the table, helps to demonstrate that in West Jutlandic the definite article comes before the noun, and in this sense, West Jutlandic, despite being technically a North-Germanic language, behaves sometimes more like a West Germanic, like English, Frisian or Dutch. In West Frisian, 'the stone', 'the sun', and 'the house', are: de stien, de sinne and it hus. As we can also see in this table, whereas the North-Germanic languages generally change their definite ending depending on the gender, again, West Jutlandic does not possess gender in the nouns, and so the word æ means 'the' regardless of the gender. An example of how West Jutlandic differs from standard, Sjøællandsk Danish, can be seen in this basic sentence I wrote:

I am on the stone – standard English

jeg er på stenen – standard Danish

a e å æ stien – West Jutlandic

Note that the word for 'I' in West Jutlandic is **a**, standard Danish jeg.

Another thing which this table brings up, is that the precise relationship between Frisian and North-Germanic does not necessarily always correspond to the genetic affinity of these languages. For example, we can see that the West-Frisian word for stone is **stien**, showing a similar vowel development to the Angleldansk and West Jutlandic **stien**. To further demonstrate that these relationships may indeed go beyond the definitions of North-Germanic and West-Germanic, it is interesting that the forms *styan* and *steean* exist in Cumbrian dialects of English. What is even more fascinating is that Anglic and Norse also interacted in Cumbria, and I find it fascinating that although the Cumbrian dialect of English is 'West-Germanic', and Angeldansk and West Jutlandic are 'North-Germanic', there is indeed a lot of crossover and connections, particularly in Jutland and in Northern England.

In some of my writing, I make reference to this occurring on both sides of the North-Sea, and how it may be in some way connected to the Doggerland landmass which once connected England to Denmark in ancient times. This also complicates things, because, whilst it's simpler to simply say that the Danes invaded England from Denmark, we also have to consider that the Angles, who actually gave us the words 'England' and 'English', are also found in Denmark. And to complicate things even further, England and Denmark were historically a part of the same landmass thousands of years earlier. So people were likely in contact between Denmark and England since at least the end of the last Ice Age.

What I feel this means is that, whilst the Vikings, and the North-Germanic, and West-Germanic connections between England and Denmark do certainly account for 'some' of these similarities; the links between England and Denmark go back much, much further than the Vikings, and much much further than the Angles. And I think it quite possible that at least some of these connections are what we might call Pre-Indo-European, existing outside of Indo-European languages as we know them today.

Before I move on to talk more about this topic, I want to briefly talk about Jutlandic in a little more detail. This is something which I have talked about before, but I will mention it here again. Although the 'r' in Danish has always generally been an uvular r, this was not the case in Western Jutland. Here, older speakers of West Jutlandic, for example around Hvide Sande, will pronounce the 'r' practically identically to how people pronounce 'r' in Norfolk, on the English side of the North-Sea! This is not to mention the similarities I have heard between the prosody of some Jutlandic dialects, and the prosody of Scottish Gaelic. In fact, at least from my experience, certain dialects of Scottish Gaelic, Donegal Irish and English, all share crossovers with Danish prosodic patterns in one form or another. This is again likely something that I think is pre-Indo-European, perhaps a substrate influence before North-Germanic languages came into being.

On another interesting side note, the dialect of Norfolk in England is another fascinating subject. Despite being more southerly, we also see an 'Anglic' connection to Norfolk, at least in terms of Indo-European language. The actual dialects of English in Norfolk are sometimes so grammatically different to English in general, that it makes we wonder if there wasn't also some kind of pre-Indo-European influence in the background. Take for example the Norfolk dialect sentence, "she do do as she do best", where 'do' has a much more extended meaning as an auxiliary verb.

We have to also understand that Frisia, Western Jutland, and Norfolk, have all been subjected to extremely dramatic changes in sea level, even within the past few hundred years. This can be easily found by researching the history of Frisia, and the island of Strand, an island, which, during a very short space of time, was almost entirely destroyed and washed away by a large storm surge. Nowadays the much smaller islands of Nordstrand and Pellworm are all that remains of the original landmass.

This is not to mention the Storegga slide, a giant underwater landslide which happened in the Mesolithic period. This caused tsunamies and sea level changes across the North-Sea basin, and may have been the thing that caused Doggerland, the land between Denmark and England, to become largely uninhabitable. Norfolk, like Frisia, is also very flat, and in recent centuries, the coastline of Norfolk has been extensively altered by the creation of dykes, drainage systems and dredging.

Perhaps the most important thing here though is that, until relatively recently, some of these coastal areas remained almost impenetrable. This is why the Iceni tribe (possibly also a pre-Indo-European word in my opinion), were lively able to protect themselves living in Norfolk during the Roman period.

Before the creation of dykes, the coastal landscape was practically unfarmable. It was a place of saltmarshes, channels, reeds, lakes, and partially submerged tree roots and forests. Changes in culture did reach Norfolk, but, for certain areas of the landscape in Norfolk, Essex, Frisia and Western Jutland, the landscape would have remained pretty similar in nature to how it was during the Mesolithic; despite the huge sea level changes. Perhaps it is also possible then, that ancient languages, and ancient cultures survived around these ancient environments. And perhaps some of these peoples later became people known as the Jutes, who are recorded, like the Angles, as being in both England and in Denmark.



The photo above shows the Ullstone, a large, unusually-shaped erratic boulder, located in the valley of Kentmere in Cumbria, England. Ullr is a Scandinavian god name, attested in the North-Germanic languages. There doesn't appear to be a huge amount that is widely known about this deity, but in *Skáldskaparmál*, a part of the prose edda, it seems that Ullr was associated with hunting and with archery. Although the traditional explanation would be that the 'Vikings brought their gods to England', actually, this site, the Ullstone, is very reminiscent of a Sámi *seida*, a sacred site, many of which are found in Northern Scandinavia. When I visited this boulder, I felt as though it was in a sense, guarding the valley. And the type of place where ancient people may have hunted from. Nearby is Hart Cragg, with the word 'Hart' being cognate to Old Norse *hjørtr* – 'deer', showing an example of a possible Norse word, attested in a place-name but without the vowel-breaking process seen in the phonology of *hjørtr*.

Even though the traditional explanation might be that 'The Vikings just named the stone after their God', I do feel that the Ullstone is indeed a very sacred site. It has an animate feel, like something alive that is guarding the valley. To me it is very reminiscent of an animistic belief system, where rocks, and natural places of a special shape, are considered to be the abode of spirits.

Magical places, where we are perhaps supposed to ask the permission of the resident deity before visiting. Many of the ancient Sámi seidas are also linked to hunting and to honouring the land for feeding us, and so many seidas contain reindeer bones as offerings. What we take, we must also give thanks for, and we must always return something back.

Considering that the Ullstone is in a valley which would be ideal for hunting deer for example, and considering the animistic imagery of the site, could the traditions of Ull in the landscape of Cumbria, actually be thousands of years older than the Vikings?

Does the Anglo-Norse language contradict with what we know of English history?

The last topic which I want to look at here, is Anglo-Norse. I have already discussed this in detail in other articles, but in this article I will include further, useful information.

Anglo-Norse is the name I write to describe the 'Norse' language in England. We have a lot of words in English, and especially in the dialects of Northern English, where there are many words which are cognate to words in North-Germanic languages. The thing is though, is that I'm not convinced that these relationships in language began with the Vikings. I have already mentioned the similarity of Northern English *stean* and Angeldansk *stien*, West Jutlandic *stien*, and West-Frisian *stien*. Here we can see a common group of sounds, which are not dependent upon the exact genetic relationship of these languages. There appears instead perhaps to already exist a kind of 'continuum' in these words, between North-Germanic and West Germanic, and in both England and in Denmark.

A thing I have looked at previously with regards to this topic, is vowel-breaking in Old Norse. This is something that helps to define Old Norse from the older Proto-Norse and Proto-Germanic languages. Interestingly though, Danish, and Anglo-Norse seem to sometimes 'lack' this apparently Viking-period change in language. For example, Proto-Germanic **leuhsaz* (1) or similar, meaning 'light' Old Norse *ljós*, Western Norwegian *ljus*, Swedish *ljus*, but Danish *lys*, Anglo-Norse "Lis", perhaps as in the river name *Liza* in Cumbria, Old Norse *ljósá* – 'bright river', with *á* – river. It is possible that the Anglo-Norse pronunciation simply lost the evidence of vowel-breaking due to the influence of English. But it is also perhaps possible that vowel-breaking never developed in Anglo-Norse as a whole.

Danish does have a separate kind of vowel-breaking process, observed in the word *hjem* – ‘home’, Old Norse *heim*, *hæim*, Western Norwegian *heim* or *haim*, Swedish *hem*, Pite Westrobothnian *håjm*. Now, fascinatingly, Northern England also has a kind of vowel-breaking process in this word, and thus ‘home’ in the Cumbrian dialect, is *yam*. Arguably, a process of vowel-breaking happens more generally in the Cumbrian dialect, ‘oven’ for example is *yubm*, ‘one’ for example is *yan*. Perhaps it is no surprise then, that Western Jutlandic also has *jen* or *jæn* for ‘one’. This is perhaps indicative, that although vowel-breaking has taken place in different ways between Germanic languages, the dialects of Jutland and of Northern-England seem to share related phonological process, despite the fact that the language in Cumbria is West-Germanic, and the language in Jutland is North-Germanic.

In terms of Danish in general there are certain phonological developments that are similar to those in English, and particularly in certain English dialects. For example the word ‘day’ can be pronounced like [dɛ:] in Northern England, (more standard: [deɪ]) which is almost identical to the colloquial Danish pronunciation of *dag* – ‘day’, as [d̥ɛʔ] or even something closer to [d̥ɛʔj].

Sometimes I wonder if perhaps ‘Old Anglic’ and ‘Old Norse’ were in a sense certain registers of language, with Old Norse being close in grammar to that of the languages in Scandinavia, and Old Anglic/Old Northumbrian being closer to the language of peoples in what is now Germany; whilst the colloquial language of Northern England may have been neither one nor the other! We may perhaps observe in English dialects today, that some dialects are in some ways closer to North-Germanic, and other dialects are closer to West-Germanic; at least in reference to certain features of those dialects.

Furthermore, when it comes to runic inscriptions in Northern England, it seems sometimes that West-Germanic or even ‘Proto-Norse’ features are found among North-Germanic features. For example, a runic inscription in Carlisle church in Cumbria, **urait** – ‘wrote’, in reference to the person who wrote the runes on the stone. The element **urait** – ‘wrote’ shows a more West-Germanic or perhaps Proto-Norse form of this word. The *w-* is preserved in English in the word *write*. In the modern North-Germanic languages, the initial *w-/u-/v-* is missing, and we have for example Icelandic *rita*, Norwegian *rita*.

In addition to the comments about vowel-breaking, there are also certain other things about the runic inscriptions which might demonstrate that Anglo-Norse, ‘Manx-Norse’ and ‘Norn’, all shared varying similarity to Proto-Norse. Another such example of this is on a Manx runestone from Maughold on the Isle of Man, which has the form **sino** for Old Norse *sína* (Br Olsen;205B (Maughold (IV), MM 142). This word *sína* means ‘his, her, its’ in the feminine accusative form, and perhaps not surprisingly at this stage, the form **sino** is

more reflective of Proto-Norse or Proto-Germanic phonology than it is of Old Norse phonology, according to Wiktionary for example; although as of yet I have been unable to find a citation for this information.

In conclusion

I realise that for most people reading this article, it will not really answer any questions. In fact it may create more questions. And also people are perfectly at liberty to completely disagree with what I'm questioning here. But I do feel, that our understanding of the Norse in Britain is simply not complete enough, and I hope that this article encourages others to perhaps look at this subject with a more open mind.

References:

Reference (1): Kroonen, Guus (2013), “*leuhsa-”, in Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic (Leiden Indo-European Etymological Dictionary Series; 11), Leiden, Boston: Brill, →ISBN, page 334

Most of the information in this article comes from things which I have learned, and then later asked questions about based on my understanding. I cannot really remember where I learned most of this information, but for example, with regards to North-Germanic languages and dialects, I have mainly learned this information by speaking to speakers of those dialects, and having private discussions with them. Unfortunately, detailed information on Danish dialects is not widely available to the public for the most part.

One reference is included in the text with regards to the Manx runestone. I have to also mention that Daniel Skibsted Volhardt has taught me about West Jutlandic, and if it wasn't for his knowledge of his own dialect and for his linguistic skills, I would likely not have been able to have taken such an interest in these dialects.

Angeldansk is not a widely spoken dialect today, in fact, it may no longer be spoken as a community language. I have learned about Anglo-Danish from a number of sources, but most notably from the book *Bemærkninger om Sprogforholdene i Angel samt nogle Sprogprøver*, by EH Hagerup, written in 1856.

I am also not sure who the first people were to look at Cumbrian place-name etymologies, for example Wikipedia also gives *ljós á* as the origin of the name 'Liza', but no citation is included. With much of this information, including to some extent with the runestones, it can also be quite easy to read the language and to work out at least some of the words and meanings.

An introduction to the Wadden Sea and West Jutland coastal environments, and how they may help us to understand more about the history of Morecambe Bay in England, with notes on linguistic changes

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, photos also by Linden Alexander Pentecost

I introduce this article by discussing something on the North-Frisian language.

North-Frisian is a Germanic language which I had not studied much until recently. I am far less familiar with West-Germanic languages than I am with North-Germanic languages, and indeed West-Germanic languages, including the dialects of English and Low German, are an enormous topic to cover.

The dialects of English are themselves fascinating, and I think it is strange that the dialectal diversity within England is perhaps not really taught about or preserved as much as it perhaps should be.

It is often stated that the Frisian languages are the closest Germanic languages to English, except for Scots of course. But I am suspicious of this notion of grouping Frisian and English together into a sort of dialect continuum, I would much rather describe the Frisian languages as a unique group of Germanic languages, which do indeed share much in common with English; but to say that they are particularly close to English, more so than any other Germanic language, would be incorrect in my opinion.

To begin I will give a little background. The Frisian languages are spoken around what is known in English as the Wadden Sea. The Wadden Sea is a vast landscape of tidal channels, saltmarshes, mudflats and sand, separated from the North Sea by the Frisian Islands, including for example the West Frisian islands and the North Frisian islands.

The formation of the Wadden Sea, from what I understand, was due to the North Sea gradually breaking through the original coastal dunes. This original coastline is today represented as the Frisian Islands, including the West Frisian islands such as Texel and Schiermonnikoog, East Frisian islands such as Borkum and Kachelotplate, and North Frisian islands such as Sylt, Pellworm and Amrum, and the North Frisian islands in Denmark such as Rømø and Fanø.

Although this process of coastal erosion and change has been taking place for thousands of years, I think that in order to properly understand the origins

of Frisian, we need to look at more recent changes which have taken place, with enormous changes having taken place after the year 1000 AD.

The coastline of Holland, the North Sea coast of Germany, and the coastline of Western Jutland, have undergone enormous changes. The landscape changes in Holland are relatively well discussed, so I will talk a little briefly about some of the landscape changes which have happened in Western Jutland.

In Western Jutland, north of the Wadden Sea, there are a number of coastal brackish water or freshwater lagoons, which have formed after longshore drift has moved sediments over what were once bays. These in Danish are referred to as fjord or sø. Examples of such fjords include the Ringkøbing Fjord and the Nisum Fjord, both located in Western Jutland. Towards Northwestern Jutland there are clearly visible areas of the landscape where the sea once flowed, for example, the Ferring Sø in northwest Jutland appears (judging by maps) to have once connected to the Limfjord, which separates the North Jutland island from the Danish mainland. Between the Ferring Sø and the Limfjord are three lakes, the Mellemvese, the Nørrevese and the Smedshavevese, all of which are on low-lying land.

The Limfjord itself has gone through periods of being connected to the North Sea (as it is today), and periods of being separated from the North Sea by a sand barrier. The North Sea tides have meant that this entire coastline, and going down towards the Wadden Sea, is constantly being altered, with for example the West Jutlandic coastline having periods where the sea cuts away at the dunes, and breaks through to the marshes beyond, and other periods when longshore drift causes deposition of sand, thereby blocking the entrances to the fjords and sø's of this region.

With regards to the Frisian languages, I think it incredibly important to take into account, that with regards to understanding the history and origins of Frisian languages, this entire landscape has seen some dramatic changes, and it seems only obvious that this must have played an important role in how the Frisian languages have developed. It is also highly likely in my opinion that the spread of the Low German languages can be seen in connection to the solidification of the present 'landscape', with the Frisian languages being greatly connected to the old 'landscape'.

When we look at the North Frisian language, we are looking at a complex dialectal continuum, the complexity of which is again greatly connected to the dramatic sea level changes that have taken place. For example it is difficult to know what the North Frisian language of Strand was like, the island of Strand being now destroyed. But we can study the nearby Frisian languages to create some picture of what kind of language was spoken on Strand.

Notes on the language and landscape of Morecambe Bay, Northwest England



Photo above: the Kent Estuary at Sandside, showing present day sea levels, and the large (several hundred feet deep) areas of sediment which have filled this valley, which tens of thousands of years ago, would have been much deeper in total; meaning that the sand and mud is several hundred feet deep in places. Some of this sand and mud may have entered the Kent estuary

following a large scale flood, from my research. Note that the name 'Kent' is likely connected to a name in Kentmere known as Pengennett, this is a Celtic or pre-Celtic name which likely shows consonant lenition of the original word for 'Kent', something like *cennet, which has been mutated to *gennet after the word **pen**, a Welsh and possibly pre-Celtic word, meaning 'head' or 'top'. The exact meaning of *cennet I am unsure of.

I have discussed this topic before, but this is ongoing research, and with each new publication I discuss new aspects to this topic and share further findings and information. Please see some of my other works in articles and in books to understand the research so far.

I have discussed before in various articles and books how the landscape of Morecambe Bay has changed over the thousands of years, and how this may be reflected in the linguistic place-name elements visible in the region, for example, the occurrence of various Irish or pre-Irish place-names in the Morecambe Bay region, which seem to coincide with an 'older landscape'.

Morecambe Bay is unusual, like the Wadden Sea it also has incredibly dangerous tides, and is a very dynamic landscape. And it was when recently I began to read more about the Wadden Sea, that I came to notice certain similarities between the Wadden Sea and Morecambe Bay; which is not to say that the two landscapes are directly comparable or similar, but nevertheless.

In my previous work I have discussed the idea that Walney Island to the north of Morecambe Bay, and the Fylde coastline to the south, may have once formed a kind of dune barrier across what is now Morecambe Bay. Having studied a little more about the Wadden Sea, I noticed a similar thing going on with the shape of the Wadden Sea coastline and that of the Morecambe Bay coastline, and I feel that with further research, I may be able to look into this in more detail; about the possibility of whether or not there was once a 'barrier' of sorts across Morecambe Bay.

Recently when walking the coastline close to Arnside, I visited a place called White Creek. This bay is not directly in the Kent estuary, and from what I understand, would have been approximately the original extent of the tidal influence before the Kent Estuary was flooded and well, 'became' an estuary so to speak.

The curious thing about the beach at White Creek is that it contains a rather raised beach, much higher than other beaches in the area. In June when visiting Cumbria we visited another site close to Heversham, further up the Kent Estuary, which appears to show another 'raised beach' of some kind, although I am unsure if this was in fact an ancient manmade structure.

Further research is needed. The latter beach is now far from the water, but at one time the sea would have gone up much further, although this 'beach' is not directly facing where the wave action would have been coming from.

The White Creek beach is different, because it is directly facing the Irish Sea and is in the direct line of where the ancient wave action would have been pointing. Similar raised shingle beaches can be found around the headland near White Creek, but as far as I am aware they are not found any further up the Kent Estuary. It might be possible to attribute the beach at White Creek simply to natural wave action in more recent times, but considering the large amount of sand and mud in Morecambe Bay, I think it very unlikely that ordinary wave action at present day sea levels could have resulted in a shingle beach of this substantial size. Below is a photo of the shingle beach at White Creek.



Note:

With regards to the Morecambe Bay coastline and the Western Jutland coastline, it is important for me to note that sea levels have both risen and fallen in both areas. Often (with regards to the Netherlands for example) we may talk about sea level rise, and I have talked about sea level rise with regards to the creation of the Frisian Islands; but, with regards to Jutland and Morecambe Bay I also mention that the sea levels were once higher, and I think it is important to mention that these sea level changes do not go in just one direction.

Introduction to the North-Frisian language, and its connection to North-Germanic

Note: I have studied North-Frisian mainly by reading from wiktionary and by reading articles in different types of North-Frisian, therefore I feel it is not possible to really reference the individual words in this article as they are common knowledge to North Frisian speakers. However, the dialect which I mainly discuss is that of **Mooringer**, and I have learned most of what I know about **Mooringer** from the two following resources:

[.https://www.friesisch.net/](https://www.friesisch.net/) - a dictionary from German to Mooringer North Frisian.

.Friesische gebrauchsgrammatik Mooringer Frasch - Antje Arfsten, Anne Paulsen-Schwarz, Lena Terhart

The North Frisian language is a West-Germanic language spoken on the North Sea coastline of what is now Germany. The North Frisian language has been spoken in this region far longer than the High German language has been, and historically speaking North-Frisian has also shared a geographical and linguistic relationship to Low German and perhaps to Jutlandic. North-Frisian can sometimes exhibit traits which are more typical of North-Germanic languages, and the nearby Jutlandic languages, which are North-Germanic, also exhibit features that are more typical of West-Germanic. The complexity of this region linguistically is likely somewhat obscured, in my opinion, due to the dramatic environmental changes which have taken place around the Wadden Sea and on the coastline of Jutland to the north (see the previous article in this book).

As previously mentioned, there are several dialects of North-Frisian. These dialects did not always maintain a great deal of contact with each other, and thus there are quite stark differences visible between them phonetically, even though they are certainly the same language. Some of these dialects include for example **Sölring** from the island of Sylt, **Öömrang** from the island of Amrum, and the closely related **Fering** dialect from the island of Föhr. Mainland dialects include for example **Mooringer**, **Karhiirder** and **Gooshiirder**. The **Halunder** dialect of North-Frisian is spoken on the island of Heligoland, unlike the other North-Frisian islands, the island of Heligoland is made of solid rock, and is situated some distance out into the North Sea

and is not a part of the Wadden Sea. The **Halunder** dialect of North-Frisian is also quite distinctive from the other dialects. For example, in the Halunder dialect, the second person plural pronoun is **djüm**, with a similar initial **dj-** in the third person plural pronoun, which is **dji**; compare for example the Sörling equivalents **juu** and **ja**.

The Mooringer North-Frisian dialect contains many words which are quite similar to words in North-Germanic languages, for example **jard** is earth, compare German *Erde*, Halunder **iir**, English 'earth', but Danish *jord*. The words **uurd** and **ülew** in Mooringer North-Frisian, also help to demonstrate that Mooringer North Frisian contains words which exhibit more typically North-Germanic sound traits.

English *book*, German *Buch*, Dutch *boek*, Mooringer North Frisian **bök**, Danish *bog*, Swedish *bok*, Norwegian *bok*, Westrobothnian (variant of) *båok*.

English *boat*, German *Boot*, Dutch *boot*, Mooringer North Frisian **büütj**, Danish *båd*, Swedish *båt*, Norwegian *båt*, Sognefjord Norwegian *baot*.

English *house*, German *Haus*, Dutch *huis*, Mooringer North Frisian **hüs**, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian *hus*, Elfdalian *aus*.

English *strand* (for a beach), German *Strand*, Dutch *strand*, Mooringer North Frisian **strönj**, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish *strand*, also Norwegian *strond*.

English *sand*, German *Sand*, Dutch *zand*, Mooringer North Frisian **sönj**, Norwegian, Swedish, Danish *sand*

English *wolf*, German *Wolf*, Dutch *wolf*, Mooringer North Frisian **ülew**, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian *ulv*

English *word*, German *Wort*, Dutch *woord*, but Mooringer North Frisian **uurd**, compare Danish, Swedish, Norwegian *ord*, Trøndersk *oL* Westrobothnian **åoL**

English *water*, German *Wasser*, Dutch *water*, Mooringer North Frisian **wåader**, Danish *vand*, Swedish *vatten*, Norwegian *vann* or *vatn*.

Note: Frisia had strong connections to Scandinavia in the past, and the Frisians at one time recognised Danish kings. However, I personally feel that the connections between Frisian and North-Germanic languages have to do with cultural and linguistic contact over a much longer period of time.