Old
English
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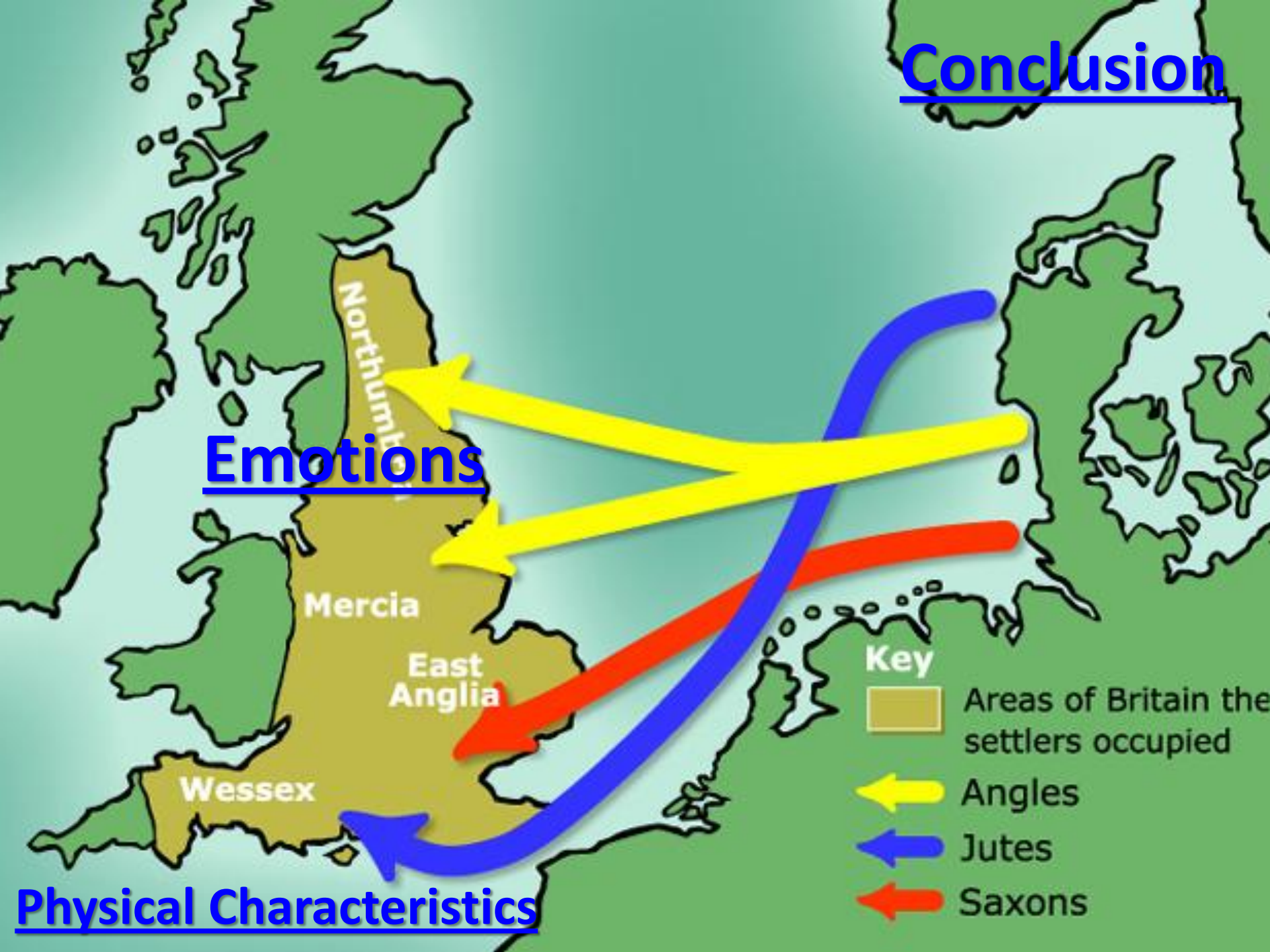
Old English was the West Germanic language spoken in the area now known as England between the 5th and 11th centuries. This language included the oldest words ever documented from origin that are still used in modern society. However, a big question still remains: How did the Old English words influence the development of new words and why are they still relevant considering how old they are, technically being considered the "first words"?


Conclusion
Emotions
Northumbria
Mercia
East Anglia
Wessex
Physical Characteristics
Key
Areas of Britain the settlers occupied
Angles
Jutes
Saxons

Emotion

All words from this list originated from the Old English Period. The languages of origin include: Old Frisian, Old Norse, German, Dutch, Greek, Sanskirt, Lithuanian, Latin, Gothic, Russian, Old Saxon, Old Persian, Middle Irish, Welsh, Anglian, and West Germanic. Pertaining to the question asked previously, these words are still relevant today based on the fact that they come from a basic time period in which feelings were being developed, as well as

the words to describe these feelings. The realization that feelings do not change in terms of the simple fact that they are what they are allows you to understand why these words have lasted up until our modern day time period. This is because emotions are internal, and while they do undergo changes personal to each of us, they do not change as a concept, which allowed these terms to be carried down for generations and made them some of the most important basic words for emotional description even unto this present day.

The Group of Action

Fear , glad, guilt, mad, pride & sad are all emotional words that all have the common theme of what you can feel rather than do as an action, with the exception of fear, with which you can do both. It is interesting to think of the actions that the Anglo-Saxons proceeded with to feel these type of effects. It is interesting to think about how they could've possibly come about, considering how basic the time period was at the time. A probable conclusion is the theory that around this time, the people were

just beginning to have these feelings towards their actions. It is possible that there was an initial pride from the fact that the land was theirs to claim, fear from the invasions that took place afterwards, anger from the realization of what had just happened, sadness from the resulting consequences, and guilt from the actual invaders, even though there was no probable admittance of these feelings from the start. This is one of the many summarized possible scenarios that could have evoked such words to be created after the understanding that their feelings existed. There is no factual evidence to support this claim, so the many potentials are numerous and unending.

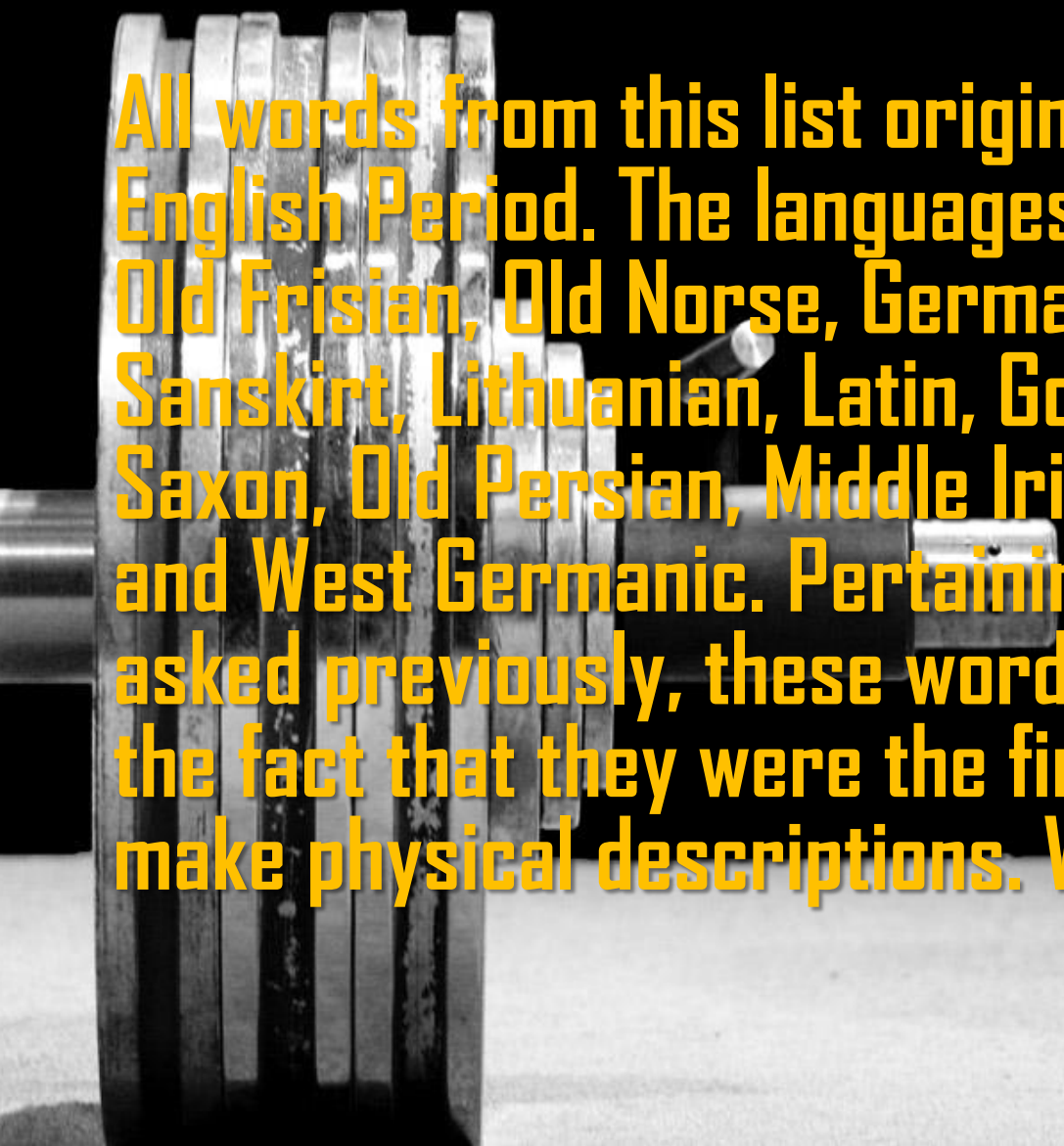
The Group of Feelings

Feel, forgive, hate, & love are all emotional words from this time period that all have the common theme of an action type of emotion, with the exception of feel, with which you can do both. The creation of these particular words could've stemmed from the previous possible scenario, such as the actually (feel)ings themselves, the anguish and pain derived from the events of society at the time, hate towards those that hurt them, love towards those that were close to them to provide support and comfort, and forgiveness to those that caused the pain

that they could've been feeling at any given moment, whether it be from a disagreement or the invasions themselves, which could've diminished their sense of pride amongst themselves. Again, there is no actual evidence of the reason why these feelings were worded the way they were, so the possibilities are infinite as to why the reason could've have been. The main focus is on the understanding of the environment during the time period and how it could've influenced the creation of such marvels of internal feelings.

Go Back

Physical Characteristics



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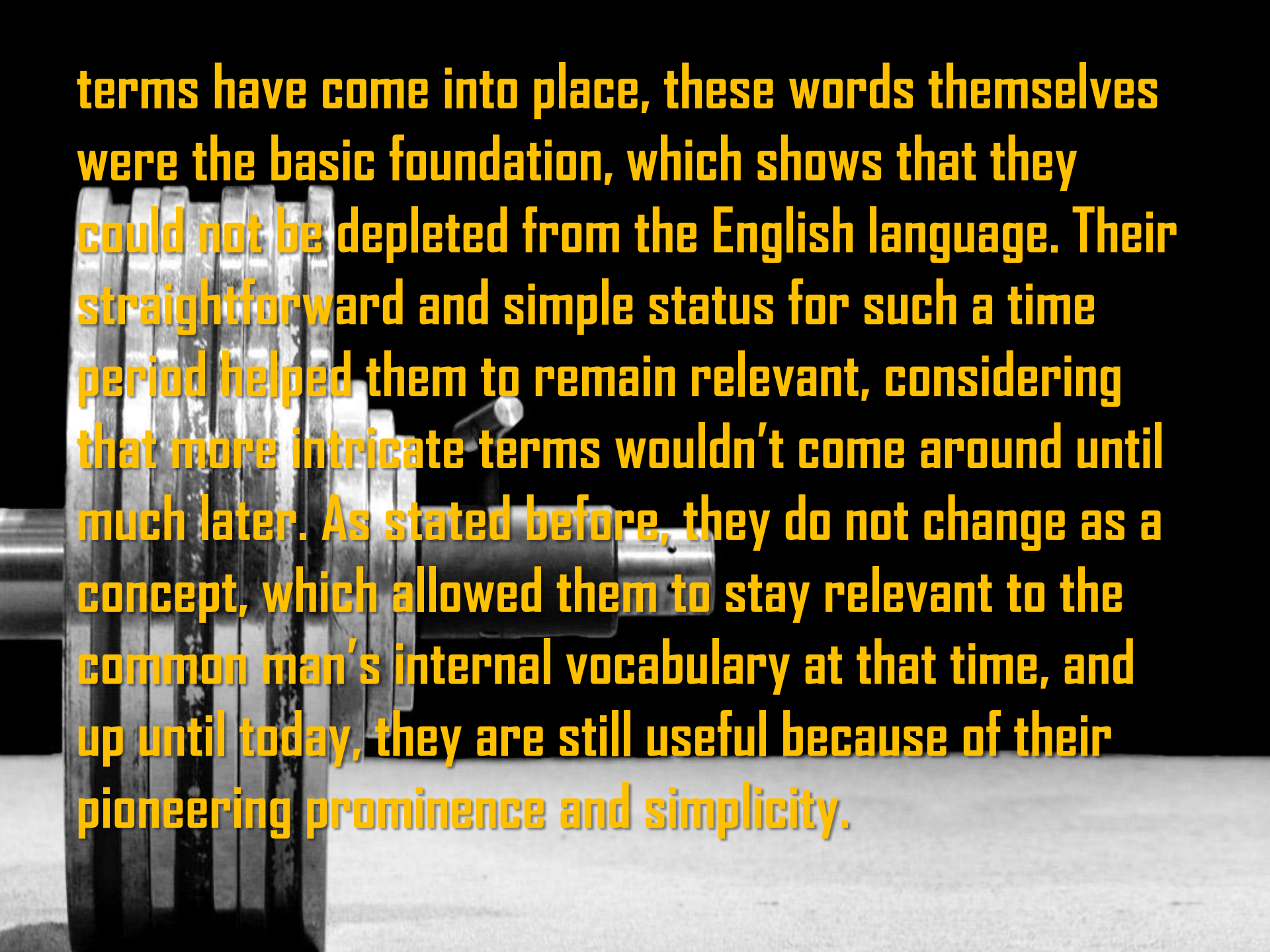

terms have come into place, these words themselves were the basic foundation, which shows that they could not be depleted from the English language. Their straightforward and simple status for such a time period helped them to remain relevant, considering that more intricate terms wouldn't come around until much later. As stated before, they do not change as a concept, which allowed them to stay relevant to the common man's internal vocabulary at that time, and up until today, they are still useful because of their pioneering prominence and simplicity.

Let's now take a different approach at the view of these physical descriptions and where they could've been derived from.

Fat

This word originally meant "fat, fatted, plump, obese," or "to cram, stuff". In 1951, the term was used as teen slang to mean "attractive, up to date". Fat cat meant "privileged and rich person" (1928); fat chance meant "no chance at all" (1906). Fathead is from 1842; fat-witted is from 1590s; fatso was first recorded 1944; The expression “the fat is in the fire” originally meant "the plan has failed" (1560s). Take a look at how the meaning was added to other words and how that influenced the connotation.

Good

This word originally meant "virtuous; desirable; valid; considerable". It was used as an expression of satisfaction from early 15 century & of children, "well-behaved," by the1690s. Irregular comparatives (better, best) reflect a widespread pattern; *Good-for-nothing* is from 1711. *Good looking* is attested from 1780 (*good looks* by c.1800). *Good sport*, of persons, is from 1906; *good to go* is attested from 1989. *The good book* "the Bible" attested from 1801, originally in missionary literature describing the language of conversion efforts in American Indian tribes.

Old

Old originally meant "aged, antique, primeval; elder, experienced". A few Indo-European languages distinguish words for "old" (vs. young) from words for "old" (vs. new), and some have separate words for aged persons as opposed to old things. L. *senex* was used of aged living things, mostly persons, while *vetus* (lit. "having many years") was used of inanimate things. Gk. *geraios* was used mostly of humans; Gk.*palaios* was used mostly of things, of persons only in a derogatory sense. Greek also had *arkhaios*, lit. "belonging to the beginning," which parallels Fr. *ancien*, used mostly with reference to things "of former times." Old English also had *fyrn* "ancient," related to O.E. *feor* "far, distant. The original Old English vowel is preserved in Scots *auld*, also in alderman. The original comparative and superlative (*elder*, *eldest*) are retained in particular uses.

Tell me that wasn't boring.....

LETS TAKE A LOOK AT THE REST

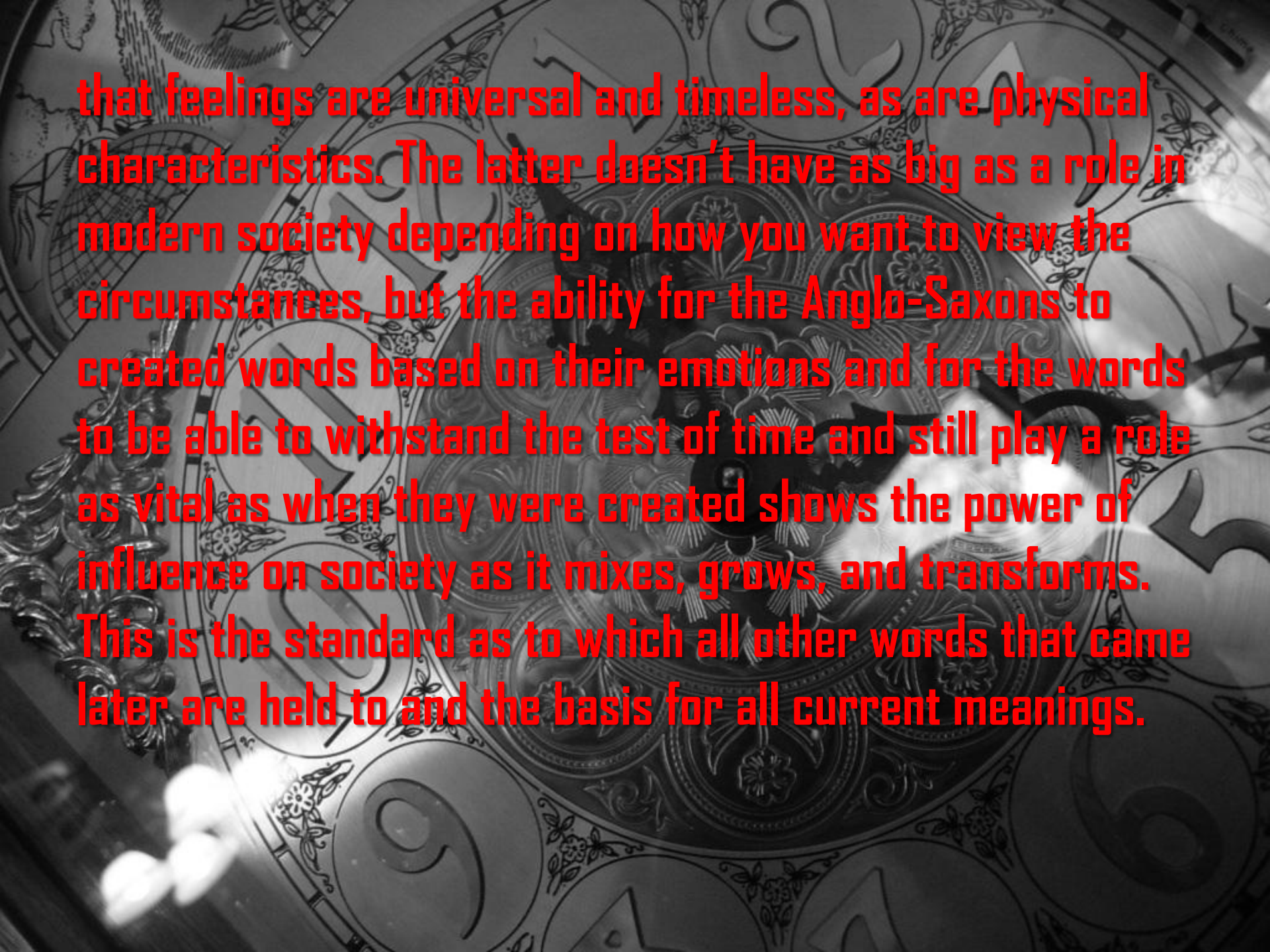
The remaining words in this category are: kind, lean, strong, mean, weak, & young. Understand this perspective of these words. They all deal with what society at the moment chose to define you as. You were better suited being strong and young over weak and old, considering the job of the individuals. They mainly farmed and proceeded in hard manual labor. You couldn't be feeble and expect to survive. These words likely came about to distinguish those that were capable of surviving and weed out those who were deemed unfit to live, which is an

interesting view to take in considering the fact that they were later conquered by the Vikings when they invaded, differentiating the true meanings that were already set in place. They could've also been used to describe the men that they saw as they embarked on their journey for conquest, and over time evolved into words that were considered desirable attributes as the different groups of individuals intertwined and scattered. This is just one of the many possible conclusions as to how the evolution and understanding of these terms came about and what they represented as they were communicated throughout the world.

GO BACK

In conclusion, let us take a step back (or forward; Your call) into the extensive view on the evolution of these words and how they changed over time. The general trend to notice is how they each changed as the society around them changed. As people became more aware of each other, the connotations started to expand and have more weight as to what they equaled. A simple formula to show this explanation starts with the Anglo-Saxons: Basic society + basic needs = basic words. As they intertwined and mixed in with other societies, the meanings began to serve different purposes based on the needs at the moment, as they increased and became more complex.

This general foundation for all other words from that point on answers the question from the beginning: How did the Old English words influence the development of new words and why are they still relevant considering how old they are, technically being considered the "first words"? The historical influence isn't as evident seeing that these were the origins, but the cultural influence shows up tremendously when you look at how the words fit the environment around the individuals at the time. It shows how they adapted words into their culture to express how they felt at any given moment and basically allows us the opportunity to see


that feelings are universal and timeless, as are physical characteristics. The latter doesn't have as big as a role in modern society depending on how you want to view the circumstances, but the ability for the Anglo-Saxons to created words based on their emotions and for the words to be able to withstand the test of time and still play a role as vital as when they were created shows the power of influence on society as it mixes, grows, and transforms. This is the standard as to which all other words that came later are held to and the basis for all current meanings.

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