A history of the English Language

PREHISTORY

- ✢ Monkeys are not very smart…
- ✢ They pretend to talk but its hard for us to really call their behavior "speech"
- ✢ Interestingly, they never ask questions either
- ✢ Amidst the litany of ape literature and conversation, not once has any primate ever been able to conceive of the possibility that any of the lesser beings surrounding it could hold information that it does not readily sense with its own eyes and ears

EAT

1. Proto indo-european

- Modern linguistics began with British colonization of India
- Welsh administrator in India, William Jones, recognized linguistic link between Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek
- People could tell languages had things in common before, but they were all in India; borrowing assumed
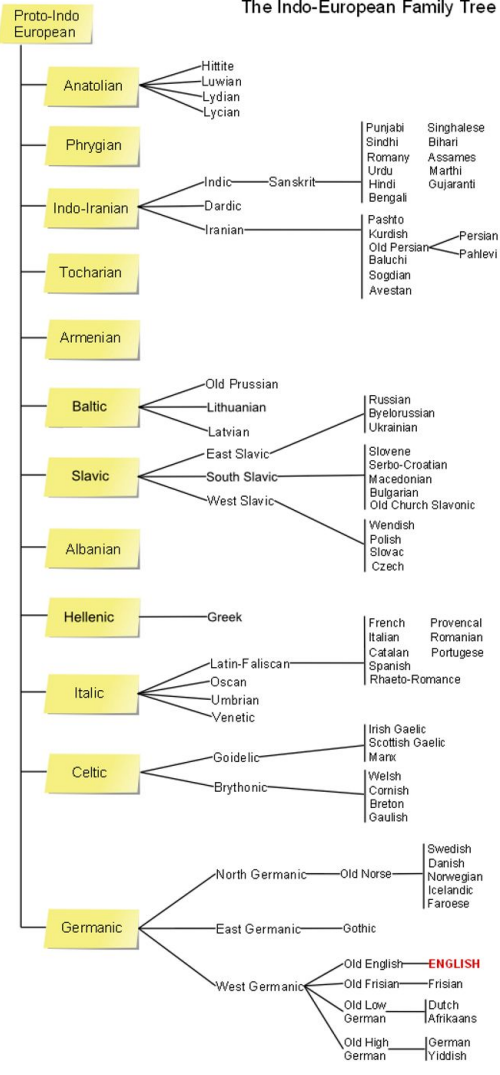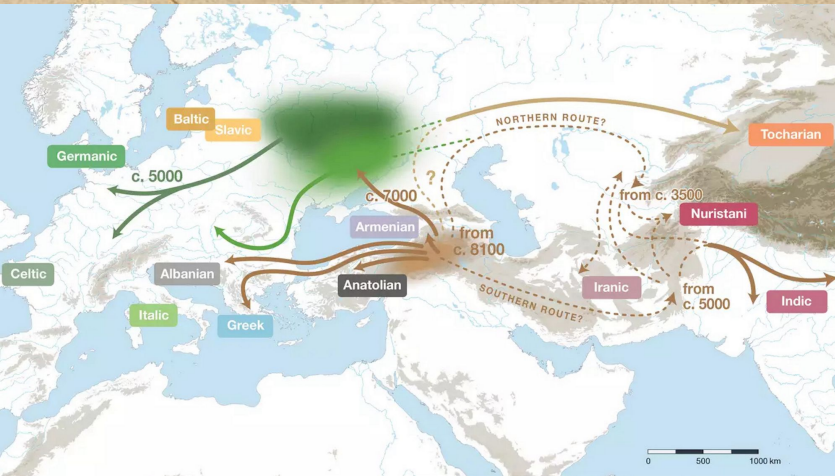 - But India is really far away!

"The Sanskrit language, whatever be its antiquity, is of a wonderful structure, more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin, and more exquisitely refined than either, yet bearing to both of them a stronger affinity, both in the roots of the verbs and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong, indeed, that no philologer could examine them all three, without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists."

Sanskrit	Latin	Greek	English	Hindi
pitr	pater	pater	faither	pita
bhrata	frater	phrater	brother	bhai
pada	ped	podi	pedestrian	paiir
jan	genus	genos	genealogy	janm
naman	nomen	onoma	name	naam
nasyati	nex	nekros		nasht
svapnas	somnus	hupnos		sapna
nabhas	nebulo	nephos		nabh
hemant	hiems	(k)heima		hem-ritu
deva	deus	theos	divine	devta
dwee	duo	duo	two	do
tree	tres	tria	three	teen
sapt	septum	hepta	seven	saat
das	decem	deca	ten	dus

- Homeland?
  - Words for elm and hazel trees; this means east of Lithuania!
  - No words for olive, pear, grape; this means they're not Mediterranean!
  - They have a word for sea (mere); they must be near one
  - They have a word for honey (medhu), they must have honeybees, meaning west of the Urals!
- Also no word for city, so they were probably nomadic

The Indo-European Family Tree

The origins of the word CITY in various European languages

WHO WERE THEY?

✣ Nomadic, horseback riding people
✣ Powerful, might've invented horseback riding or the wheel or agriculture
✣ Stretched from western China to Iberia, Scandinavia to northern India

PIE	English	Gothic	Latin	Ancient Greek	Sanskrit	Iranian	Slavic	Baltic	Celtic	Armenian	Albanian	Tocharian	Hittite
*méh₂tēr "mother"[a][1][2]	mother (< OE mōdor)	mōdar "mother"	māter "mother" ⇒ [note 1]	mḗtēr "mother" ⇒ [note 2]	mā́tr, mātŕ̥ "mother"	Av mātar- "mother"; NPers mādar "mother"; Kurd mak "mother"	OCS mati, mater- "mother"	Lith móteris "woman", motina; OPrus muti "mother"	Gaul. mātīr "mother", OIr máthir "mother"; W modryb "auntie"	mayr "mother"	motër "sister"	A mācar, B mācer "mother"	
*ph₂tḗr "father" [3][4][5]	father (< OE fæder)	fadar "father"	pater "father" ⇒ [note 3]	patḗr "father" (> patriarch)	pitŕ̥ "father"; Pitrs "spirits of the ancestors" (litt. "the fathers")	Av pitar- (nom. also pta, ta), OPers pita "father", NPers pedar	otets "father" Russian		OIr athair "father"; Welsh edrydd "paternal domain"	hayr "father"	atë "father"	A pācar, B pācer "father"	
*bʰréh₂tēr "brother"[6][7][8]	brother (< OE brōþor)	brōþar "brother"	frāter "brother" ⇒ [note 4]	pʰrā́tēr "member of a phratry (brotherhood)" (> phratry)	bʰrā́tr̥ "brother"; Rom phral "brother" (> pal)[9][10][c]	Av brātar-, OPers brātar-, NPers brādar-, Ossetian ärvád "brother, relative", NPers barādar, Kurd bira/ birader	OCS bratrŭ "brother"	Lith brólis, OPrus brati "brother"	Gaul Bratronos (pers. name); [11] OIr bráthair, W brawd (pl. brodyr) "brother"	ełbayr (gen. ełbawr) "brother"		A pracar, B procer "brother"	Lyd brafr(-sis) "brother"[12]
*swésōr "sister"[13][14][8]	sister (< OE sweostor, influenced by ON systir)	swistar "sister"	soror "sister" ⇒ [note 5]	éor "cousin's daughter"	svásr̥ "sister"	Av x̌vaŋhar- "sister"; NPers ḫwāhar "sister"; Kurd xwişk "sister"[d]	OCS sestra "sister"	Lith sesuo, seser-, OPrus sestra "sister"	Gaul suiorebe "with two sisters" (dual) [15] OIr siur, W chwaer "sister"	kʿuyr (kʿiř), nom.pl kʿur-kʿ "sister"[e]	vashë, vajzë "girl" (< *varjë < *vëharë < PAlb *swesarā)	A ṣar', B ṣer "sister"	

People [edit]

PIE	English	Gothic	Latin	Ancient Greek	Sanskrit	Iranian	Slavic	Baltic	Celtic	Armenian	Albanian	Tocharian	Hittite
*mon- "human beings"	man (< OE "Mann")	manna "human beings"		Amazon < *ŋ-mŋ-g(w)-iōn 'man-less, without husband' (debatable)	manuṣya "human being"	Av manuš "human"	OES/OCS mǫžĭ "man"						
*dʰǵʰemṓn "person, human (litt. of the earth)" (See also *dʰeǵʰom-)	OE guma "person, man", brȳdguma "bridegroom"[n]	guma "man"	homō "person" ⇒ [note 8]	khthōn "the earth" (> autochthonous); khamai "on the ground"	kṣám, gen. gmás/ jmás "ground, earth"		OCS zem(l)janinъ "earthling"	OLith žmuõ "person"; Lith žmoná "wife"; OPrus zmunents "human"	OIr duine, W dyn "person" < *dʰǵʰom-yo-			A śom "boy"; B śaumo "person"	
*h₂ner- "man, hero"		ON Njǫrðr (name of a God)	Ner-ō (personal name), neriōsus "strong"	anḗr (andros) "man" (> Andreas, Andrew)	nár- (nom. nā) "man, person"	Av nar- (nom. nā) "man, person", Past nar "male, brave" NPers nar-, Kurd nêr "male animal, masculine"	OCS naravŭ "character, custom";	Lith nóras "wish, want", narsa; narsùs "brave;" OPrus nàrs "courage"	W nêr "lord, prince, leader; hero"; Celt narto "strength"	ayr (aṙn) "man, person"	njer "man, person"		
*wiHrós "man"	werewolf (< OE wer "man")	waír "man"	vir "man" ⇒ [note 9]	hiérāx "a type of hawk"	vīrá- "man, hero", hero"	Av vīra- "man, hero", Kurd mêr	Belar (Smolensk) вір "a rite of passage for young men into adulthood"; (Mogilev) віра "a feast or meal organized by a young man, after reaching adulthood, for his companions"[p]	Lith výras "man"; OPrus wirs "man, husband"	OIr fer, W gŵr "man"		burrë "man"	A wir "young"	

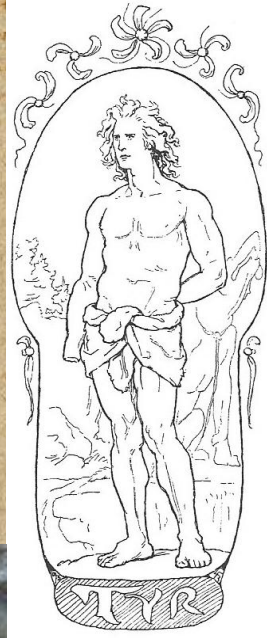| PIE	English	Gothic	Latin	Ancient Greek	Sanskrit	Iranian	Slavic	Baltic	Celtic	Armenian	Albanian	Tocharian	Hittite
*éǵh₂ "I"	I (< OE *ić*)	ik "I"	egō "I" < *egoH₂	egṓ, egṓn "I"	ahám "I" < *egH₂-om	Av azəm, OPers adam, Parth. az "I" < *egH₂-om; Kurd ez "I (direct case)"	OCS azŭ "I"	Lith àš, OLith eš, OPrus as, Latv es "I"	es "I"	es "I"	u, unë "I" (-në possibly originally a suffix)	ñuk "I"	ūk "I" influenced by ammuk "me"
*h₁me "me (acc.)"	me (< OE *mē, mec* < *H₁me-ge*)	mik "me (acc.)"	mē(d) "me (acc.)"	emé, me "me (acc.)"	mām "me (acc.)" < *H₁mē-m, mā "me (acc. encl.)"	Av mąm "me" Kurd mi "me" Past mā "I [oblique case]"	OCS mę "me (acc.)" < *H₁mē-m	Lith manè "me (acc.)"	OIr me-sse, mé, W mi "I"	is "me (acc.)" <? *H₁me-ge	mua, mue "me (acc.)" < *H₁mē-m		ammuk "me (acc., dat.)" < *H₁me-ge, -mu "me (acc. encl.)"
*h₁méǵʰye "me (dat.)", *(h₁)moy "me (dat. encl.)"	me (< OE *mē*)	mis "me (dat.)"	mihi "me (dat.)"	moi "me (dat., gen. encl.)"	máhya(m) "me (dat.)", mḗ, me "me (dat. encl.)"	Av maibya "me (dat.)" (? not in Pokorny), me (Old Avestan moi) "me (dat. encl.)"	OCS mi (dat enc.) < *(H₁)moi	Lith man "for me", OPrus maiy "me (dat. encl.)"	OIr infix -m- "me"; W -'m infixed accusative first person singular pronoun "me"	inj "me (dat.)"	meje		ammuk "me (acc., dat.)" < *h₁me-ge, -mi "me (dat. encl.)"
*h₁meme-, *h₁mene- "of me, mine"; *h₁mo-yo-, * h₁me-yo- "my"	my, mine (< OE *mīn* < *H₁mei-no-*)	meins "my"; meina "of me"	meī "of me"; meus "my" < *H₁me-yo-	emeîo "of me"; emós "my"	máma "of me"; ma/ mā "my" < *H₁mo-	Av mana, OPers manā "of me"; Av ma (m/n), mā (f) "my", NPers az āne man-; Kurd a/ê min	OCS mene "to me", moj/ a/e (m/f/ n) "mine"	Lith mana(s), OPrus mais/ maia "my"	W fyⁿ "of me, my"; Breton ma "of me, my"	im "my"	im "my" (article i + em)	AB ñi "my" < Proto-Tocharian *mäñi	miš "my" < *H₁me-yo-

PIE	English	Gothic	Latin	Ancient Greek	Sanskrit	Iranian	Slavic	Baltic	Celtic	Armenian	Albanian	Tocharian	Hittite
*krep- "body"[82][83]	(mid)riff (< OE hrif)		corpus, corporis "body" ⇒ [note 11]		kŕp "beautiful appearance, beauty"						kurm "torso" and krep		
*káput ~ *kapwéts "head"[84][85]	head (< OE héafod); OE hafela, hafola "head"		caput, capitis "head" ⇒ [note 12]	[ah]	kapála "skull, cranium; bowl"						kapelë "hat" ; Latin caput		
*dáḱru, *h₂éḱru "tear"	tear (< OE tēar, tæhher)	tagr "tear"	lacrima "tear" (> lachrymose)	dákru "tear"	áśru "tear"	Av asrū- "tear"; Kurd hêsir "tear"		OPrus assara "tear", Lith ašara "tear	OIr dēr, W deigr "tear"; Cornish dagr "tear"	artawsr "tear" < *draḱur		A ākär "tear", B pl. akrūna "tears"	isḫaḫru "tear"
*dn̥ǵʰuh₂-, *dn̥ǵʰwéh₂ "tongue"	tongue (< OE tunge)	tuggō "tongue"	lingua "tongue" (archaic dingua) ⇒ [note 13]		jihvá "tongue" < *ǵiǵʰwā, juhú	Av hizvā < *ǵiǵʰwā, OPers hizān, Parth ezβān "tongue", NPers zabān; Kurd izman "tongue"[86]	OCS języ-kŭ "tongue" < *n̥ǵʰū-k-	OPrus inzuws "tongue", Lith liežuvis "tongue"	teng "tongue"; W tafod "tongue, language"	lezu "tongue" (influenced by lizem, "I lick")	gjuhë "tongue"	A käntu, B kantwo "tongue" (*kantwa < *tankwa)	
*h₁ésh₂r̥, *h₁esh₂nés "blood"			archaic aser, sanguis "blood" (< possibly h₁sh₂-én- obl. stem + guen) (> sanguine, etc.)	éar "blood"	ásr̥j, asnás "blood"	OP ahr̥ "blood"		Lat asins, Ltg asnis (gen. ašņa) "blood"	īsarnom "blood-colored, iron"	ariwn "blood"	A ysär "blood"	ēsḫar (esḫanas) "blood"
ǵ(o)nH₂dʰos "jaw, cheek, chin"	chin (< OE ċinn)	kinnus "cheek"	gena "cheek"	génus (génuos) "chin, jaw"; gnátʰos, gnatʰmós "jaw" < *ǵnH₂dʰ-	hánu-ṣ "jaw" < *ǵʰenu-s, gaṇḍa "cheek"	Av zānu- "jaw-" < *ǵʰenu-s, OPers danūg < *danu-ka-, Parth zanax "chin, jaw"; NPers gune "cheek", chune "jaw"; Kurd gup "cheek"; Past žáma "jaw"		OPrus žauna "jaw", Lith žándas "cheek", žiaunos "gills"	OIr gi(u)n "mouth"; W gên, pl. geneu "cheek, chin"; Old Cornish pl. genau < *genewes "cheeks, chins"	cn-awt "jaw, cheek"		A śanwe-m "jaw"	

Proto indo-european Sky father

- In the ancient Indian Vedic texts, there is a reference to a figure known as Dyaus Pitr
- Linguistics have found similar traits in this god and the Greek Zeus Pater, Roman Jupiter, and Norse Tyr
- These names seem to be cognate of the Proto Indo-European patron deity, *Dyḗus ph₂tḗr*, the Sky Father
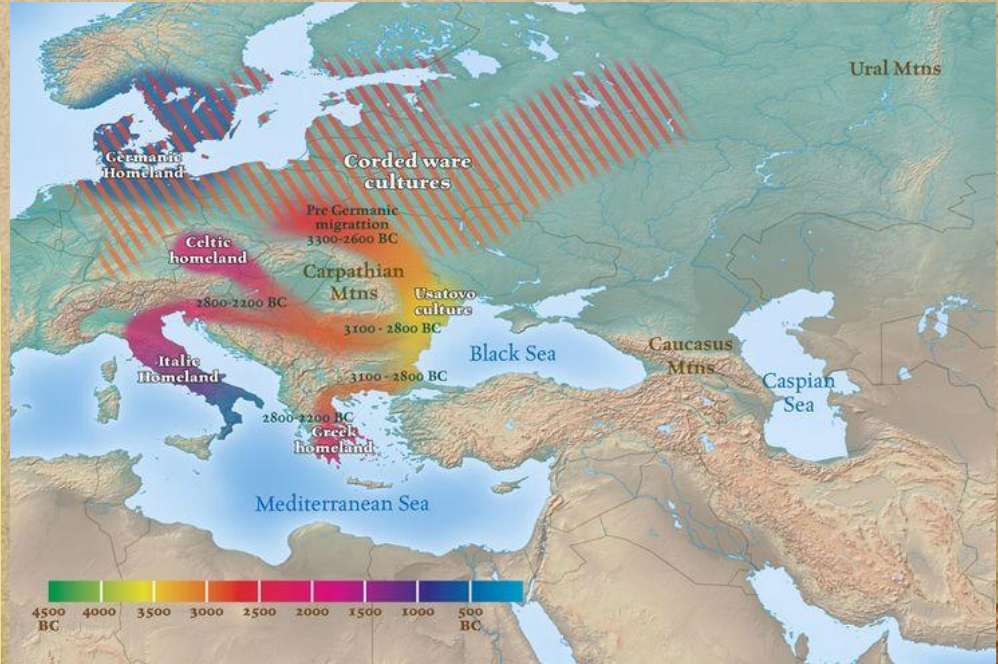
2. GERMAN

Germanic origins

- A new group of people with blonde hair and blue eyes arose in the area around Denmark and lower Scandinavia
- Though a majority of words in English come from Latin or Greek, the most basic words in English all come from German!

- English's root lies in the Germanic speaking anglo-saxons, who migrated to Britain after the fall of the Roman Empire
- Besides the anglo-saxons, English also developed from further Danish and Norse invasions!

1.	the	26.	they
2.	be	27.	we
3.	to	28.	say
4.	of	29.	her
5.	and	30.	she
6.	a	31.	or
7.	in	32.	an
8.	that	33.	will
9.	have	34.	my
10.	I	35.	one
11.	it	36.	all
12.	for	37.	would
13.	not	38.	there
14.	on	39.	their
15.	with	40.	what
16.	he	41.	so
17.	as	42.	up
18.	you	43.	out
19.	do	44.	if
20.	at	45.	about
21.	this	46.	who
22.	but	47.	get
23.	his	48.	which
24.	by	49.	go
25.	from	50.	me

Scandinavian Influence

English	Old Norse	Meaning
berserk	*berserkr*	lit. a "bear-shirt" a Viking warrior who entered battle wearing nothing for armor but an animal skin
club	*klubba*	a heavy, blunt weapon
gun	*gunn*	from the female name *Gunnhildr*: *gunn* (war) + *hildr* (battle)
ransack	*rannsaka*	to search a house
scathe	*skaða*	to injure
slaughter	*slatra*	to butcher

- Danes established the Danelaw in England around the 9th century, ruled by vikings speaking a Norse language
- You can get a sense of their relationship to English speakers based on the words that came into English from them
- Introduced many Germanic doublets, like disc/disk, shirt/skirt, edge/egg
- Norse also gives us our days of the week; Monday for the moon, Tuesday for the god Tiw, who, by the way, is the same god that I was talking about earlier, Tiw is a morph of Deus, Wednesday for Odin, Thursday for Thor, Friday for Freyja

3. GREEK

Greek Words in English

- In modern English, most Greek derived terms were invented recently to describe new inventions or ideas
- Otherwise, Greek primarily entered English through Latin
- Direct influence comes through culture, Greek stories and legends
  - Academy, from Academus in the Iliad
  - Sirens, sea monsters who looked like women
  - Swan song (meaning final act), when swans died they'd return to Apollo, god of music
  - Amazon, named after tribe in Greek legend
  - "Bites the dust" comes from the Iliad
  - Trojan horse

- *utopia* (1516; οὐ 'not' + τόπος 'place')[10]
- *zoology* (1669; ζῷον + λογία)
- *hydrodynamics* (1738; ὕδωρ + δυναμικός)
- *photography* (1834; φῶς + γραφικός)
- *oocyte* (1895; ᾠόν + κύτος)
- *helicobacter* (1989; ἕλιξ + βακτήριον)

So it is really the combining forms of Greek roots and affixes that are borrowed, not the words. Neologisms using these elements are coined in all the European languages, and spread to the others freely—including to Modern Greek, where they are considered to be reborrowings. Traditionally, these coinages were constructed using only Greek morphemes, *e.g.*, *metamathematics*, but increasingly, Greek, Latin, and other morphemes are combined. These hybrid words were formerly considered to be 'barbarisms', such as:

- *television* (τῆλε + Latin *vision*);
- *metalinguistic* (μετά + Latin *lingua* + -ιστής + -ικος); and
- *garbology* (English *garbage* + -ολογία).

Some derivations are idiosyncratic, not following Greek compounding patterns, for example:[11]

- *gas* (< χάος chaos) is irregular both in formation and in spelling;
- *hadron* < ἀδρός with the suffix -*on*, itself abstracted from Greek *anion* (ἀνιόν);
- *henotheism* < ἑνός 'one' + θεός 'god', though *heno-* is not used as a prefix in Greek;
- *taxonomy* < τάξις 'order' + -*nomy* (-νομία 'study of'), where the "more etymological form" is *taxinomy*,[1][12] as found in ταξίαρχος, 'taxiarch', and the neologism *taxidermy*. Modern Greek uses ταξινομία in its reborrowing.[13]
- *psychedelic* < ψυχή 'psyche' + δηλοῦν 'make manifest, reveal'; the regular formation would be *psychodelic*[14] or *psychodelotic*;[15]
- *telegram*; the regular formation would have been *telegrapheme*;[16]
- *hecto-, kilo-, myria-*, etymologically *hecato-, chilio-, myrio-*;[17]
- *heuristic*, regular formation *heuretic*;
- *chrysalis*, regular spelling *chrysallis*;
- *ptomaine*, regular formation *ptomatine*;
- *kerosene, hydrant, symbiont*.

As a result, most of the scientific terms which we have borrowed from Greek began to appear in the language during and after the Middle Ages.

In the thirteenth century, we get words like *astronomy*, *arithmetic*, *eclipse*, *comet* and *cosmos*.

In the fourteenth century, we get words like *problem*, *philosophy*, *geometry*, *rhetoric*, *logic*, *astrology*, *element*, *essence*, *quality*, *hemisphere* and *cycle*.

In the fifteenth century, we get words like *method* and *physical*.

In the sixteenth century, we get words like *anatomy*, *geography*, *physics*, *mathematics*, *pharmacy*, *idea*, *method*, *theorem*, *theory*, *hypothesis*, *phenomenon*, *species*, *energy*, *vacuum*, *metamorphosis*, *anthropology* and *syndrome*.

In the seventeenth century, we get words like *diagram*, *system*, *botanical*, *psychology*, *atmosphere* and *geocentric*.

And in the 19th century, we get words like *biology*, *cardiology*, *ecology*, *geothermal*, *helium* and *hypnosis*.

Alphabet

- Alphabet comes from the Phoenicians, stolen by Greeks, stolen by Romans, stolen by us!
- Fun fact, alphabetic symbols were originally pictograms!
  - The letter a, alpha in Greek, originates from Phoenician "aleph" meaning cow; the letter represents the head and horns of a bull

Origins of the Phoenician, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin alphabets

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4. LATIN

Latin and English

- Latin entered English many times! 55% of words are Latin derived
- First wave: Romans invaded Britain in 43 AD, established many forts and towns
  - Londinium into London, Lindum Colonia into Lincoln
  - Many names did not transfer over, instead taking the name of the Roman word for fort, castra
    - Worcestershire, Lancaster, Manchester
    - Also gives us the word castle
- Second wave: Germans adopted Latin words trading with the Romans, hitched a ride with the Anglo-Saxons back to Britain
  - Mile from Latin Milli (one thousand steps)
  - Mint and money from Latin Moneta
  - Cook from Coquus
  - Cheese from Caseus

Roman Britain

Latin and English cont.

- Third wave: Normans, speaking Latin derived French, invade in 1066
  - Much of Latin comes in this wave, English fundamentally transformed into something unrecognizable from other Germanic languages
  - Most famous examples are the words for live animals Anglo-Saxon peasants would use, and the names of their prepared dish forms, eaten by Norman nobles
- Fourth wave: English scholars in the renaissance use Latin words to describe many new or complex concepts
  - Introduction from introductio, corruption from corruptio, seduction from seductio
- Fifth wave: now we just steal Latin words outright
  - Et Cetera, Quid Pro Quo, Ad Hominem

Old English origin words	Old French origin words	Notes
cow (OE cū) ox (OE oxa)	beef (AN beof, OF boef)	[2]
calf (OE cealf)	veal (AN vel; OF veel, veal)	[2]
swine (OE swīn) pig (OE picga)	pork (OF porc)	[2]
sheep (OE scēap)	mutton (OF moton)	[2]
hen (OE hen, henn) chicken (OE cicen)	poultry (OF pouletrie) pullet (OF poulet)	[2]
deer (OE dēor) hart (OE heorot)	venison (AN venesoun)	[2]
dove (OE dūfe)	pigeon (OF pijen)	

5. Outside Influence

SOME INTERESTING ORIGINS...

Chinese/Cantonese

- "No can do" and "long time no see" come from Cantonese 不能干 and 好久冇见
  - ※ Comes from Chinese railroad workers
- Ketchup comes from Cantonese 茄汁 ke2 zap1

Malay

- Amok (as in to run Amok), Bamboo, Compound, all come from Malay
- Compound as in a collection of buildings, from Kampung

Arabic

- Algebra, Algorithm, Alcohol, Alchemy
- Al is just an article in arabic

Sanskrit

- Loot, pundit, all come from Sanskrit
- In the period of British Raj
- What words we get from a language tells us a lot about our relationship to that culture

6. DOUBLETS

Doublets in English

- Because English originates from so many different languages, it uniquely has a ton of synonyms, many of them doublets (same origin)!
- Host-Guest
  - Host also has hotel, hostel, hospital
  - Originates in Proto Indo-European herding tradition
  - Even Zeus is referred to as god of hospitality
- Ward-Guard, Warden-Guardian
  - Also reflects a shift from G to W in English; present in other words, like War vs French Guerre, Spanish Guerrilla
- Capital, Capture, Capiche, Chief, Head
  - All originate from the word for "Head"
  - Head represents sound shift from K sounds to H sounds in English
    - Latin Centum and hundred
    - Latin Cord (Accord, Discord, Concord, Cordial), Greek Cardio, and Heart
    - Latin Equus and Horse (also cognate with car, hurry, current)
    - Wheel, Cycle, Chakra
    -

All these words are related

By Starkey Comics

Why care?

- ✣ It's interesting!
- ✣ Language is an integral part of who we are, a part of understanding ourselves is understanding the meaning behind the words we speak
- ✣ Makes learning new languages a lot easier too!

THANKS
FOR
LISTENING