The Intrusion of Optative Forms into the Preterite in Pomeranian

How does Pomeranian relate to Old Saxon?

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Small languages – Big Ideas, Oldenburg
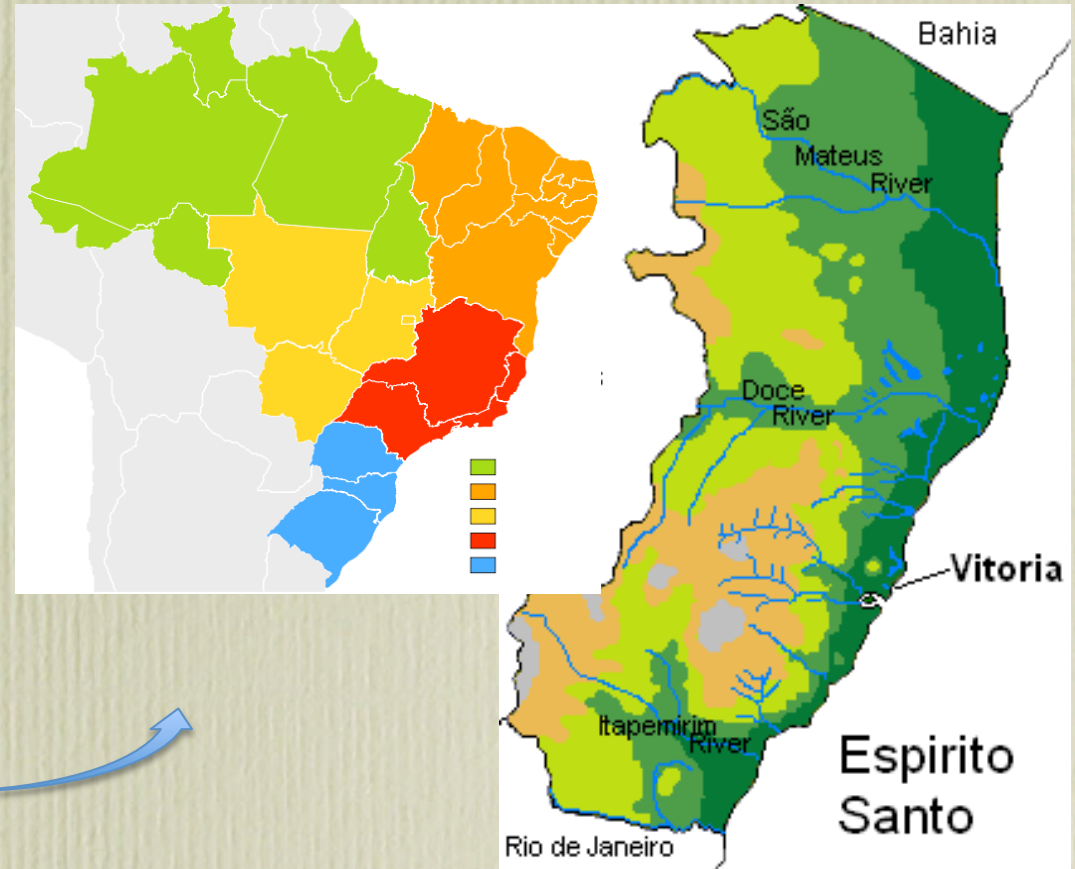30 June - 1 July 2022

Phenomenon

un dei Berichte **neihme** tau an Dickd
and the stories took bigger in size
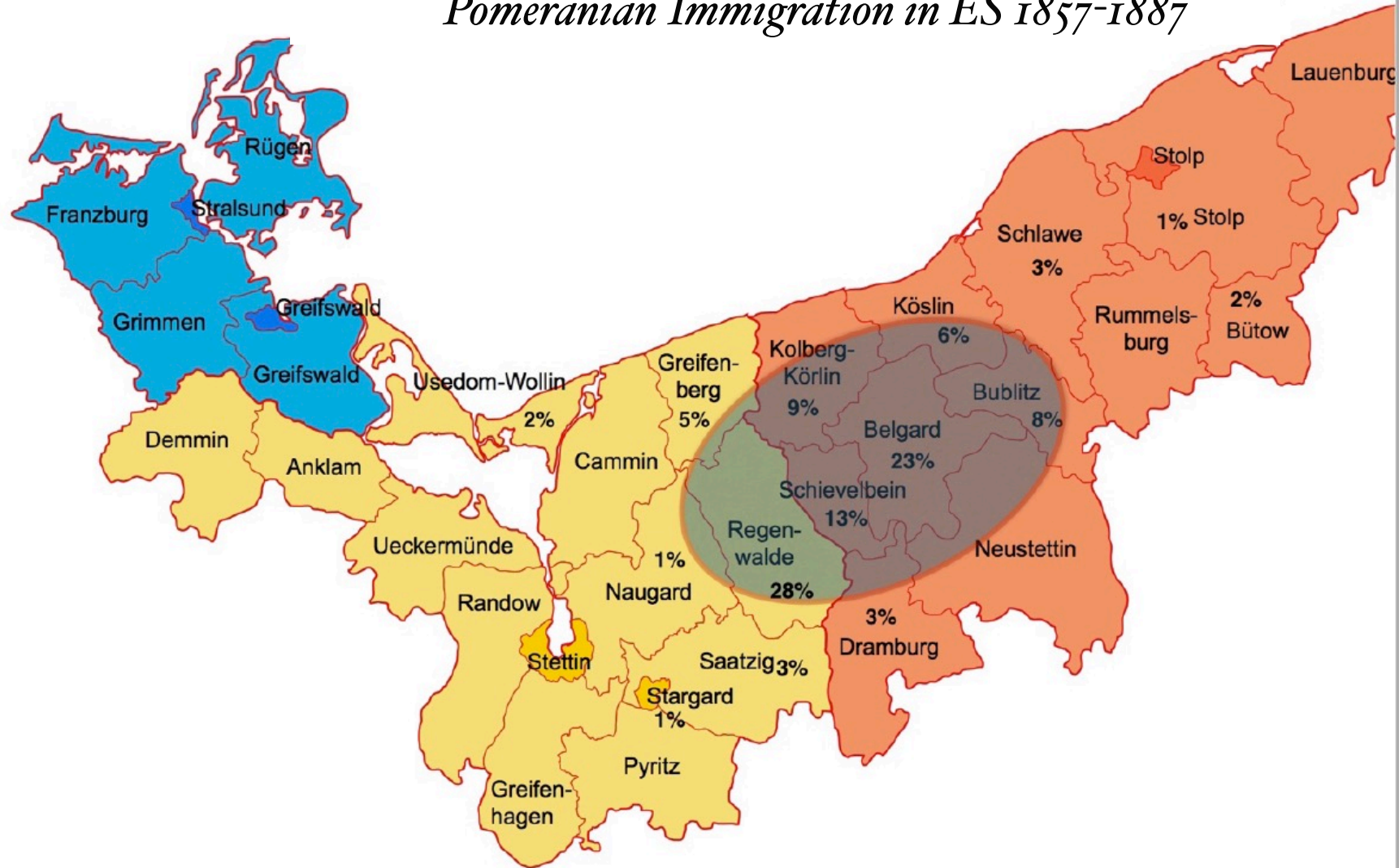'the stories got more and more inflated'

Coastal West Germanic

From Pomerania to Espirito Santo in 1850-1880

Statistics

Pomeranian Immigration in ES 1857-1887

Program

- The Problem   (EP ~ Gothic/Old-Anglian/OF?)
                                (EP ≠ OS/OD/AngloSaxon)

- The Evidence

- Geographical spread

- Historical dimension

- Evaluation

Pomeranian is the West Germanic language spoken by European emigrants who went from Farther Pomerania (present-day Poland) to Brazil in the period 1857–1887. This language is no longer spoken in cohesive societies in Europe, but the language has survived and is in remarkably good shape on this language island in the tropical state of Espirito Santo. This monograph offers the first synchronic grammar of this language. After a historical introduction, the book offers a systematic description of its phonology, morphology and syntax. The language is contrasted with its European sisters, more particularly High German, Dutch, and Frisian. It highlights various phenomena that will presumably contribute to the ongoing theoretical debate on the Germanic verbal system. It provides new data on cluster V2, do-support, and the two infinitives. As to the infinitival syntax, the language shows remarkable parallels to the system of Frisian. As to the rich Pomeranian system of subtractive morphology, the phonological account that is offered, will be important for the ongoing discussion of the abstractness of phonological representations. Finally, Pomeranian is a welcome addition to the set of languages on which our etymological understanding of West Germanic is based.

Gertjan Postma
A Contrastive Grammar of Brazilian Pomeranian

John Benjamins Publishing Company

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A Contrastive Grammar of Brazilian Pomeranian

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Program

- The Problem　　(EP ~ Gothic/Old-Anglian/OF?)
　　　　　　　　(EP ≠ OHG/OS/OD/AngloSaxon)

- The Evidence

- Geographical spread

- Three approaches

- Evaluation

The problem in BP

BPom		HG	
preterite		preterite	optative
naim	–	nahm	nähme
naimst	–	nahmst	nähmest
naim	–	nahm	nähme
naima	–	nahmen	nähmen
naima	–	namt	nähmet
naima	–	nahmen	nähmen

class 4

BPom		HG	
preterite		preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest
jaif	–	gab	gäbe
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben

class 5

The problem in EP

BPom		HG		E-Pommers	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterit	optative
naim	–	nahm	nähme	namm	naim
naimst	–	nahmst	nähmest	nammst	naimst
naim	–	nahm	nähme	namm	naim
naima	–	nahmen	nähmen	naime	naime
naima	–	namt	nähmet	naime	naime
naima	–	nahmen	nähmen	naime	naime

class 4

BPom		HG		E-Pommers	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest	gafst	gaifst
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet	gaiwe	gaiwe
jaiwe	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe

class 5

The problem of EP

BPom		HG		E-Pommers		Old Saxon	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest	gaffst	gaifst	gāvi	gāvis
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin
jaiwe	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin

The problem of EP

BPom		HG		E-Pommers		Old Saxon	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest	gaffst	gaifst	gāvi	gāvis
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin
jaiwe	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin

Agathe Lasch's Intrusion Hypothesis (1910)
"In the preterite plural of the 4th and 5th series of the strong verbs, the umlauted vowel of the optative entered the [preterite] indicative. This can be clearly observed in 4th and 5th class, where it is ê < â. The umlaut in 2nd, 3rd, 6th happened more recently"

The problem of EP

BPom		HG		E-Pommers		Old Saxon	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest	gaffst	gaifst	gāvi	gāvis
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin
jaiwe	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin

- why would optative forms intrude into the peterite?
- why does this intrusion happen in the plural only?
- why does this intrusion happen in class 4/5 verbs only

Hypothesis 1: Intrusion

- For reasons yet to explore, optative forms intrude …
  …in **preterite**, **plural** forms in ablaut **class 4/5** verbs

The problem of EP

BPom		HG		E-Pommers		Old Saxon		Gothic	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi	gaf	gēbjau
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest	gaffst	gaifst	gāvi	gāvis	gaft	gēbeis
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi	gaf	gēbi
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin	gēbum	gēbeima
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin	gēbuþ	gēbeiþ
jaiwe	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin	gēbun	gēbeina

The problem of EP

BPom		HG		E-Pommers		Old Saxon		Gothic	
preterite		preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative	preterite	optative
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi	gaf	gēbjau
jaifst	–	gabst	gäbest	gaffst	gaifst	gāvi	gāvis	gaft	gēbeis
jaif	–	gab	gäbe	gaff	gaif	gaf	gāvi	gaf	gēbi
jaiwa	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin	gēbum	gēbeima
jaiwa	–	gabt	gäbet	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin	gēbuþ	gēbeiþ
jaiwe	–	gaben	gäben	gaiwe	gaiwe	gāvun	gāvin	gēbun	gēbeina

PGmc *ē > WGmc *ā > OE, OF æ > Eng, Frisian [i:]
OS, OD ā > [a:] or [ɔ:]

Hypothesis 2: Regular sound change

(If a phonological regular process is assumed)
- EP derives from a stage or variant of OS that did not participate in WGmc ē > ā.
- East Old Saxon?

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(If a phonological regular process is assumed)
- EP derives from a stage or variant of OS that did not participate in WGmc ē > ā.
- East Old Saxon?

EP *stråt* 'street' < PWGmc *strāta* < Lat *strāta*
EP *nådel* 'needle' < PWGmc *nāþlu* < PGmc *nēþlo*
EP *såt* 'seed' < PWGmc *sādi* < PGmc *sēdi*

Program

- The Problem   (EP ~ Gothic/Old-Anglian/OF?)
                                (EP ≠ OS/OD/AngloSaxon)

- The Evidence

- Geographical spread

- Historical dimension

- Evaluation

2.1 The Evidence

SG-PL vowel alternation in Hinterpommern in 1843

Firmenich

a.	Voate Hähnk **was** fliet'g, syn fru, dat Haun was ful.	(11x)
	Father Rooster was hard.working, his wife, the hen, was lazy	
b.	Syn wange **were** noch natt van throane	(4x)
	his cheeks wre still wett of tears	
a.	As sei noa Huus **kamm**, fraug ehr mann: …	(9x)
	when she to house came, asked her husband:…	
b.	un (sei) **keime** kort noa middag in't hoawken-nest.	(1x)
	and (they) came shortly after midday in the hawk nest	
a.	Nu gung syn Fru hen, söcht syn Pott un **att** em half ut	(4x)
	now went his wife away, searched his pot and ate it half empty	
b.	Daun **eite** sei un weren vull freud.	(1x)
	then.PAST ate they and were full joy	
a.	(dei) Zeegenbuck **verstack** sick hinner't Handauk	(1x)
	the bock hid himself behind the towel	
b.	Eh hei van syn Jagden kamm, **verstoaken** sick, dei Voate Hähnk mitbröcht hadd	
	before he from his hunt came, hid themselves, those (who) Father brought had	
		(1x)

2.1 The Evidence

SG-PL vowel alternation in Hinterpommern in 1843

preterite	/a/	ei/ä/å:
sg	44	0
pl	0	7

p-value < 0.00001

2.2 The Evidence

SG-PL vowel alternation in Hinterpommern in 1833   Böhmer

preterite.indicative Budow 1833	a	ei/ai/ä
SG	12	0
PL	0	4

$p < 0.0006$

2.3 The Evidence

SG-PL vowel alternation in Hinterpommern in 1924

Albert Schwarz, Wandhagen

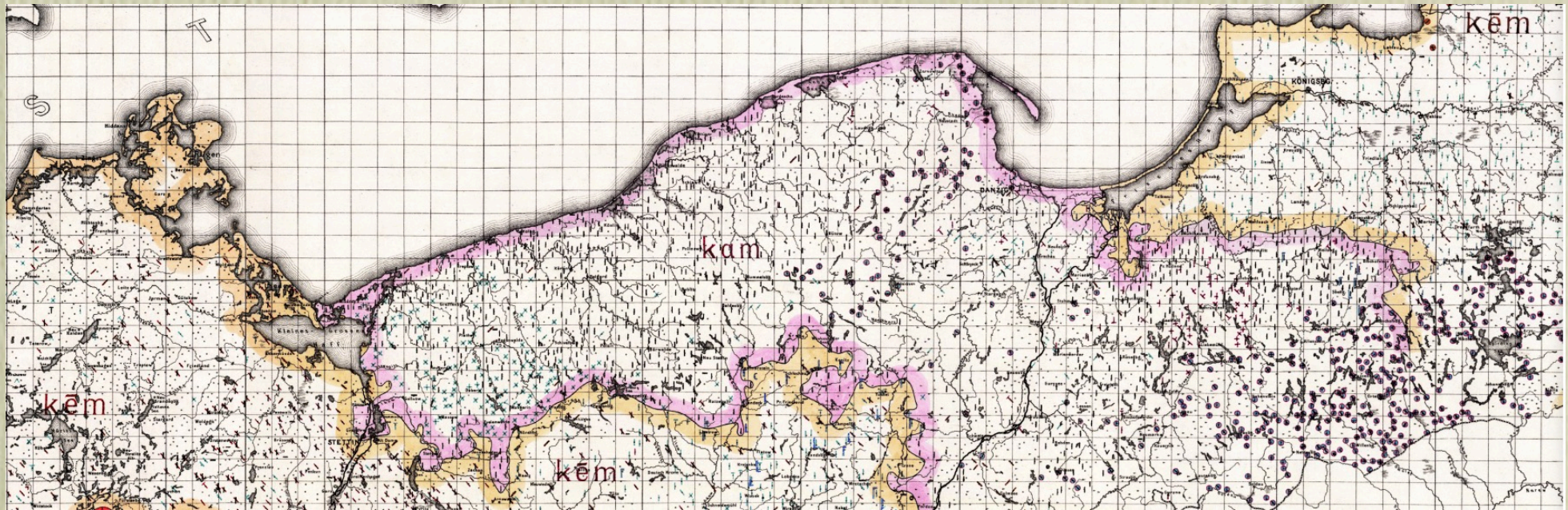| preterite.ind class 4/5	/a/	/ai/e/
sg	48	0
pl	0	5

$p < 0.00001$

Program

- The Problem (EP ~ Gothic/Old-Anglian/OF?)
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- Historical dimension

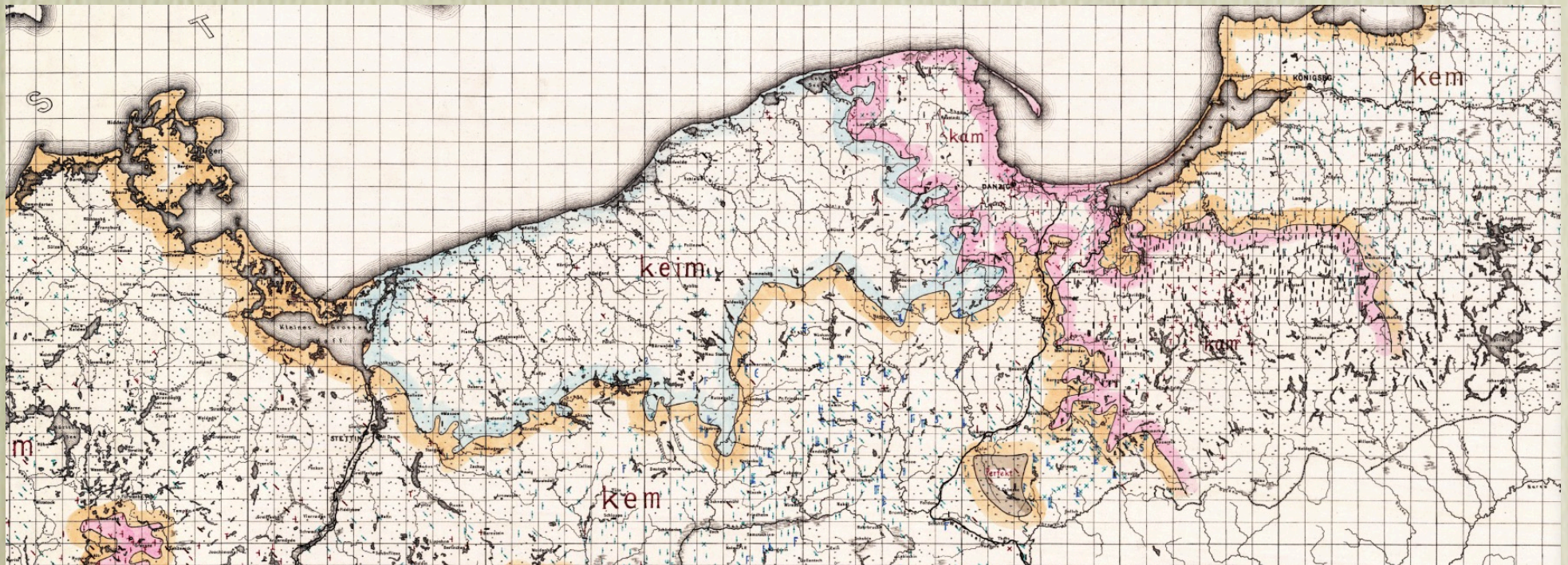- Evaluation

3. Geographical spread

Wenker Atlas

6. Dat Für **was** tau heit   (Eventin, 52445, near Wandhagen)
   the fire was too hot
24. (…) und **weere** fest am sloapen
      and were firm in.the sleep.ING2
34. Dat Woat **kam** vam Hatte.   (Repkow, 52444, near Wandhagen)
   the word came from.the heart
24. Ais wi gista Awend trüg **keime**, leige dea Aner im beer un sleipe fest.
   when we yester-evening back came, laid the others in.the bed and slept firm

3. Geographical spread

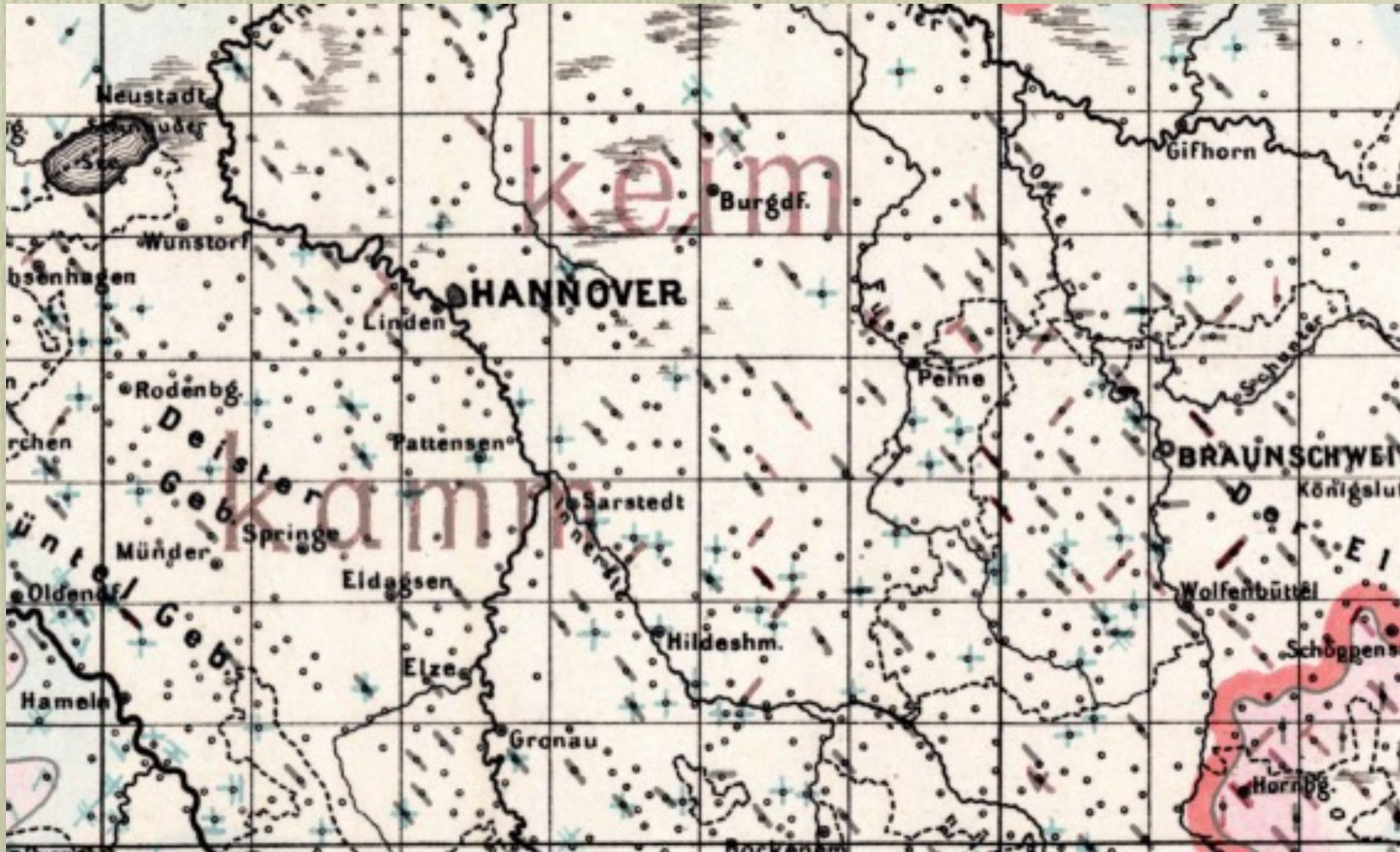# 3.2 Geographical spread

sg

pl

3.2 Geographical spread

Program

- The Problem   (EP ~ Gothic/Old-Anglian/OF?)
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4.1 Historical dimension

SG-PL vowel alternation in a 15th century Eastphalian Manuscript

a.	Ek **was** hungerich, vnde gy engeuen my nicht to etene	(64x)
	I was hungy, and you NEG-gave.PL me not to eat	
b.	Wente wy **weren** tosamen up eynem weche, vnde he was dore vnde ik [was] wis gherekent	(9x)
	For we were together on one way and he was dumm and I (was) wise reckoned	
a.	[Do] **quam** he wedder to deme pawese vnde sede ...	(1x)
	then came.SG he back to the pope and said ...	
b.	Corteliken [darna] **quemen** se vnder de mordere	(3x)
	Briefly thereafter came.PL they among the murderers	
a.	Dat viffte van dem lesten auent male dat onse liue here myt synen Jungeren **at**	
	the fifth: of the last evening meal that our dear lord with his pupils ate.SG	(1x)
b.	Se **eten** vnde druncken, se lacheden, ...	(1x)
	They ate.PL and drank.PL, they laughed.PL	
a.	To dem lesten **gaff** ome de pawes eyn uingeren to dragende	(4x)
	At the least gave.SG him the pope a ring to wear	
b.	Ik was hungerich, vnde gy **geuen** my to etene	(2x)
	I was hungry and you gave.PL me to eat	

4.1 Historical dimension

SG-PL vowel alternation in a 15th century Eastphalian Manuscript

preterite.indicative class 4/5	/a/	/e/
SG	102	0
PL	0	19

p-value < 0.00001

4.2 Old English (Anglian)

Early 8th century Latin manuscript (British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV)

10th century Old English glosses

Cross table of a/e ablaut in 4/5 without *wosa*:

	/æ/ae/a	e
13SG	175	2
13PL	0	104

$p < 0.00001$

Cross table of a/e ablaut in 4/5 including *wosa*

wosa + 4/5	/æ/ae/a	e
13SG	383	5
13PL	3	279

$p < 0.000001$

4.3 (Old) Frisian

(Saterland Frisian)

weze – waas – wieren – wezen	'to be'
kwede – kwaad – kwieden – kweden	'to say'
kume – koom – kemen – kemen	'to come'
sjo – saag – segen – säin	'to see'
geskjo – geskaag – geskegen – geskäin	'to happen'

Summary

a–ē quality + quantity contrast type 1	a–ā quantity contrast type 2	neither type 3
• Gothic • Old Frisian (*was/weren*) • OE (Northhumbrian) (> 9 verbs)	• Old Norse (a–ǫ) • OS, OHG • OE (West Saxon)	
• 15thc Eastphalian (> 7 verbs)	• Middle Dutch	Modern German Brazilian Pomeranian Modern West Frisian
• Modern English (*was/were*) • European-Pomeranian (> 5 verbs) • Saterland Frisian (> 5 verbs)	• Modern Icelandic • Modern Dutch	

• 1. There is a clear possibility that a-ē alternation is an archaic feature
• 2. However, a regular phonological process is not without problems
• 3. Lasch' intrusion is still an option, and needs further investigation
• 4. 1 and 3 are not *a priori* incompatible

Diachronic path - REN corpus

Vowel in PRET.PL.IND. of *wesen* 'to be' in North Low Saxon ("Nordniedersächsisch").				
	13th	14th	15th	16th
a	15	771	0	7
e	2	37	95	113
%e	12%	32%	100%	94%

Diachronic path - REN corpus

wesen 'to be'; vowel in PL.PRET.IND in Colonial German.

	13de	14de	15de	16de
a	0	0	4	0
e	1	16	71	32
%e	100%	100%	95%	100%

Diachronic path

Schlüter, W. (1914) Schra of Nowgorod – Wortregister

verb	preterite SG–PL indicative	ref.
'to be'	was – weren	(p. 77)
'to come'	quam – quemen	(p. 33)
'to give'	? – geven	(p. 24)
'to take'	nam – nemen	(p. 43)
'to happen'	schach – ?	(p. 52)

Program

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State of the Art + prospects

• There can be an archaic East Saxon variant with stable a-ē alternation and Lasch' intrusion from the 15thc onwards is an optical increase by the emancipation of Eastern dialects/texts

• The Easter Saxon a – ē alternation is a novelty and intrudes into western dialects

• The a – ē alternation is a novelty (Lasch) and comes about through language contact with Flemish/Dutch dialects during the Ostsiedlung

Clue: *was - weren*

Language Contact

during Ostsiedlung

• Dialects without umlaut (Flemish/Dutch colonists) come in contact with umlauting dialects (Low Saxon)

Sound change in nouns

Nominal a-Class (neuters and masc)

Pomeranian		Dutch
hof – hoif	↔	hof – ho:ven
glas – gle:s	↔	glas – gla:zen
blad – ble:r	↔	blad – bla:deren
dak – dek	↔	dak – da:ken
fat – fet	↔	vat – va:ten

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		was – wa:ren
		gaf – ga:ven
		nam – na:men

class 4/5 verbs only

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dak – dek	↔	dak – da:ken
fat – fet	↔	vat – va:ten
was – we:ren	←	was – wa:ren
gaf – ge:ven	←	gaf – ga:ven
nam - ne:men	←	nam – na:men

class 4/5 verbs only

Evaluation

Nominal a-Class (neuters and masc)

Pomeranian		Dutch
hof – hoif	↔	hof – ho:ven
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blad – ble:r	↔	blad – bla:deren
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fat – fet	↔	vat – va:ten
was – we:ren	←	was – wa:ren
gaf – ge:ven	←	gaf – ga:ven
nam - ne:men	←	nam – na:men

- intrusion becomes understandable:
  - Flemish/Dutch lack secundary umlaut
  - Only length oppositions survive
  - Length becomes reinterpreted by umlaut upon L2
- intrusion in plural only
- in class 4/5 only

Evaluation

- Gothic

} Archaic feature

- East Old Saxon

- Language contact during Ostsiedlung   Innovation

The Intrusion of Optative Forms into the Preterite in Pomeranian

How does Pomeranian relate to Old Saxon?

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Small languages – Big Ideas, Oldenburg
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