

Literatura de Língua Inglesa I

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Língua Inglesa I

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Aula 1

THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD: HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

META

Apresentar o contexto sócio-histórico da formação étnica e cultural dos grupos sociais que formavam o período anglo-saxônico.

OBJETIVOS

Ao final da aula o(a) aluno(a) deve ser capaz de:
Compreender o processo de formação da Europa do ponto de vista histórico e discursivo, a partir da queda do Império Romano;
Reconhecer e identificar os principais elementos da sociedade e da cultura do período.

PRERREQUISITOS

Familiaridade com a problemática do conceito de Literatura;
Conceitos-chave da poética clássica, adquiridos em Teoria da Literatura I e II.

Luiz Eduardo Oliveira

INTRODUÇÃO

Prezado(a) aluno(a),

Espero que você goste deste curso e faça um bom uso deste material didático. Tenho lecionado esta disciplina há pouco mais de vinte anos na Universidade Federal de Sergipe e experimentado uma significativa variedade de métodos, livros e estratégias de ensino e avaliação. Com relação à educação a distância, não é a primeira vez que escrevo material didático para a UAB / CESAD / UFS, pois elaborei o material didático de Teoria da Literatura II e fui coautor do material de Produção de Textos I. No entanto, é a primeira vez que organizo material didático para a disciplina que leciono no curso de Letras Inglês presencial da UFS.

Não se trata de um trabalho autoral, mas eminentemente técnico, uma vez que busca sintetizar o que há de disponível, clássico e atualizado sobre a matéria. Para tanto, nos valem não somente de material impresso – livros e artigos de periódicos –, mas também de vídeo, áudio, discos, CDs, DVDs, filmes, séries televisivas, blogs, sites etc. As referências das fontes utilizadas, na medida do possível, são sempre feitas, seja no corpo do texto, seja no final de cada aula.

Na organização do conteúdo programático, contou muito a minha experiência em sala de aula, de modo que busquei, sempre que possível, uma aproximação deste material didático com a dinâmica da sala de aula, uma vez que ambas as modalidades – presencial e a distância – são oferecidas pela mesma instituição e as disciplinas são coordenadas, na maioria dos casos, pelos mesmos professores. No entanto, foram respeitadas as especificidades da EAD.

Boa parte do material está redigida em inglês. Nesse sentido, a linguagem utilizada foi a mais objetiva, coloquial e informal possível, respeitando sempre a gravidade ou complexidade dos temas abordados, muitos dos quais não podem ser reduzidos a certa coloquialidade sem perderem parte de seu conteúdo. Nas notas e no glossário, utilizamo-nos de muitas definições existentes na Internet, mas somente em sites institucionais. Contudo, usamos fartamente de informações oriundas de enciclopédias coletivas virtuais como a Wikipédia (<https://www.wikipedia.org/>) para tal fim, não sem antes checarmos a veracidade das informações e das referências utilizadas.

Desse modo, acreditamos que pudemos unir, neste material, a atualidade das informações existentes sobre o assunto na Internet e a base fundamental dos livros e autores mais autorizados sobre a matéria. Em alguns casos, usamos trechos de obras e/ou artigos de minha autoria já publicados sobre o assunto, o que, além de favorecer uma abordagem transdisciplinar da matéria, reveste o material de uma certa originalidade, haja vista que algumas aulas tiveram como texto base a produção científica e/ou acadêmica do autor.

Algumas vídeo-aulas sobre literatura de língua inglesa podem ser também vistas no meu canal do Youtube:

<https://www.youtube.com/user/musicaeletras>

Nosso intuito, enfim, foi organizar e sistematizar de maneira sintética uma infinidade de informações, textos, imagens e outras formas de arquivos, impressos ou virtuais, que só de maneira muito fragmentária e espalhada se encontra na rede. Da mesma forma, organizamos, em nossas referências bibliográficas ao final de cada aula, um apanhado do que há de clássico e atualizado sobre cada assunto.

Iniciemos, pois o nosso curso. Nessa primeira aula, vamos estudar em inglês. Ready? So, let's go!!

The Anglo-Saxon Period is the first period not only of English Literature, but also of English history. It begins with the coming and establishment of many northern tribes in the island we nowadays call England, after the fall of the Roman Empire. In order to understand this specific historical context, it's important to know something about the history of the Western world, at least since the rise and fall of the Roman empire, a process which lasted no less than five centuries. The only information we have from the peoples who inhabited the place before the coming of the Romans comes from the archeological researches, but we know that they were part of the Celtic people, and that they played an important role in the process of formation of England and the English people, together with the Romans and then with the Northern invaders: the Jutes, the Anglos and the Saxons.

In this first class we are going to learn something about the consequences of the fall of the Roman empire, as well as of the invasion and establishment of the Northern peoples above mentioned, and then we are going to try to sketch something of the historical context in which the main cultural events took place.

First of all, we have to understand the invention of ancestry, which is a discursive strategy through which the history of a certain people is constructed and, in many ways, invented. The first period of English literature is known as The Anglo-Saxon Period.

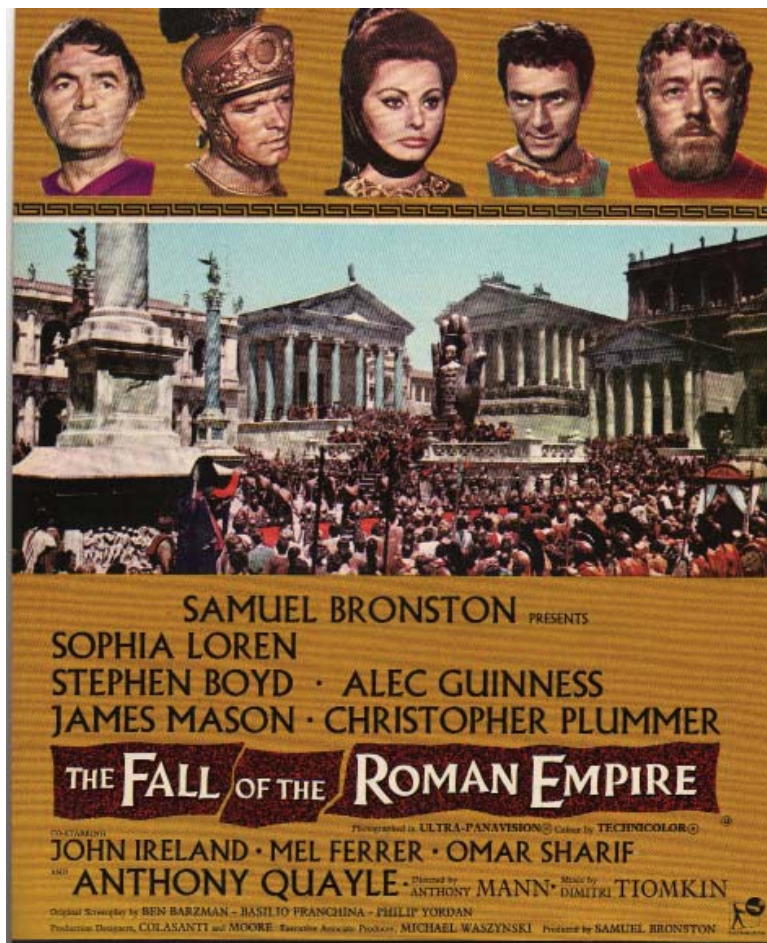
THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

To begin with, in order to understand the Anglo-Saxon Period, we must know that everything begins after the decline and fall of the Roman Empire. Most of the literary historians consider it a symbolic mark of the beginnings of England, although the few reliable extant data which is available depends on archeological and philological research, which is itself object of a historical review in recent studies.

If we read the historiography about the beginnings of other countries during this period, we come to realize that The fall of the Roman Empire

Ver glossário no final da Aula

marks the beginning of Europe itself. After the Greeks, after this moment of empire, of hegemony of Greece, we have the formation and development of the Roman Empire, and it's a process which takes place in the very beginning of **the Christian era**. As a means to illustrate the way the fall of the Roman empire was represented by Hollywood filmmakers during the sixties, it's interesting to watch *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, a 1964 epic film starring Sophia Loren, Stephen Boyd, Alec Guinness, James Mason, Christopher Plummer, Mel Ferrer and Omar Sharif. It was directed by Anthony Mann and produced by Samuel Bronston, with a screenplay by Ben Barzman, Basilio Franchina and Philip Yordan. Another interesting filmic production is *Rome*, a British-American-Italian historical drama television series created by Bruno Heller, John Milius and William J. MacDonald. The seasons were broadcast on HBO, BBC Two, and RaiDue between 2005 and 2007. They were later released on DVD and Blu-ray. It is set in the 1st century BC, during Ancient Rome's transition from Republic to Empire. Nevertheless, Edward Gibbon's **The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**, published in six volumes between 1776 and 1788, is still the great literary classic upon which most of the narratives about the fall of the Roman empire are based.





Edward Gibbon (1737- 1794) was an English historian and Member of Parliament. His most important work, **The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire**, was published in six volumes between 1776 and 1788. The Decline and Fall is known for the quality and irony of its prose, its use of primary sources, and its open criticism of organised religion

THE ANGLO-SAXON PEOPLE

Ver glossário no final da Aula

And what about the first inhabitants of the island, before the coming the Romans? Literary **historiography** states that these people were **the Celts**, who spoke a language similar to Welsh, or Gaelic, from the Scottish highlands. It is believed that they offered little resistance to the Romans, except in the mountainous regions, like Wales and the northern part of the wall they built between the Forth and the Clyde, they all submitted to their conquerors without fighting. As the Romans had restricted their colonization in larger centers, like York and London, the other parts became unprotected with the withdrawal of the Roman troops, which were recalled to protect Rome from the Northern invaders and left England as an easy target to the raiders: **The Angles, Saxons** and Jutes

We know that the fall of the Roman Empire occurs in the fifth century of our Christian era, and during the sixth and seven centuries, England was not unified, it was divided into seven small kingdoms, and suffered the attacks of many tribes and groups coming from the North. Of course, these peoples were not unified ethnically or linguistically. They came from many mixtures.

The so-called “barbarians” had invaded many other places, and they had lived with many different peoples. It’s important to observe a very important thing about the word “Saxons”. Saxons are supposed to be one of these ethnic groups which invaded England and other parts of Europe. But Saxons, according to some historians, and I’m thinking of **Eric Hobsbawm**, is a name which is given to people who work in the fields, so a peasant would be a Saxon. Only after many years, some centuries, the historians had to invent an ancestry to the English people and decided to consider the Saxons an ethnic group, instead of a group of professionals, a group of people who work in the field.



Eric John Ernest Hobsbawm (1917-2012) was a British Marxist historian of the rise of industrial capitalism, socialism, and nationalism. His best-known works include his trilogy about what he called the "long 19th century" (**The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789–1848**, **The Age of Capital: 1848–1875** and **The Age of Empire: 1875–1914**), *The Age of Extremes* on the short 20th century, and an edited volume that introduced the influential idea of "invented traditions".

All that we know about the Anglo-Saxon people comes from archeology and philology, whose researches were responsible for the construction of the Anglo-Saxon historical narrative. We know nothing about this period but representations. We don't have pictures, we don't have videos, we hardly have some written documents. So, the only thing we know about the Anglo-Saxon Period, which, chronologically speaking, lasts from the fifth century, the century of the fall of the Roman Empire, and goes on until 1066, which is the year of the invasion of the Normans, was possible because of the discoveries and studies of archeology and philology. Architectural relics, pieces of manuscripts, pieces of vases, these are archeological discoveries. We do not know about the music which they played during this period, but the Romantic historians generally use in their narratives what is known as medieval songs or medieval compositions. We must know that, during the fifth century, when the Roman Empire fell, Christianity was strong enough to be the most influential religion in this context.

This is a famous mask, a helmet, an Anglo-Saxon helmet, which is on the cover of most of the books about the Anglo-Saxon period.



As the Anglo-Saxon settlers were their own masters, they did little to keep the legacy of the Romans and soon replaced the Roman stone buildings with their own wooden ones. They brought with them their languages and religious beliefs, but, with the arrival of Saint Augustine, in 597, most of them were converted to Christianity.

The Anglo-Saxon period lasted for 600 years, from 410 to 1066, and during that time the political landscape underwent many changes. The early settlers kept to small tribal groups, forming kingdoms and sub-kingdoms. By the ninth century, the country was divided into four kingdoms - Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia and Wessex. Wessex was the only one of these kingdoms to survive the **Viking** invasions. Eric Bloodaxe, the Viking

ruler of York, was killed by the Wessex army in 954 and England was united under one king - Edred.

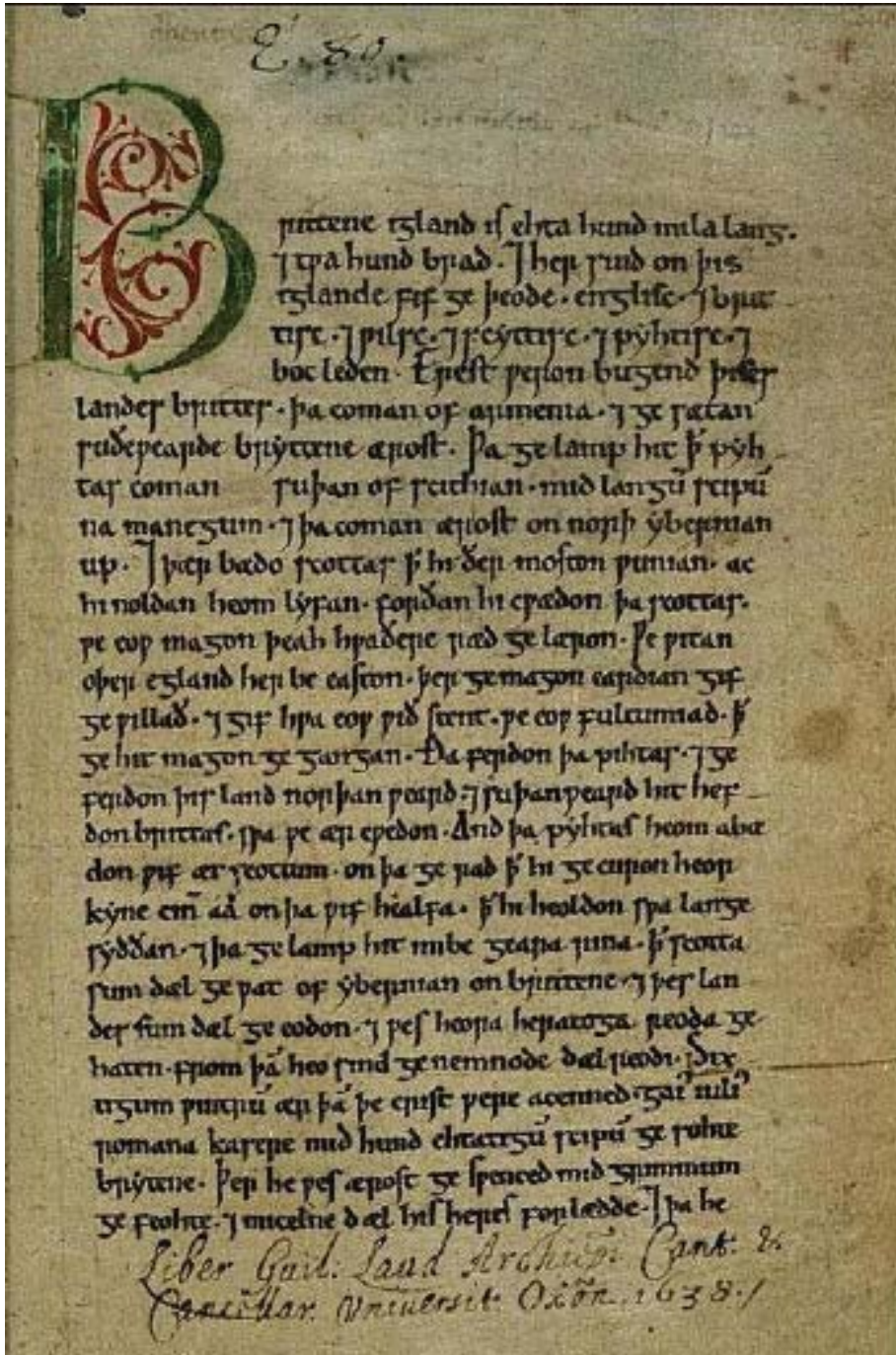
The most important king of the Anglo-Saxon period is undoubtedly Alfred the Great (849-899), from Wessex, who is one of the outstanding figures not only of the period, but also of English history, mainly because of his social and educational reforms, as well as his military successes against the Danes. He was born in Oxfordshire as the fourth or fifth son of Aethelwulf, king of the West Saxons (Wessex). In 871, Alfred defeated the Danes at the Battle of Ashdown, in Berkshire. The following year, he succeeded his brother as king. Despite his success at Ashdown, the Danes continued to devastate Wessex and Alfred was forced to withdraw to the Somerset marshes, where he continued his warfare against his enemies. In 878, he defeated the Danes again in the Battle of Edington. In 886, he negotiated a treaty with the Danes and England was divided, with the North and the East (between the Rivers Thames and Tees) declared to be Danish territory. Alfred therefore was then in control of areas of West Mercia and Kent, which had been beyond the boundaries of Wessex.

With the peace, he (re)organised his army and built a series of settlements across southern England. As an administrator, he established a code of laws and a reformed coinage. His biographers and most of the historians say that he was given to education and learned Latin in his late thirties. It was during this time that he decided to initiate a work of translation of books from Latin to the Wessex dialect. By the 890s, Alfred's charters and coinage were referring to him as "king of the English". He died in October 899 and was buried at his capital city of Winchester.



Alfred the Great (849 – 26 October 899) (Old English: *Ælfrēd*, *Ælfræd*, "elf counsel" or "wise elf") was King of Wessex from 871 to 899.

Most of the information we have about the Anglo-Saxons comes from **the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle**, a year-by-year account of all the major events of the time initiated during Alfred's time, himself being one of the translators. Among other things it describes the rise and fall of the bishops and kings and the important battles of the period.



The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle is a collection of annals in Old English chronicling the history of the Anglo-Saxons. The original manuscript of the Chronicle was created late in the 9th century, probably in Wessex, during the reign of Alfred the Great. Multiple copies were made of that one original which were distributed to monasteries across England, where they were independently updated. In one case, the Chronicle was still being actively updated in 1154.

THE ANGLO-SAXON WOMEN

According to Carole Hough, from the University of Glasgow, studies of women in Anglo-Saxon England draw on a range of sources, including literary texts, ecclesiastical writings, inscriptions and place-names. In all of these documents, women, as one would suppose, feature less prominently than men, but it is uncertain whether this reflects male control of society as a whole or of the sources themselves. Relevant legislation survives from the seventh through to the eleventh centuries, with women represented in early Kentish and West Saxon law, the *domboc* of Alfred the Great (c.887–893), and laws issued by Æthelred (c.978–1014) and Cnut (c.1020–1023).

The influence of the church on late seventh-century legislation is seen in the third series of Kentish laws, issued by Wihtred in 695, and in the laws of his West Saxon contemporary Ine, preserved as an appendix to **Alfred's *domboc***. Examples include the prohibition of idolatry by man or wife and a provision for an abbess to stand as proxy for a foreigner's kin group. Another reference to the marriage contract states that a bridegroom's money is to be returned if the marriage does not take place. References to women in Alfred's laws are predominantly concerned with unlawful intercourse, whether with religious or lay women. The wider social implications of crime from the ninth century onwards are reflected in an increasing number of fines to the king for offences such as rape.

Ver glossário no final da Aula

Like men, women are defined in the laws by social class. Indeed, the precision with which different classes of women are identified preserves unique information on the structure of Anglo-Saxon society. Unlike men, however, women are also characteristically defined by marital status. Child custody is a major theme. The widowed mother's right to custody is explicitly stated in later seventh-century Kentish and West Saxon law. Both clauses assign trusteeship of the child's property to relatives. A widow who remarried would forfeit at least part of the inheritance from her first husband, and might also lose custody of her children.

As with much Anglo-Saxon legislation, it is difficult to separate innovation from tradition. According to Alfred's book, a pregnant woman was protected by two wergilds: her own and half that of her unborn child. Parallels with continental law suggest that this may go back to common Germanic tradition, despite not appearing in English law until the late ninth century. With the majority of evidence for women preserved in laws from opposite poles of the Anglo-Saxon period, it is difficult to assess the level of continuity between them. Alfred's book also stipulated a financial penalty based on the wergild to be paid by the adulterer to the wronged husband. By the eleventh century, however, the punishment for adultery was incurred by the woman herself, who would lose not only her property but her nose and ears.

Anglo-Saxon rule came to an end in 1066, soon after the death of **Edward the Confessor**, who had no heir. He had supposedly willed the kingdom to William of Normandy, but also seemed to favour Harold Godwinson as his successor. Harold was crowned king immediately after Edward died, but he failed in his attempt to defend his crown, when William and an invading army crossed the Channel from France to claim it for himself. Harold was defeated by the Normans at the Battle of Hastings in October 1066.

Ver glossário no final da Aula

CONCLUSÃO

The history of England begins with the fall of the Roman empire, when the northern invaders (the Jutes, the Angles and the Saxons) settled in the regions which were left unprotected with the withdrawal of the Roman troops. The Angles stayed in the coastal region, the Saxons in the central and finally the Jutes in the region known as Kent. These people were not unified ethnically or linguistically. They came from many mixtures and miscegenation, because they had invaded many other places and they had lived with many different peoples. It is importante to point out a very important thing about the word Saxon. Saxons are supposed to be one of these ethnic groups which invaded England and other parts of Europe. But Saxon, according to some historians, is a name which is given to people who work in the fields, like for example, peasants. So, a peasant would be a saxon. Only after many years, some centuries, the historians had to invent an ancestry to the English people and decided to consider the Saxons an ethnic group, instead of a group of professionals, a group of people who worked in the field, peasants. Finally, we have the importance of archeology and philology for the construction of the Anglo-Saxon and historical narrative.. So, the only thing we know about the Anglo-Saxon period, which chronologically speaking lasts from the 5th century, the century of the fall of the Roman Empire, and goes on until 1066, which is the year of the invasion of the Normans.



RESUMO

We know very little about the periods previous to the Greeks. After the Greeks, we have the formation and development of the Roman empire, which is a process which takes place in the very beginning of the Christian era. Rome grows exponentially and becomes the most important power in the world during those days. Just like the Greeks, they reached faraway regions in the eastern part of the world. They could not cross the sea, something that the Europeans would do many centuries afterwards. But they initiated this process of conquest and colonization. With the decline

of the Roman Empire, we see a period of ethnic and linguistic mixture and the formation of the European states and the emergence of Angle Land, which nowadays is called England. And then, we see the coming of the Northern groups: the Angles, who gave the name of the country, Angle Land, England; the Saxons and the Jutes, not to mention the Vikings and other groups which invaded England after this first period. The fall of the Roman Empire occurs in the 5th century of the Christian era and, during the 6th and 7th centuries, England was not unified, but was divided into four kingdoms and suffered the attacks of many tribes and groups coming from the North.



Answer the questions below in English:

What's the importance of the fall of the Roman empire to the history of England?

Who were the Anglo-Saxons?

What's the importance of Alfred the Great to English history and literature?

Write something about the situation of women during the Anglo-Saxon period.

COMENTÁRIO SOBRE AS ATIVIDADES

Esta atividade tem por finalidade principal fazer você construir uma síntese dos principais conteúdos dessa primeira Aula, de modo a compreender criticamente o processo de constituição da Inglaterra como país nessa sua primeira fase. Desse modo, será importante compreender a importância da queda do Império romano para a história da Inglaterra, bem como as principais características dos povos anglo-saxônicos. Será importante também compreender o que significou a política cultural do rei Alfredo para o desenvolvimento da literatura e mesmo da historiografia inglesa. Por fim, é preciso que o estudante saiba resumir, com suas próprias palavras, determinados temas do período. No caso presente, a situação das mulheres.



PRÓXIMA AULA

The Anglo-Saxon Literature

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GLÓSSARIO

The most successful dating system the world has ever known is that based on the 'Year of the Lord' (Anno Domini) - **the Christian era**. It was created in AD 525 by a Scythian monk, Dionysius Exiguus, primarily as a means of numbering Easters. Today, this system for reckoning time is used globally and is by no means restricted to adherents of Christianity. The present essay aims to describe not only the origins and the early development of the Dionysian system, from its invention until its adoption throughout Western Europe in the course of the eleventh century, but also its antecedents in Late Antiquity and the general context in which this era was conceived.

Historiography: refers to both the study of the methodology of historians and the development of history as a discipline, and also to a body of historical work on a particular subject. The historiography of a specific topic covers how historians have studied that topic using particular sources, techniques, and theoretical approaches.

The Celts: were people in Iron Age and Medieval Europe who spoke Celtic languages and had cultural similarities, although the relationship between ethnic, linguistic and cultural factors in the Celtic world remains uncertain and controversial. The exact geographic spread of the ancient Celts is also disputed; in particular, the ways in which the Iron Age inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland should be regarded as Celts has become a subject of controversy.

The Angles: (Latin Anglii) were one of the main Germanic peoples who settled in Britain in the post-Roman period. They founded several of the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England, and their name is the root of the name England. The name comes from the district of Angeln, an area located on the Baltic shore of what is now Schleswig-Holstein, the most northern state of Germany. **The Saxons** (Latin: Saxones, Old English: Seaxe, Old Saxon: Sahson, Low German: Sassen, German: Sachsen, Dutch: Saksen) were a confederation of Germanic tribes on the North German Plain. They settled in large parts of Great Britain in the early Middle Ages and formed part of the merged group of Anglo-Saxons who eventually organized the first united Kingdom of England. Some Saxons remained in Germany, where they resisted the expanding Frankish Empire through the leadership of the semi-legendary Saxon hero, Widukind. The Jutes, Iuti, or Iutæ (/dʒuːts/) were a Germanic people. According to historiography, the Jutes were one of the three most powerful Germanic peoples of their time, the other two being the Saxons and the Angles. They are believed to have originated from the Jutland Peninsula (called Iutum in Latin) and part of the North Frisian coast. In present times the Jutlandic Peninsula

consists of the mainland of Denmark and Southern Schleswig in Germany. North Frisia is part of Germany as well.

Vikings (Danish: Vikingerne; Faroese: Víkingur; Icelandic: Víkingar; Norwegian: Vikingene; Nynorsk: Vikingar; Swedish: Vikingar), from Old Norse víkingr, were Germanic Norse seafarers, speaking the Old Norse language, who raided and traded from their Scandinavian homelands across wide areas of northern and central Europe, as well as European Russia, during the late 8th to late 11th centuries. The term is also commonly extended in modern English and other vernaculars to the inhabitants of Viking home communities during what has become known as the Viking Age.

The Doom Book, Code of Alfred or Legal Code of Ælfred the Great was the code of laws ("dooms", laws or judgments) compiled by Alfred the Great (c. 893 AD) from three prior Saxon codes, to which he prefixed the Ten Commandments of Moses and incorporated rules of life from the Mosaic Code and the Christian code of ethics.

Edward the Confessor (1003/1005-1066), son of Æthelred the Unready and Emma of Normandy, was one of the last Anglo-Saxon kings of England and is usually regarded as the last king of the House of Wessex, ruling from 1042 to 1066.