



# WEQSPEROS

## A DANCE WITH OLD TONGUES

*valar morghulis, valar dohaeris*

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*valar morghulis*

*valar dohaeris*

Carlos Quiles

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## Images

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## Text

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## FOREWORD

*Tolkien was a philologist, and an Oxford don, and could spend decades laboriously inventing Elvish in all its detail. I, alas, am only a hardworking SF and fantasy novel, and I don't have his gift for languages. That is to say, I have not actually created a Valyrian language. The best I could do was try to sketch in each of the chief tongues of my imaginary world in broad strokes, and give them each their characteristic sounds and spellings.*

George R. R. Martin<sup>i</sup>

This text began as a simple question: how would the most faithful translation of *A Song of Ice and Fire* into Late Proto-Indo-European look like? The idea of such a translation came to me back in 2016, with I discovered the Latin translations of *The Hobbit*, and of the Ancient Greek and Latin translations of the first book of Harry Potter's series.

The main problem of this task lies in the details: which stage or stages of Proto-Indo-European would the Common Tongue correspond to in the different periods described in the book? Which Late Indo-European dialects would be spoken in each region of Westeros? What language would be more consistent with the description of the Old Tongue? How would the described language history of the Known World correlate best with coeval real-world proto-languages and ancient languages? And, perhaps most importantly, what implications do all of this have for the translation of names and sentences used in the fantasy world?

Because we must necessarily talk about Indo-Uralic languages as the main languages of Westeros and neighboring lands, the close relationship between these and Eurasianic and Afroasiatic languages have to be also reflected in the languages of Essos, to keep a

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<sup>i</sup> [So Spake Martin: Yet More Questions \(July 22, 2001\)](#).

more natural reconstruction. The known ancestral contacts among proto-languages and ancient languages cannot be avoided in such a translation.

Also interesting for Martin's worldbuilding translated into an Indo-European setting is the incorporation of dialects and a chronology more or less faithful to known linguistic developments; after all, no language can exist in the void, without external influences or internal changes. If English is spoken in Westeros, so are the different dialects akin to modern or ancient English ones, as the TV show tries to reflect with the different accents used. If Late Indo-European is spoken in Westeros, so are the different dialects necessarily related to this language formation in its different periods, and so are the dialects of contemporaneous neighboring languages.



Figure 1. *The Known World after the Doom of Valyria. A blank canvas for linguistics.*

The language void left in ASoIaF is an opportunity to introduce millions of fans like us into the world of ancient languages and comparative grammar. By setting a parallel of each known language or dialect to a natural proto-language—including resources on how to complement each language and dialect—the culture of this fantasy world becomes infinite, leading its development to a level higher than what Tolkien himself could achieve in a work of a gifted linguist's lifetime.

I also wanted to use this opportunity to illustrate, in the simplest possible way, how population genomics would work in combination with ancient languages for this *Indo-European World of Ice and Fire*. Hence the correction and expansion of this text (mostly

written in 2017 & 2018) to incorporate the most recent findings of population genomics to the Known World, in the second part called *Peoples of Westeros*. More than a faithful picture of lineages in Westeros (i.e. estimated by researching the books), it is used to as a general representation of the situation in ancient Eurasia translated into Westeros.

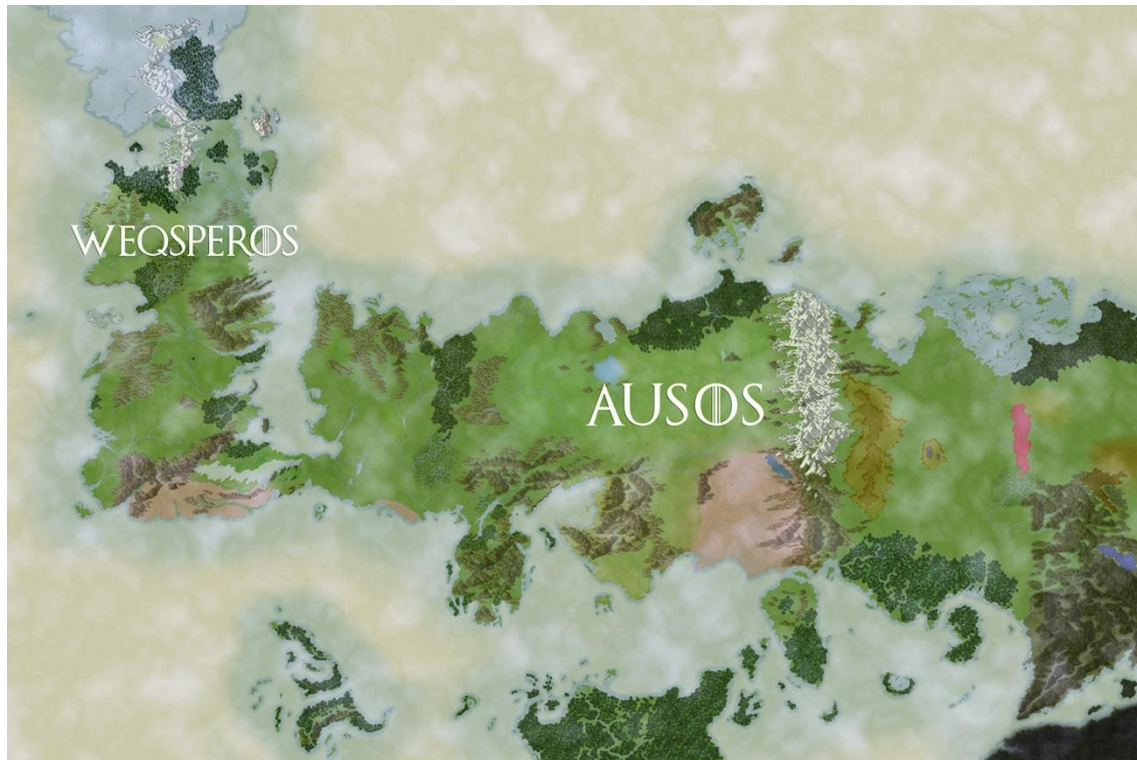


Figure 2. The Known World in ancient times. A blank canvas for population and language expansions.





# CONVENTIONS

## Color code

The following text contains a color code similar to the one used by Michael Ende in his book, *The Neverending Story*: red is used for the real world, and green for the developed fantasy. Apart from these two colors, black is used for texts including ASoIaF canon, and blue for non-canon sources.

As a summary:

- In Black: References to the canon, books, GRRM comments, etc.
- In Blue: Fantasy references from supplementary books (e.g. roleplaying game), the TV series, or analysis by fans.
- In Green: Fantasy world translated into real-world ancient languages. Renaming and complementary explanation of certain aspects of this fantasy world.
- In Red: Real references for parallels with the Fantasy world: i.e. ancient language equivalences, real-world etymologies, and generally explanations of a transposition of our ancient world into the Known World of ASoIaF.

## Real world

To understand the equivalences of languages and migrations to the real-world ones, you may want to take a look at the following open access books from the series *A Song of Sheep and Horses*:

- Book One (languages): [A Song of Sheep and Horses: eurafrasia nostratica, eurasia indouralica.](#)

- Books Two & Three (cultures and peoples): [A Game of Clans: \*collectores venatoresque, agricolae pastoresque\*](#) & [A Clash of Chiefs: \*rex militaris, rex sacrorum\*](#).
- Book Four (maps and graphics): [A Storm of Hordes: \*hic sunt leones, hic sunt dracones\*](#).

For varied open access resources to learn Late Proto-Indo-European, reference works on lexicon, morphology, and syntax, and for conventions to be able to use it as a modern language, visit <<https://academiaprisca.org/>>.

For resources on specific ancient languages and dialects, the current offer is overwhelming, so it is difficult to list books and papers appropriately. A good starting point is to ask for resources in our Facebook page or dedicated discussion groups at <<https://www.facebook.com/indoeuropean/>>.

# I. TONGUES OF WESTEROS

## I.1. True Tongue

The True Tongue is the language of the children of the forest, described “as sounding like the song of stones in a brook, or the wind through leaves, or the rain upon de water (...) it seems clear that their speech originated, or drew inspiration from, the sounds they heard every day”<sup>ii</sup>.

If it were related to human languages, only an ancestral language phonologically similar to the traditionally named *Khoisan* languages, with dozens of click consonants (similar to “sounds heard everyday”), may be similar to them.

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<sup>ii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Dawn Age.

## I.2. Ghiscari language

The Old Ghiscari language is unrelated to other languages of the Known World. It may be thought of as Sumerian, with their known glyphs<sup>iii</sup> belonging to the early Sumerian pictographs and symbols, before they turned into the full-fledged cuneiform script.

- The word for the settlement Ghis, from which the name Ghiscar (for the whole region) was derived, may come originally from 𒄠𒅗𒅗 *gissu* ‘shade, shadow; protection, aegis’<sup>iv</sup>. Less likely a back-formation from 𒄠𒅗𒅗 *gišgal* ‘station’<sup>v</sup>.
- One surviving “modern” Ghiscari<sup>vi</sup> word, *Mhysa* ‘mother’ may come from a distortion (into \**mu-s-a*) of *munus amagan* ‘mother’, formed by 𒄠𒅗𒅗 *munus* ‘woman; female’<sup>vii</sup> and 𒄠𒅗𒅗 *ama-ganga* ‘breeding female animal; child-bearing mother’<sup>viii</sup>.

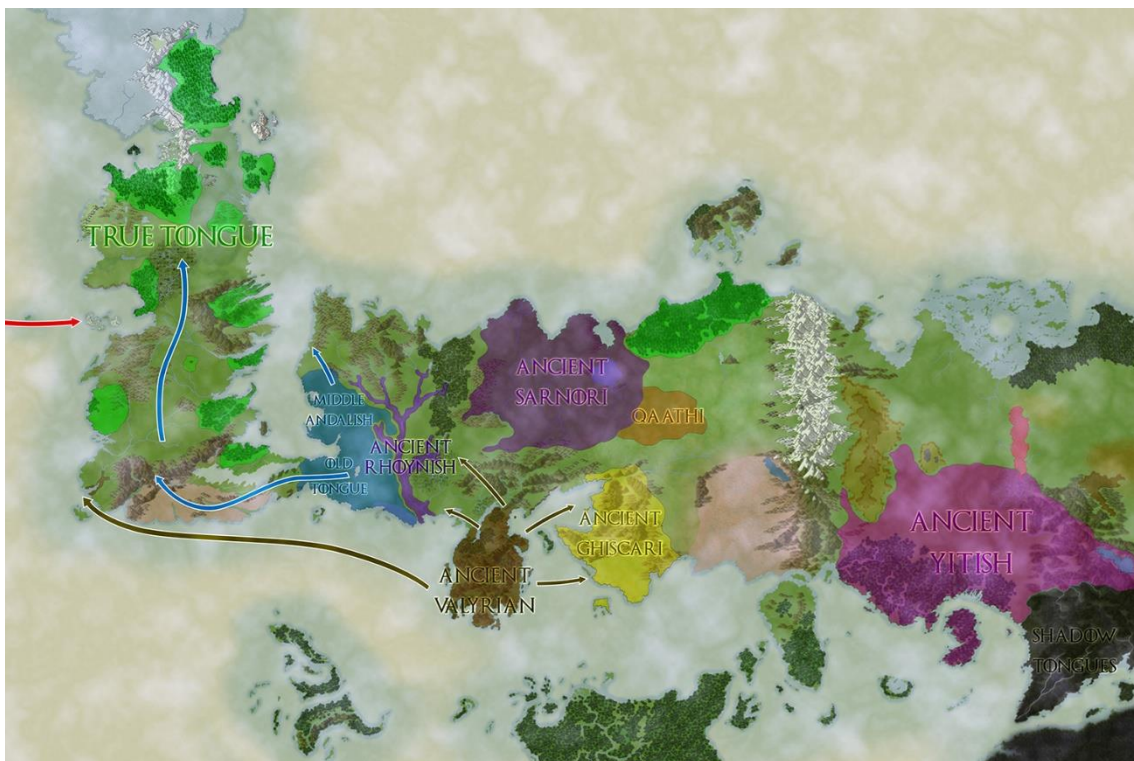


Figure 3. Ancient languages before the Dawn of Days and their expansion. Modified from [Adam Whitehead \(2018\)](#).

<sup>iii</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 23, Daenerys II; Chapter 42, Daenerys IV.

<sup>iv</sup> <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/cgi-bin/xff?xff=e2235>

<sup>v</sup> <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/cgi-bin/xff?xff=e2237>

<sup>vi</sup> [https://awoiaf.westeros.org/index.php/Ghiscari#.22Modern.22\\_Ghiscari](https://awoiaf.westeros.org/index.php/Ghiscari#.22Modern.22_Ghiscari)

<sup>vii</sup> <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/cgi-bin/xff?xff=e3795>

<sup>viii</sup> [http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/cgi-bin/distprof?cfgw=amagan\[MOTHER\]&res=aek&eid=e308](http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/cgi-bin/distprof?cfgw=amagan[MOTHER]&res=aek&eid=e308)

### I.3. Valyrian language

High Valyrian can be described as the literary language of noble houses<sup>ix</sup>. Ancient Valyrian can be described as Semitic in nature, where High Valyrian would correspond to West Semitic and the Valyrian dominance over Ghiscari mixture in the Old Ghiscari Empire would correspond to East Semitic blending with Sumerian.

High Valyrian names would have continued thus especially in Old Valyria, while Bastard Valyrian may have expanded with settlers of the Valyrian Freehold. These may correspond to Northwest Semitic and other West Semitic dialects, respectively.

Most Valyrian names may be traced back to ‘fire’, cf. Semitic \*<sup>?</sup>ūr- ~ \*<sup>?</sup>irr ~ \*<sup>?</sup>ry. So, for example, Valyria may be reconstructed as *Wāl<sup>?</sup>iriyā*, from \**Wal(a)ḡ-<sup>?</sup>ir-iyā-*, from compound *Walaḡ-<sup>?</sup>ar-u* ‘fire-lover’, the first term from \**wVlaḡ-* ‘be infatuated, in love’.

High Valyrian seems to have been influenced by Ghiscari, in the same sense that Semitic languages tend not to use compound words, whereas Sumerian (and partly East Semitic) does. Valyrian names are thus transliterated into the Common Tongue as they sound, hence reconstructions are based on the likely transliteration of Semitic sounds in Indo-European:

- This reconstruction may also be inferred from *valar morghulis*<sup>x</sup>, translated as ‘all men must die’<sup>xi</sup> from *wal(aḡ)<sup>?</sup>ar(u) mutqarish*, lit. “a-High-Valyrian being(getting)-frozen”. The inverted order is used to mark the subject, hence “even a High Valyrian dies”, where *qarish* is a stative meaning “being (in the state of having made) freeze”, hence “being (getting) frozen/stiff/dead”. The trend to drop the ending may be typical of the spoken language.
- Similarly, the counterpart phrase *valar dohaeris*<sup>xii</sup>, translated as “all men must serve”<sup>xiii</sup>, may be interpreted as *wal(aḡ)<sup>?</sup>ar(u) dagilu*, lit. “a-High-Valyrian is-obeying”, hence “even a High Valyrian serves”. The Indo-Europeanized form is thus likely a contamination of the word including rhotacism and a change by non-native speakers to an ending similar to *morghulis*.
- *Valonqar* is the Valyrian word for ‘little brother’<sup>xiv</sup>, and may be reconstructed probably as a distortion from pl. *a<sup>?</sup>hū qalalū*, contaminated by the prototypical

<sup>ix</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Chapter 11, Daenerys II.

<sup>x</sup> *A Clash of Kings*, Chapter 47, Arya IX.

<sup>xi</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 27, Daenerys III.

<sup>xii</sup> *A Feast for Crows*, Chapter 6, Arya I.

<sup>xiii</sup> *A Feast for Crows*, Chapter 34, Cat Of The Canals.

<sup>xiv</sup> *A Feast for Crows*, Chapter 34, Cat Of The Canals.

Valyrian *valar*, rhotacism, and syncope, with an *-n* probably dialectal Myrish (see below).

- On the other hand, Valyrian *maegi* ‘wise’<sup>xv</sup> must come ultimately from the Common Tongue *\*mag<sup>h</sup>os*, in turn from archaic *\*meḡ<sup>h</sup>-* ‘to be able to, to help; power, sorcerer’.
- **Similarly**, *dracarys*, translated as meaning ‘dragonfire’<sup>xvi</sup>, is composed of a Common Tongue term *drák-onts* ‘big serpent; dragon’, from *\*derk-* ‘see’, hence “(he) who sees”, and the Valyrian term for ‘fire’. This supports the idea of the wide ancient distribution of dragons including Westeros<sup>xvii</sup>, and potentially of their creation in the west as claimed by Barth<sup>xviii</sup>.
- *Azor Ahai*, not confirmed to be of Valyrian origin, could be explained as *ʕaḏur ʔaḥid(u)*, “the one/absolute hero” derived from the same source as Hebrew *(m)az(z)ur* ‘helpful’, “he that assists”, from *azar* ‘help, succour’ (cf. Arabic *ʕaḏar*, also in Phoenician in compounds), and Semitic *\*w/ʔaḥad* ‘one, alone; unite’.

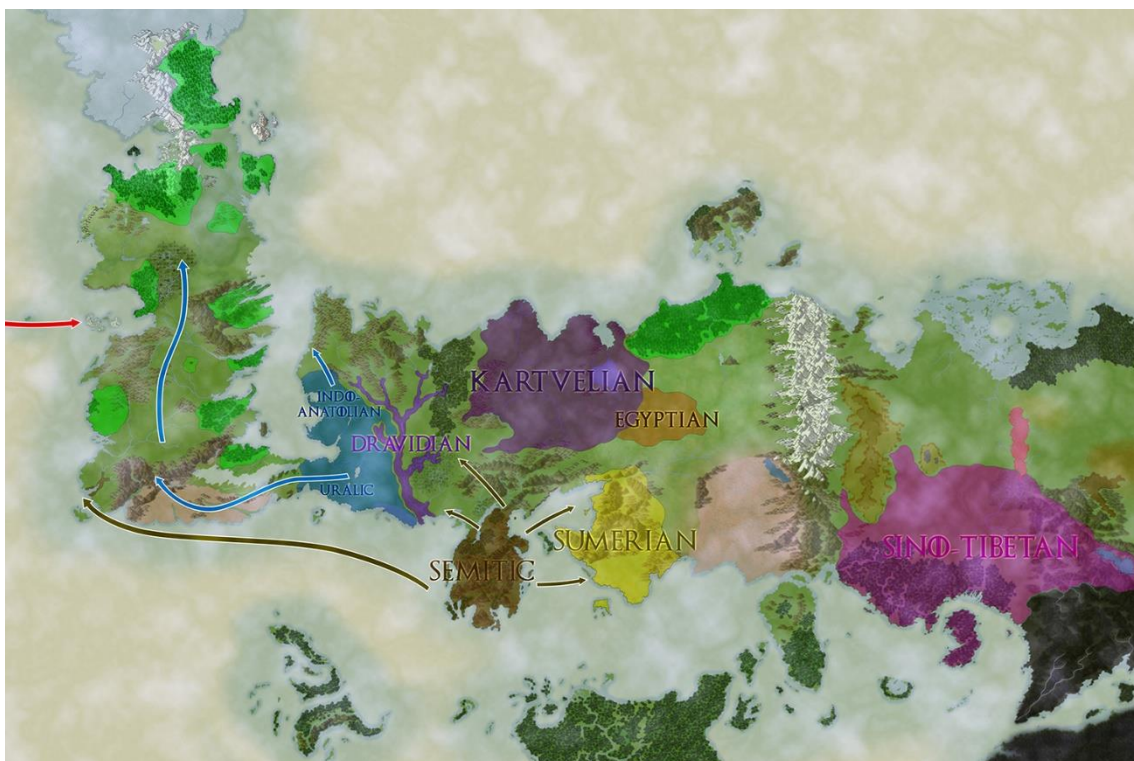


Figure 4. Equivalence of ancient languages of the Known World and location of ancient samples referred to in the text.

<sup>xv</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Chapter 72, Daenerys X.

<sup>xvi</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 8, Daenerys I.

<sup>xvii</sup> [So Spake Martin: Dragons in Westeros \(December 11, 1999\)](#)

<sup>xviii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Beyond the Free Cities: Sothoryos.

Common names of House Targaryen are inferred to belong to High Valyrian standards, too.<sup>xix</sup>

- *Targaryen* can be reconstructed as from *Tarak-<sup>?</sup>(a)ri-iyā-*, with a meaning possibly close to “striking with fire”, from Afroasiatic *\*tVrVk-* ‘beat, strike’ (cf. Akkadian *tarāku*).
- *Velaryon* may be from *Bill-<sup>?</sup>(a)ri-iyā-*, from *\*bill-* ‘cure, health’, contaminated with *valar*. Their common name *Jacaerys* may be from *\*yagaʕ-* ‘be tired, suffer’.
- *Aegon* can be reconstructed in its second term as from *\*qam-* ‘burn’, probably originally from *ḥay(aw)-qam-* ‘animal who burns’, an epithet for ‘dragon’, from *\*ḥay(aw)-* ‘animal’; and possibly contaminated with *ḥa<sup>?</sup>-qam*, from ‘throne of burning (swords?)’, from *\*ḥa<sup>?</sup>-* ‘throne, altar’, through folk etymology after Aegon’s conquests. Other possibilities for the first term include *\*hVwVy-* ‘worm’ (another ancient epithet for dragon) or *\*haww* ‘fire’.
- *Baelor* can be reconstructed as *Baʕl-<sup>?</sup>ūr-* “lord of flames”, from *\*baʕl-* ‘husband, master, owner’.
- *Daemon* can be tentatively reconstructed as *Dammaṇa-* (cf. Arabic *dāʕim-an* ‘lasting, enduring’), from Semitic *\*dVwVm* ‘dwell; last; stay a long time in one place’, a potential epithet for the perennial fire. Morphologically identical with *\*da/imm(-an)-* ‘rainless cloud; rain’.
- *Daenerys* could be reconstructed as from *Ṭaʕan-<sup>?</sup>ry-*, translated as “who strikes with fire”, from *\*ṭVʕa/un-* ‘strike with a spear, pierce’.
- *Jaehaera*, *Jaeherys*, may come from *\*yVhig-* (also *\*wVhig-*) ‘burn and shine (of fire)’, related to Afroasiatic *\*<sup>?</sup>ug-* ‘burn, fire’.
- *Rhae* and derivatives come probably from *\*ra<sup>?</sup>(i)š-* ‘head; top; beginning’. The ending in *-gar* is probably related to *\*gir-* ‘fire, deity of fire’ (cf. Akk. *giru*, *girru*, or Arabic *ʕr* ‘make/burn bricks’).

<sup>xix</sup> <[https://awoiaf.westeros.org/index.php/High\\_Valyrian](https://awoiaf.westeros.org/index.php/High_Valyrian)>.



### I.3.1. Low Valyrian

Examples of Bastard Valyrian of the Free Cities may include the name *Syrio Forel*, described as of Braavosi<sup>xx</sup> or thick Myrish accent<sup>xxi</sup>, hence *Sūriyu Furr-<sup>?</sup>El-*, formed by a distorted name *Syria*<sup>xxii</sup>; \**pur-* ‘best ones, elite’ (cf. Arabic *furr-*); and NW Sem. \**il(u)* ‘god’. This name alone attests to the deformation of Bastard Valyrian (probably Southern Valyrian dialect) in common with the ancestor of Arabic. The dropping of the ending must be very common in the modern Low Valyrian speech.

Valyrian script is also described as involving glyphs.<sup>xxiii</sup> As the source of expansion of civilization in most of the Known World, this may correspond to the Proto-Sinaitic alphabet (potentially related to the Egyptian hieroglyphs, in turn used in Qaath) turning into Phoenician alphabet in the classical period, which would have influenced the alphabets eventually used in Westeros.

The modern mongrel tongue<sup>xxiv</sup> of some slavers in Slaver’s Bay is thus a blend of High Valyrian and Old Ghiscari<sup>xxv</sup>, which can be then described as similar to Akkadian, i.e. East Semitic mixed with Sumerian.



Figure 5. Languages of the Known World after Aegon’s Conquest. Modified from [Adam Whitehead \(2018\)](#).

<sup>xx</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Chapter 22, Arya II.

<sup>xxi</sup> *Storm of Swords*, Chapter 39, Arya VII.

<sup>xxii</sup> <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Name\\_of\\_Syria](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Name_of_Syria)>.

<sup>xxiii</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 27, Daenerys III.

<sup>xxiv</sup> *A Dance with Dragons*, Chapter 59, The Discarded Knight.

<sup>xxv</sup> *A Dance with Dragons*, Chapter 60, The Spurned Suitor.

## I.4. Old Tongue

The Old Tongue is the harsh, clanging language<sup>xxvi</sup> brought to Westeros by the First Men during their invasion, and is still spoken by the giants<sup>xxvii</sup> and most wildlings<sup>xxviii</sup>.

The language is thus most likely identified with Uralic. Examples of the language include:

- *Magnar* ‘Lord’<sup>xxix</sup>, which can be reconstructed as from Uralic *\*maje* ‘earth’, an infix *-n-*, and the suffix *\*-ar* as a deadjectival verbal suffix with the meaning of “acquisition of property”.
- *Skagos* ‘stone’<sup>xxx</sup>, looks like a foreign word (of Common Tongue or Ibbish origin), unless it is interpreted as metathesized *\*kVSkV* into *\*\*SkV-kV-* with some of its different meanings (‘dry’, ‘waterfall; rapids’) maybe remotely related to a derivative ‘stone’, hence from *\*koSka*.
- *Sygerrik* ‘deceiver’<sup>xxxi</sup>, maybe an expression combining *\*čukka* ‘hide, shut’ and *\*rikV* (*\*riyV*) ‘(cut off) piece’.

Some short House names from the North may also be interpreted as having its origin in the Old Tongue<sup>xxxii</sup>, and they seem to be related to nature, although many have been reinterpreted to fit sounds and meanings compatible with the Common Tongue:

- *Stark* may be from *\*tarku* ‘conifer; twig’, potentially contaminated by the Indo-European *s-mobile*. This reconstruction may be supported by the interpretation of *Karstark* as from *\*karča* ‘branch, twigs’, hence maybe Stark is a back-contamination from *\*\*karč-tarku*, reinterpreted within the Common Tongue as *\*\*kar-čtarku*.
- *Wull* may be from *\*uole* (*\*uōle*) ‘pole’.
- *Umber* may be from *\*ompra* ‘a kind of sour plant’.
- *Stout* may come from *\*tütKV* ‘spread’, possibly also reinterpreted as with an *s-mobile* to assimilate it to the Common Tongue.

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<sup>xxvi</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 15, Jon II.

<sup>xxvii</sup> *A Dance with Dragons*, Chapter 49, Jon X.

<sup>xxviii</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 15, Jon II.

<sup>xxix</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 7, Jon I. *A Dance with Dragons*, Chapter 35, Jon VII.

<sup>xxx</sup> *A Feast for Crows*, Chapter 15, Samwell II. *The World of Ice & Fire*, The North: The Stoneborn of Skagos.

<sup>xxxi</sup> *A Clash of Kings*, Chapter 51, Jon VI.

<sup>xxxii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The North.

The First Men had their own writing system, including a runic script<sup>xxxiii</sup> found all over Westeros. **The most reasonable equivalence is found in the Old European script.**

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<sup>xxxiii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Iron Islands.

## I.5. Common Tongue

Middle Andalish, which may be identified as Indo-Anatolian, is the language spoken by the Andals, and a branch of the Old Tongue, which can in turn be identified before the Dawn Age as the Indo-Anatolian–Uralic community, removed ca. 4000 years from each other<sup>xxxiv</sup>. Middle Andalish evolved into the Common Tongue or Westerosi, which can be identified as Common Indo-European:

- *Andalos* comes probably from *And<sup>h</sup>ālōs*, in turn from *\*and<sup>h</sup>ō* ‘bloom, kindle’ (hence “blooming, young (land)”, possibly “original land”), and the ending in *-lo-*, which gives the initial adjective (and ethnonym) *and<sup>h</sup>ālos* ‘Andal’. For the original form in *ā*, not attested in Indo-European, cf. Dothraki *Rhaesh Andahli* showing an archaic *\*And<sup>h</sup>ahl-* before the laryngeal loss.
- *Hukko*, the hero whom the Pentoshi singers say led the Andals, has been long noted by some maesters to be possibly the rendering of the name *Hugor*<sup>xxxv</sup>, which can be derived then from Andalish *Xugōr*, ‘conjurer’ or ‘slaughterer, butcherer’, from PIE *\*χueg<sup>h</sup>-*, cf. Hitt. *huk-zi*, *huk(k)-* ‘conjure, treat by incantation’ (possibly here also Gk. *auk<sup>h</sup>éō* ‘boast, brag’) and Hitt. *huk-zi*, *huk(k)-* (and OP *vaj* ‘to stab’).
- *Westeros* comes from *\*yékw<sup>w</sup>speros* ‘evening’ hence ‘evening star’ hence ‘western’, while *Essos* comes from *\*ausōs* ‘dawn’ hence ‘east’. Both terms must have spread with the expansion of the Andals and their written records.
- *Septs* and *septries* are buildings where followers of the Faith of the Seven worship<sup>xxxvi</sup>. The word is reconstructible as from *\*septm̥* ‘seven’, which has also its cognates in Afroasiatic (cf. Sem. *\*sabʕ-/\*šabʕ-*, Egyptian *sfh*, etc.) which supports the eastern origin (or eastward expansion) of the cult.

While most names in Westeros can be derived as from a common Late Indo-European, some features of certain words point to the dialectal nature of each region:

- In the North, *Mormont* can be reconstructed as reduplicated *Murm-nt-*, from BSl. *\*mur-m-* ‘mumble, grumble’ (like *Sansa* is reduplicated from *\*sā-n(o)-* ‘healthy, happy’ into *Sānsā*), where Italic or Germanic would reduplicate it fully in *\*murmur-*. *Jon* can be interpreted as BSl. *\*jōunos* ‘young’, although the name is also found outside of the North. The strong influence of Old Tongue phonology must also be noticed in Northerners and Dornishmen, as well as in the Iron Islands and

<sup>xxxiv</sup> For more on their evolution, see [Languages of the Known World](#), by Adam Whitehead.

<sup>xxxv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Arrival of the Andals.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Chapter 2, Catelyn I.

the Stormlands, as a strong Uralic influence is felt in Balto-Slavic, Germanic, and Indo-Iranian.

- The Iron Islands show names derived from Germanic, although that is also the case in most of Westeros (rendered in English). Nevertheless, it is interesting to find the *Kraken*, from Gmc. *\*krakōnq*, in turn from PIE *\*ger-* ‘make a sound, cry hoarsely’.
- The Riverlands must show names derived from Celtic or related groups, although conquests of Stormmen from the south and Ironmen from the north may have left foreign names in the region. For example, House *Frey* may be from Cel. *\*frijós* < PIE *\*prijós* (from *\*prej-*) ‘dear, beloved; happy, free’, but compare for a potential origin in the Iron Islands, Pre-Gmc. *\*p<sup>h</sup>rijós*, Gmc. *\*frijáz*. Other common names are potentially translations or adaptations from Old Tongue names, such as House *Fisher*, cf. PU *\*pesä* ‘nest’, or *\*pese* ‘to wash’, into Cel. *\*fēskos* from PIE *\*piskos* ‘trout, fish’, also comparable to Pre-Gmc. *\*p<sup>h</sup>iskos*, Gmc. *\*fiskaz*.
- In the Westerlands we find *Casterly Rock*, where *\*kastrom* is of Italic origin, traditionally interpreted as from *\*kat<sup>s</sup>trom?* from PIE *\*kat-*, or more likely from *\*ks-tro-*, from PIE *\*kes-* ‘cut’; this term is also behind House *Lannister*, whose first member may be interpreted as from the western rendition of *\*ulānā* (cf. Lat. *lāna*), from NWIE *\*u<sup>l</sup>nā*.
- In the Stormlands, *Durran* can be interpreted as *D<sup>ʀ</sup>-<sup>ʀ</sup>nt-*, pronounced *D<sup>ʀ</sup>-<sup>ʀ</sup>nt-* present participle from PIr. *\*dar-* ‘to tear, split’, ultimately from PIE *\*der-* ‘tear’, with *Durrandon* from derivative *D<sup>ʀ</sup>-<sup>ʀ</sup>nt-una-*, from augmentative PIr. *\*-una-*, possibly also found in other noble names in *-on* (used here as patronymic marker?); compare, for *Durran* as a potential Old Tongue name, Uralic *\*turta* ‘stiff’. *Elenei* looks foreign to Iranian and may be from an Old Tongue root such as Uralic *\*eli-* ‘humid, damp, wet’. *Baratheon* may be interpreted, if the name is from a local family, as *Bar<sup>ʀ</sup>ti-* ‘who rushes, attacks’ (cf. YAv. *barənti* ‘when it storms’, also Hitt. *parh-* ‘rush, attack’, Lat. *furō* ‘I am in a fury’) with the same suffix *-una-*.
- In the Reach, *Garth* may be interpreted as from *K<sup>h</sup>art<sup>h</sup>ós* or *Gardós* ‘enclosure; house’, from a Graeco-Phrygian source akin to PIE *\*g<sup>h</sup>rd<sup>h</sup>-ós* (in turn related to Eng. *garden*); House *Florent* may be derived from Gk. *\*p<sup>h</sup>lou(i)ós* referring to “rich in flesh and juice” (with rhotacism by contamination with English); House *Tyrrell* may be derived from Gk. *Tursis* ‘tower, keep, turret; palace, castle,

fortified town’, under rhotacism (cf. Lat. *turris*), originally probably non-IE (cf. Illyrian *-dorgis*, Lydian *Tursēnoi*).

- In Dorne, House *Martell* may come from PII *\*már-ta-* ‘mortal; man’ (from Graeco-Aryan *\*mór-to-*) and a suffix in *\*-lo-*; House *Dayne* may come from PII *\*dajan-*, from PIE *\*dejen-* ‘day’; or House *Fowler* from PII *\*(s)p<sup>h</sup>al-ta-* ‘plank’, from PIE *\*(s)p<sup>(h)</sup>el-ta-* ‘split, cut off, tear off; board’ (cf. Goth. *spilda* ‘plank’). The translation or transliteration of names from Dorne would not let easily reconstruct them etymologically.

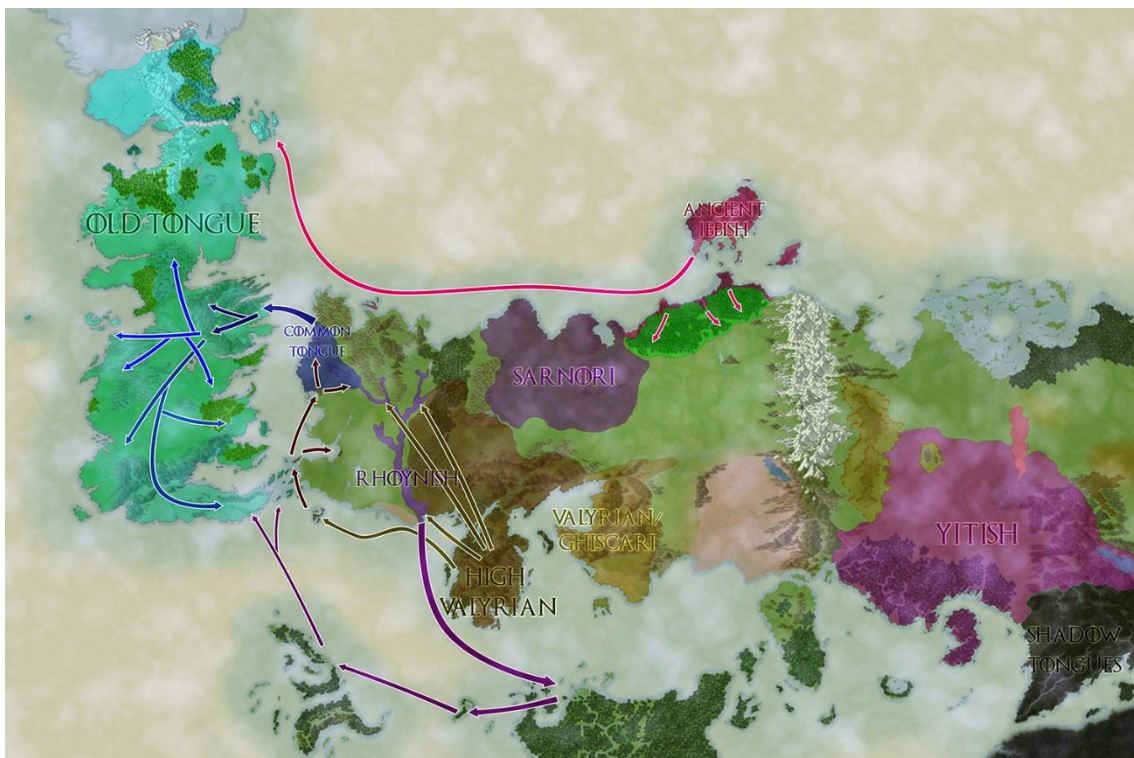


Figure 6. Expansion of languages related to the Andal invasion, the expansion of the Valyrian Freehold, and the flight of the Rhoynar in the ten thousand ships. Likely expansions of Ibbenese are also depicted.

The Common Tongue had been probably diverging slowly for two thousand years since the Andal invasion: first in the Vale since 2000 BC, from **Common Indo-European into Late Indo-European dialects** (hence the dialect of the Vale as a more archaic **Tocharian**), and then—after the different houses were in control of the known kingdoms—into known early dialects in the next 1,000 years. Aegon’s Conquest must have brought linguistic unity to the whole realm, which puts the modern Common Tongue as a sort of **Modern Indo-European**<sup>xxxvii</sup>, an amalgam of **North-West Indo-European, Palaeo-Balkan, and Proto-Indo-Iranian dialects**.

<sup>xxxvii</sup> For a full reference of how Modern Indo-European conventions based on Late Proto-Indo-European looks like, you can read the works published at <https://academiaprisca.org/>.

The superior writing system of the Andals, which replaced the First Men's runic writing systems, may be interpreted as being based on an alphabet, and thus probably the Greek one, based on the Phoenician that is used in Valyria. On differences of the adopted script, one may think that the standard is used in the oldest occupied region (The Vale) and in territories conquered through alliances, hence more like the Old Attic which became standard in Ancient Greece; that of the North and conquered territories like Riverrun and the Iron Islands may be more *runic* in style, hence similar to Old Italic letters, of Euboean origin. On Dorne, the use of a particular script derived directly from the neighboring Valyrian one, akin to Brahmi, is more logical, whereas in the Stormlands the use of Imperial Aramaic for Iranian may be explained as a resistance to use the Andal alphabet and a closer contact to the east, similar to Dorne. An ancient use of writing in Oldtown, such as with Linear A and (later) Linear B scripts, may also be proposed.

### I.5.1. The Seven Kingdoms

While the name of each region would usually be given in a higher standard, translations of each house's words are bound to have a more dialectal rendition depending on their commitment to the unity of the Seven Kingdoms.

- *The North: Kéueros*, pronounced *K'eueros* or *Šeueros* in Balto-Slavic.
  - *Winter is Coming*: officially northerners would say *G<sup>h</sup>éimā B<sup>h</sup>léigā* “Winter (is) near” pronounced *G<sup>h</sup>éimā Bleig<sup>h</sup>ā* or *Žeimā Bleizā*. This would mean literally “Winter hits” in standard Common Tongue, where a more formal translation would be *G<sup>h</sup>eim<sup>h</sup> Nédjōm* “Winter (is) near”.
- *The Vale: Ánkōs* n. (cf. Gmc. *\*angra-*, Lat. *ancae*, Gk. *ankos-*); valley could also be *klópnis*.
  - *As High as Honor*: *Tā<sup>h</sup>ūnts B<sup>h</sup>g<sup>h</sup>os Iā<sup>h</sup>ūnts K<sup>w</sup>ismā*, with *k<sup>w</sup>ismā* ‘respect’ being an archaic word, with a more common Late PIE *dekōs* ‘honor; that which is received, that which is proper’.
- *Riverrun: Dreuodánus* ‘running river’.
  - *Family, Duty, Honor*: *Géntis, D<sup>h</sup>g<sup>h</sup>etos, Dékōs*. ‘Duty’ can also be *Móinos*. The pronunciation in Celtic would change in *Dligitos*.
- *Iron Islands: Ísárnos Énsalās*, or local *Ízárnaz Ágūiōs* (< *\*ak<sup>w</sup>-iā-*) in Germanic.
  - *We Do Not Sow*: *Ne Sēamaz*, Common Tongue *Ne Sísomos*.
- *The Rock: Róupis* ‘rock; cliff’ (cf. Lat. *rūpēs*).

- *Hear me Roar: K̄l̄néu Me Rúgtum*, and in modern times it would be **Italic** *Aūízd̄je Me Rúgitum*, but House Lannister's words must be ancient (cf. OIr. *rucht* < \**rugtu*-).
- *The crownlands: Grénd̄ios Lónđ<sup>h</sup>a*.
  - *Fire and Blood: P̄ā̄ȳr Kré̄yiqe*.
- *The Reach: Óregm̄ṅ*, pronounced *Óregmã*, Common Tongue *Regm̄ṅ* (cf. Gk. *óregma*, Av. *rasman*-); a more western alternative is *Régnos* (cf. OIr. *rēn*, possibly OIce. *rakna*). The Palaeo-Balkan pronunciation of ancient initial laryngeals would probably be considered more archaic, and coupled with the relevance of Oldtown it would probably be considered a higher standard in the region.
  - *Growing strong: Áugstis W̄isós*.
  - *Oldtown: Palāj̄ópolis*, likely from PIE \**pl̄h*-, not \**k<sup>w</sup>el*- 'far (in time or space)', as usually proposed.
- *The Stormlands: Ab<sup>h</sup>rás̄j̄ia St<sup>h</sup>āna*, pronounced *Stāna*, first term from Common Tongue *ṅb<sup>h</sup>rós̄j̄o* (pronounced *Ṅb<sup>h</sup>rós̄j̄o*).
  - *Ours is the Fury: Xraudas Ahmākas*.
- *Dorne: officially Dārunás* (cf. OInd. *dāruṅá*-), Common Tongue *Dorunós* 'hard, rough, stiff', from *doru*- 'wood'.
  - *Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken: Akub<sup>h</sup>ás, Ab<sup>h</sup>užtás, Ab<sup>h</sup>γžtás*, in Common Tongue *ṅkub<sup>h</sup>ós, ṅb<sup>h</sup>ugtós, ṅb<sup>h</sup>γgtós*.





Figure 7. Equivalence of languages of the Known World with coeval proto-languages. Solid red lines divide Graeco-Aryan from Northern Indo-European dialects (Tocharian is separated from North-West Indo-European by a dotted red line).



Figure 8. The Seven Kingdoms and Free Cities labelled with regional scripts. Red lines divide script variants in Westeros. Words of each ruling house appear under their respective coat of arms. Images for coats of arms modified from [A Wiki of Ice and Fire](#).

## I.6. Rhoynish

Rhoynish is the language spoken by the Rhoynar, originally probably from the same family as the Old Tongue, which eventually must have influenced the Dornish accent especially around Greenblood, hence likely Dravidian, influencing the Indo-Aryan-like dialect of eastern Dorne.

- The name *Rhoyne* seems to derive from PIE *\*rei-* flow, like *\*Reinos* (cf. Eng. *Rhine*), hence probably a contamination of the original term, possibly from Dravidian *\*arú(!)-* ‘be gracious to; to favor’ (for a variable suffix, maybe here Tamil *ārv-am*). Supporting this contamination is the use of typical IE ethnonym in *\*-eros* in *Rhoynar*, through Eastern Dornish *Roinaras*.
- *Nymer-* (from which *Nymeria*, *Nymeros*) may be reconstructed as from a compound *\*Ni(C)-ńīr-*, from *\*ńīr* ‘water’. The first element is obscure, but potentially reduplicated, or maybe from *\*ńil-* to stand, *\*niṭ-* straight, erect, or *\*nig-* ‘to shine, glitter’.

## I.7. Dothraki

Dothraki are a culture of nomadic warriors that appeared recently from the lands beyond the Bone Mountains in the Further East, leaving behind the bones that give the Bone Mountains their name<sup>xxxviii</sup>. Their culture can thus be assimilated to the expansion of the earliest Turkic and Mongolian tribes and their common language, possibly common with Tungusic, which would serve as link to the eastern Altaic languages, spoken by the Jogos Nhai, other nomadic warlike people who live in the plains east of the Bone Mountains<sup>xxxix</sup>.

Dothraki names cannot be easily reconstructed. The typical transliteration of their names in *-ae-*, in common with Valyrian names, support that their names may have been imported in Westeros through Low Valyrian, which makes their interpretation still more difficult:

- *Dothraki* may be interpreted as *Dōtjirga-* “inner stallion”, from Altaic *\*dō-* ‘inside’, and *\*atjir-ga-* ‘stallion’, from *\*atV* ‘horse’.
- *Drogo* may be interpreted as *Derug*, from *\*déru-* ‘shake, sway’ and verbal ending (participle?) *\*-g-*.
- *Vaes* ‘city’<sup>xl</sup> can be interpreted as from Altaic *\*bēžu*, ‘numerous, great’, probably through a Low Valyrian dialectal *bēž-* into Common Tongue *baes*.
- *Rhaesh* ‘land’<sup>xli</sup> may be derived from Altaic *\*orusi* ‘river’ (because they are built around rivers, unlike the steppe grasslands where horse-riding nomads roam, which don’t need a source of water nearby). Probably adopted through Low Valyrian *ru’sh-*, hence Common Tongue *rhaesh*.
- For *khal*, cf. O. Turkish *qayan* ‘khagan, king, ruler’, borrowed in Mongolian, of unknown origin.
- For *leqse* ‘(of) rats’<sup>xlii</sup> cf. Altaic *\*alikV* ‘a kind of small animal’.
- For *Vojjor Samvi*<sup>xliii</sup> ‘The Broken Gods’, cf. *\*búro* ‘break, crush’ and *\*sám(u)* ‘shaman’.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire, The Bones and Beyond.*

<sup>xxxix</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire, The Plains of the Jogos Nhai*

<sup>xl</sup> *George R. R. Martin's A World of Ice and Fire – A Game of Thrones Guide.*

<sup>xli</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire, Ancient History: The Arrival of the Andals.*

<sup>xlii</sup> *George R. R. Martin's A World of Ice and Fire, Vaes Leqse (Gornath).*

<sup>xliii</sup> *George R. R. Martin's A World of Ice and Fire, Vojjor Samvi (Kasath).*



## II. PEOPLES OF WESTEROS

### II.1. Ancestry and bloodlines

Since the times of Archmaester Cavaly<sup>xliv</sup> and his seminal treatise *Bloodmagic*, it is known in Westeros that blood marrow can be divided into elemental stems—paternal and maternal bloodlines—and into more complex mixtures of blood types, which can be used to assess ancient population movements.

Grand Maester Reicker<sup>xlv</sup> reported, in his *Races of the Known World*, the developments of a group of bloodmages who had specialized in the arts of recovering marrow from ancient bones through the use of fire and advanced sorcery. These dark arts flourished under the patronage of Valyrians, who practiced blood magic and other dark arts, delving deep into the earth for secrets and twisting the flesh of beasts and men to fashion monstrous and unnatural chimeras<sup>xlvi</sup>.

Different dragonlords managed to retrieve dozens of bones and corpses from all corners of the world, and they were able to describe mixtures of diverse blood ancestry components and their distribution.

For example, ancient blood marrow extracted from two children of the forest and one wood walker from northern Essos. They were reported to be quite similar, suggesting they might have separated hundreds of thousands of years ago from a common stem that

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<sup>xliv</sup> See more on the initial works on population genetics in the works by Cavalli-Sforza, including:

- Cavalli-Sforza, L. L. and W. F. Bodmer. 1971. *The Genetics of Human Populations*. W. H. Freeman, San Francisco (reprinted 1999 by Dover Publications).
- Cavalli-Sforza, L. L. and M. Feldman. 1981. *Cultural Transmission and Evolution*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.
- Cavalli-Sforza, L. L., P. Menozzi, A. Piazza. 1994. *The History and Geography of Human Genes*. Princeton University Press, Princeton.

<sup>xlv</sup> Read more on historical developments of population genomics in David Reich's *Who We Are and How We Got Here* (2018).

<sup>xlvi</sup> *Fire & Blood*, Jaehaerys and Alysanne - Their Triumphs and Tragedies.

could have been shared with men. Giants may have separated from a common human trunk still earlier.

The initial study led to a consistent use of simplistically described blood ancestries<sup>xlvi</sup>. For Westerosi, four main components were described: First Men blood, peaking in the Iron Islands and beyond the Wall; Andal blood, peaking in the North; Wildling blood, peaking among the Skagosi; Essos ancestry, peaking in Dragonstone and King's Landing<sup>xlvi</sup>. This is the most common division of ancestries followed today in the study of history in the Citadel.

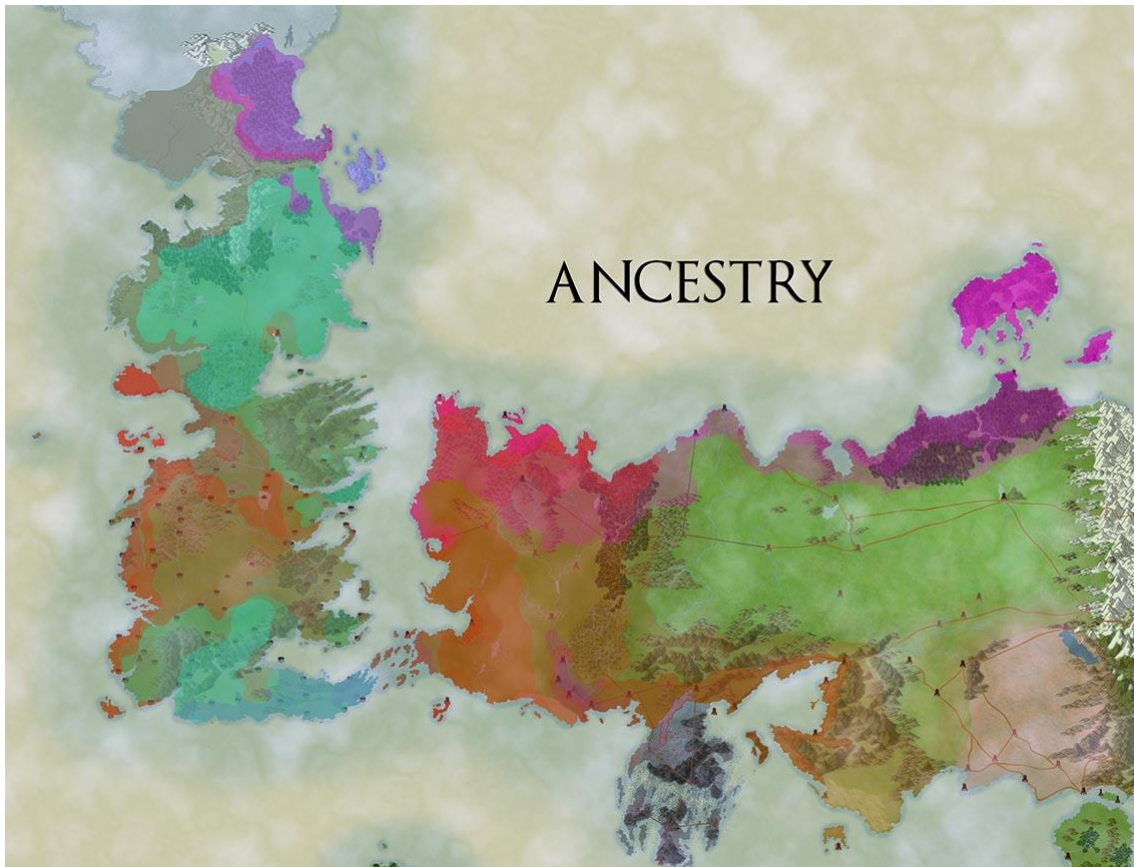


Figure 9. Modern ancestry distribution. Traditional interpretation of blood ancestries (notice peak of “Andal” ancestry in the North and in Dorne): Cyan: Andals; Red: First Men; Brown: Valyrian; Pink: Wildling. For specific maps of each component and their true attribution, see below.

Later maesters have described this interpretation as strongly influenced by the maegi Mar Gim Buut<sup>xlix</sup>. However, based on the maps and writings on higher mysteries recently collected, it has become more and more likely that history Archmaester Fulker was right

<sup>xlvi</sup> For more on speculative demography and ancestries, see [Speculative Westeros Demographic Maps](#).

<sup>xlvi</sup> In the real world, they would correspond to: Andal = Yamnaya ancestry; First Men = EHG/SHG/WHG (cline); Wildling = Siberian ancestry; Essos = Iran Neolithic/CHG/Anatolia Neolithic/EEF ancestry.

<sup>xlix</sup> For more on Marija Gimbutas’ original idea of the ‘Kurgan peoples’, you can read e.g. [The Indo-Europeans: Archeological Problems](#) (1963).

in his interpretation of ancient remains and folk tales in his book *Tongues and Peoples of Westeros*<sup>i</sup>. He asserted that the First Men and the Andals shared common ancestors in south-western Essos, in what is now the Disputed Lands and the Lower Rhoyme. According to his quite late estimates<sup>ii</sup>, the First Men brought bronze and fire to Westeros ca. 4000 BC, while the Andals brought iron and horseback riding ca. 2000 BC<sup>iii</sup>.

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<sup>i</sup> For more information on how Volker Heyd or James Mallory (among others) were right in their predictions of archaeological cultures associated with the expansion of Indo-European languages in Europe, read the series [A Song of Sheep and Horses](#).

<sup>ii</sup> Considering the history of the Riverlands alone, the number of generations that the different houses have been in control cannot add to more than 1,000 years, which makes the invasion of the Andals roughly 2000 BC a reasonable estimate. From that date, calculations are more tentative, but the Long Night must have happened in the 1,000 years prior, and the First Men likely conquered then Westeros around 4000 BC, having entered slightly earlier. See [Unreliable Timelines & Confused Dates](#), by Adam Whitehead for more.

<sup>iii</sup> *A Dance with Dragons*, Chapter 48, Jaime I.



## II.2. Sunset Sea ancestry

The study of ancient bones found in Old Wyk, probably dating before the invasion of the First Men, show a *Sunset Sea* ancestry and bloodline 1, both of which can be found today especially in eastern Westeros and Beyond the Wall.

This supports the theory of Archmaester Haereg, whereby the isles were inhabited before the arrival of the First Men<sup>liii</sup>, and the speculation of Maester Kirth, who believed that these peoples came from a land west of the Sunset Sea<sup>liv</sup>, establishing an outpost on the islands and invading the mainland during the Dawn of Days, as suggested by Maester Theron, given the similarities between the Seastone Chair and the base of the Hightower<sup>lv</sup>.

The finding of bloodline 1 as 12 especially among ancient First Men, and today as 11 mainly among modern ironmen and in coastal regions, makes it likely that it was the main bloodline associated with *Western* ancestry before the expansion of the First Men, and admixed with them during their expansion and cohabitation in Westeros.

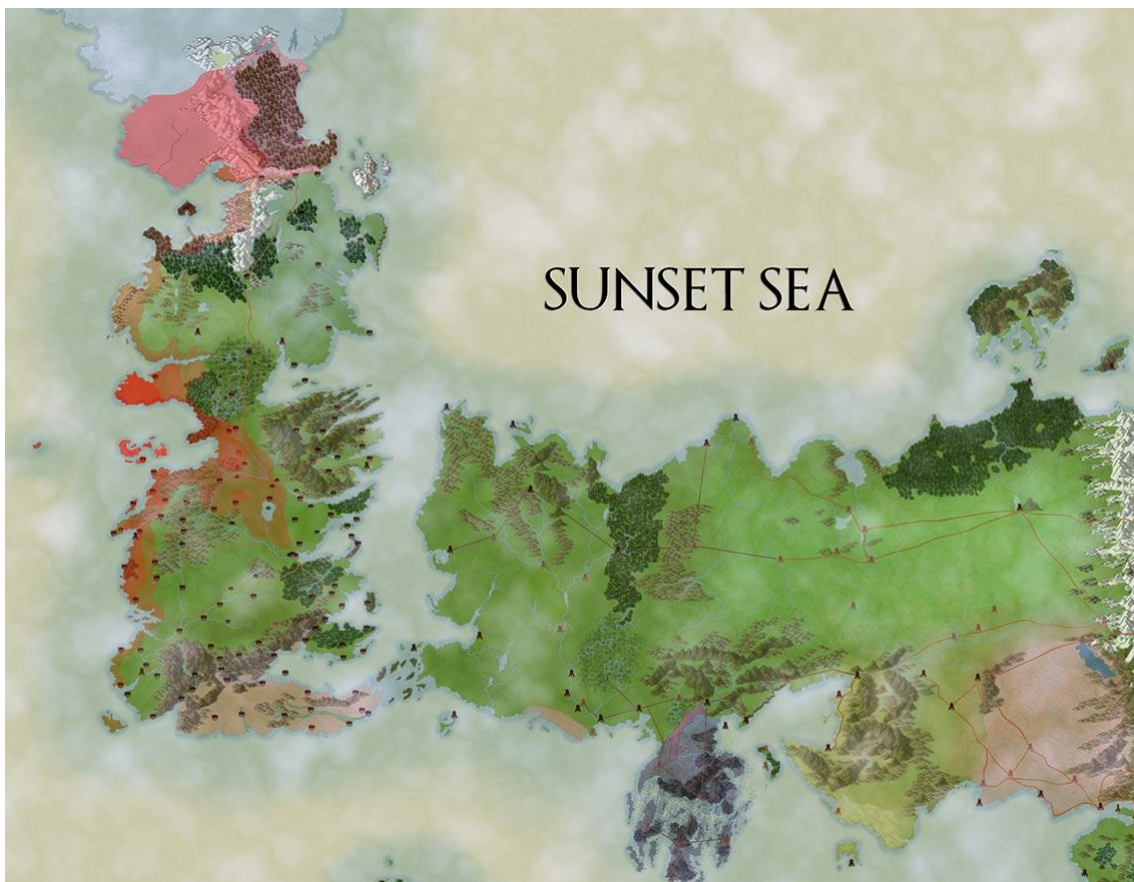


Figure 10. Modern Sunset Sea blood ancestry distribution.

<sup>liii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Iron Islands.

<sup>liv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Dawn Age.

<sup>lv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Dawn Age.

### II.3. Mazemaker ancestry

The so-called *Mazemaker* ancestry is represented by an ancient sample to the north-east of Andalos, of bloodline  $\gamma 2\alpha$ , and which is found today mainly among peoples from the western coast of Essos and in Westeros.

Mazemakers are known to have constructed vast mazes consisting of blocks of carved stone, like those found in the islands of Lorath and in mainland Essos south of Lorath<sup>lvi</sup>. Archmaester Quillion suggests that the labyrinthine foundation of the Hightower is connected with these mazemakers<sup>lvii</sup>.



Figure 11. Modern Mazemaker blood ancestry distribution.

Based on this ancient sample and modern distribution peaking around north-west Essos, these peoples probably expanded with the main bloodline  $\gamma 2$  (mostly  $\gamma 2\alpha$ ) and possibly with some clans of  $\epsilon 1\beta$ , and they must have dominated western Essos before the arrival of *Flatland* (first) and *Eastern* ancestry (later).

The finding of this ancestry not only around Lorath, but also around Braavos, may be explained in general by the multicultural origin of the Braavosi<sup>lviii</sup>, and more specifically

<sup>lvi</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Lorath.

<sup>lvii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Oldtown.

<sup>lviii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Free Cities: Braavos.

by the continuation of worship of the Pattern in Braavos<sup>lix</sup> and probably in Tyrosh according to Gyldayn<sup>lx</sup>.

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<sup>lix</sup> *A Dance with Dragons*, Chapter 64, The Ugly Little Girl.

<sup>lx</sup> *Fire & Blood*, The Year of the Three Brides - 49 AC.

## II.4. Summer Sea ancestry

*Summer Sea* ancestry is found widespread from the Bone Mountains to the Narrow Sea, particularly in the southern half of western Essos. It peaked around the modern Slaver's Bay and the Gulf of Grief, and is found among modern populations descended from the Valyrian Freehold, from the Old Empire of Ghis, and is also found as the main component of the Lhazareen in the east, the Qaathi in the north, the Rhoynar in the west, and to the south in the Basilisk Islands and northern Sothoryos, Nath, and up to the Sumer Isles in the west and the Jade Sea islands in the east.

The expansion of this ancestry through Essos was probably the result of an ancient expansion from the east near the Bone Mountains, while its expansion through the Summer Sea represents probably more recent events, likely mediated by the colonies that the Old Empire of Ghis founded in the Basilisk Isles and Sothoryos, before the Ghiscari were conquered by the Valyrian Freehold during the Ghiscari wars<sup>lxi</sup>.

In contrast to all other Summer Sea populations, which form a loose cline from east to west and from north to south, Valyrians form a tight divergent group, compatible with their described inbreeding among the nobility to keep purity of blood<sup>lxii</sup> and the common practice of incest wedding brother to sister<sup>lxiii</sup>.

This ancestry is already found in an ancient noble Valyrian from Oros, of bloodline  $\chi1\alpha2\alpha$ . Similarly, in contrast with the variety of haplogroups in ancient samples of the area ( $\epsilon$ ,  $\gamma$ ,  $\chi$ ), most samples from the Age of Valyria are of bloodline  $\chi1\alpha2\alpha1\alpha2\delta2\beta2\alpha$  (v15152). This is compatible with the known tradition of polygamy to keep the dragon bloodline pure, and with the continuation of the practice of incestuous marriage on Dragonstone and among the Targaryens, wedding brother to sister, cousin to cousin, uncle to niece and aunt to nephew, holding themselves apart from and above the noble Westerosi families<sup>lxiv</sup>. After the Doom, only a few noble paternal bloodlines must have survived.

An intermediate blood ancestry between Southern and Valyrian ones, which could be described as ancient Valyrian, is also found around Oldtown, and in some areas southwest of the Reach, which supports the theory that the settlement at the top of Whispering Sound

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<sup>lxi</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Beyond the Free Cities: The Basilisk Isles. *The World of Ice & Fire*, Beyond the Free Cities: Sothoryos.

<sup>lxii</sup> *A Clash of Kings*, Chapter 33, Catelyn IV.

<sup>lxiii</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Appendix.

<sup>lxiv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*. *Fire and Blood*.

that would become Oldtown began as a trading post where ships from Valyria, Old Ghis, and the Summer Isles could resupply and trade with so-called “elder races”<sup>lxv</sup>.

Archmaester Perestan speculated that Valyrians left Westeros due to some tragedy that fell upon them<sup>lxvi</sup>. Based on the presence in Westeros of ancient  $\chi$  bloodlines—an old bloodline potentially associated with Summer Sea ancestry, and thus with Ghiscari, Valyrians and related peoples before the further Valyrian bottlenecks under  $\chi 1\alpha 2\alpha 1\alpha 2\delta 2\beta 2\alpha$  (v15152)—at the mouth of the Honeywine and surrounding territories, the calling of the hammer of the waters after the arrival of the First Men was probably that hypothesized mishap, which may have destroyed part of their settlements.

Modern Valyrian ancestry is essentially *Summer Sea* ancestry showing a particular genetic drift most likely associated with *their known inbreeding*<sup>lxvii</sup>, and is found in the Valyrian Freehold and their colonies, as well as on Dragonstone and among the remaining Valyrian nobility in Westeros. Their typical bloodlines can be found all over Westeros and Essos, but  $\chi 1\alpha 2\alpha 1\alpha 2\delta 2\beta 2\alpha$  (v15152) peaks among Targaryens, Velarions, and Celtigars, and to a lesser extent in King’s Landing (due probably to bastards among smallfolk and lesser nobility) and in the Free Cities.



Figure 12. Modern Valyrian blood ancestry distribution. Based on published [ethnic plurality estimates](#).

<sup>lxv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Reach: Oldtown.

<sup>lxvi</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Westerlands.

<sup>lxvii</sup> See [Daenerys: Very Inbred But Not Very Targaryen](#), by Razib Khan.

## II.5. Flatlands ancestry

The languages of the First Men, the Andals, and the Rhoynar are believed by scholars to stem from an ancestral tongue which diverged in western Essos over millennia. The First Men and the Andals are further believed to have come from the grasslands of Essos (modern Dothraki Sea)<sup>lxviii</sup>. The common blood shared by Andals and First Men (the so-called *Andal* ancestry) may therefore stem from their common linguistic community in western Essos probably more than 5,000 years ago<sup>lxix</sup>.

Based on an ancient individual from the Flatlands before the invasion of Westeros by the First Men, showing bloodline ρ1β1α1 (π297) and almost full so-called *Andal* ancestry, it should be called *Flatlands* ancestry<sup>lxx</sup> instead. This ancestry can be described as a mix of a ghost population linked to *Mazemaker* and *Summer Sea* blood ancestries, and a *Silver Sea* source found in ancient individuals recovered in the Dothraki Sea south of the ancient Silver Sea.

*Flatlands* ancestry appears to have peaked in north-west Essos near the Upper Rhoynar region, and this component was also present in an ancient Sarnori sample (ca. 3 parts in 4) and in modern Sarnori populations. This is compatible with the Axe being traditionally considered to be the origin of the Andals<sup>lxxi</sup>, and would explain the presence of eastern bloodlines and *Silver Sea* ancestry in samples with *Flatlands* ancestry, which suggests exogamy of incoming (male) migrants of the grasslands south of the Silver Sea.

Today, this ancestry has been mostly replaced in western and northern Essos by *Summer Sea* blood ancestry mixed with *Valyrian* component, creating thus a wide, mixed cluster throughout Essos. Contributions of *Silver Sea* and *Further East* ancestry probably expanded recently with the Dothraki makes the current genetic picture of Essos heavily admixed compared to ancient times.

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<sup>lxviii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Beyond the Free Cities: The Grasslands.

<sup>lxix</sup> See [Languages of the Known World](#), by Adam Whitehead.

<sup>lxx</sup> *Flatlands* ancestry would roughly correspond to the so-called “Steppe ancestry”, as opposed to the more limited concept of “Yamnaya ancestry” = *Andal* ancestry.

<sup>lxxi</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Arrival of the Andals.

### II.5.1. First Men ancestry

Compared to this ancient individual from the Flatlands, an ancient individual near the Arm of Dorne of bloodline  $\rho1\alpha1\alpha1$  ( $\mu417$ ) shows further contributions from a *Mazemaker* component (ca. 1 in 4) over the main *Flatlands* ancestry.

The presence of increased *Mazemaker* ancestry in ancient samples is compatible with the more recent expansion of *Flatlands* component close to the Arm of Dorne before it was crossed<sup>lxxii</sup>, and with the ancient peak of Flatlands ancestry to the north. The finding of this ancestry still does not explain why the First Men did this trek westwards<sup>lxxiii</sup>.



Figure 13. Modern First Men blood ancestry distribution. Based on published [ethnic plurality estimates](#).

The expansion of the First Men with bloodline  $\rho1\alpha1\alpha1$  ( $\mu417$ ) can be inferred from their prevalence in the North and in Dorne, the most isolated regions from Andal influence in Westeros, and with [very low population density](#)<sup>lxxiv</sup>. The distribution of bloodlines

<sup>lxxii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The North.

<sup>lxxiii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Coming of the First Men.

<sup>lxxiv</sup> For more on estimated sizes of each region's population, you can read *The Population of the Seven Kingdoms* by Adam Whitehead at <https://atlasoficeandfireblog.wordpress.com/2016/03/06/the-population-of-the-seven-kingdoms/>, then divide approximately by the size of each territory. Also available are these [published estimates at Reddit](#) with population by country <http://i.imgur.com/sYtP1nc.png> and population density by country <http://i.imgur.com/Tbluscp.png>.

follows the estimated distribution of ethnicity based on reported origins and intermarriage<sup>lxxv</sup>.

Dornish and Northerner isolation and inbreeding (due to lower effective population size), together with the further expansion of Flatlands ancestry through dynastic marriages<sup>lxxvi</sup> and intermarriage with Andals in the north—as well as houses of early Andal origin like the Manderlys from the Reach<sup>lxxvii</sup>—, explains the peak of Flatlands ancestry in the region.

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<sup>lxxv</sup> Ethnic plurality by percentage by county: <<http://i.imgur.com/4GstvBt.png>>. Ethnic plurality by percentage by state: <<http://i.imgur.com/QmyRN9p.png>>.

<sup>lxxvi</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Chapter 66, Bran VII.

<sup>lxxvii</sup> *A Game of Thrones*, Chapter 53, Bran VI.



### II.5.2. Andal ancestry

Early Andals recovered from ancient battlefields of the Vale of Arryn show bloodline  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta1$  ( $\lambda23$ )—and essentially full so-called *Andal* ancestry, which can be described as a mix of *Flatland* (ca. 9 in 10 parts) and *Narrow Sea* ancestry (ca. 1 in 10).

The finding of *Narrow Sea* ancestry especially in the Vale compared to other regions of Westeros supports the nature of the Vale as the beachhead in the spread of the Andals into Westeros, which confirms that they arrived in the Trident after crossing the Narrow Sea<sup>lxxviii</sup>.

Andal ancestry peaking in Pentos may be due to the known breeding of Valyrian smallfolk with local Andals, being less protective of Valyrian blood than other Free Cities<sup>lxxix</sup>, and to their expansion into the old Andalos<sup>lxxx</sup> and likely admixture with their peoples.

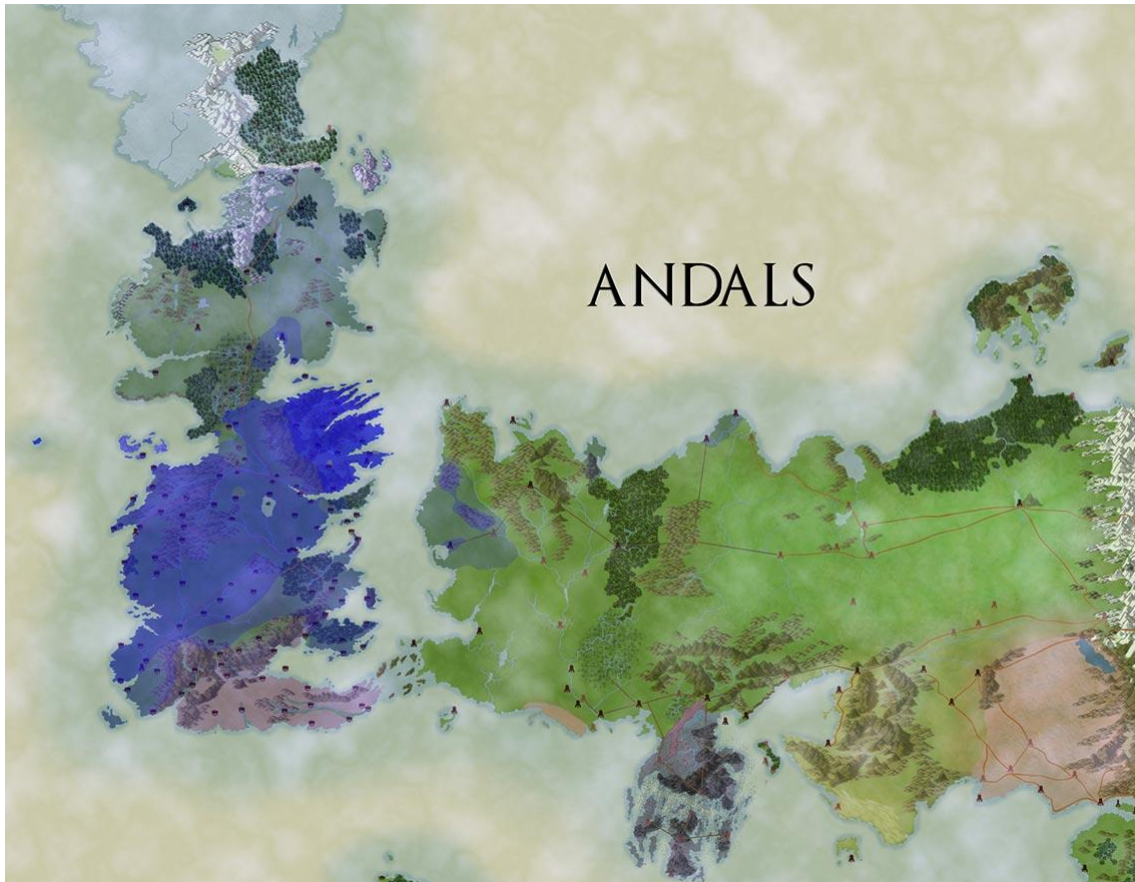


Figure 14. Andal blood ancestry distribution. Based on published [ethnic plurality estimates](#).

<sup>lxxviii</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 68, Sansa VI.

<sup>lxxix</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Free Cities: Pentos.

<sup>lxxx</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Free Cities: Pentos.

Beyond the Vale, the admixture of Andals with local populations of elevated *Flatland* (in southern and northern Westeros) and *Sunset Sea* ancestry (in central Westeros) must have caused the Narrow Sea component to be diluted.

The prevalent presence of  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta1$  ( $\lambda23$ ) bloodlines among ancient Andals (ca. 10 in 10) and most populations of central Westeros supports the expansion of these tribes with later waves of Andals that eventually conquered the Mountain and Vale and the Iron Islands, and through alliances and intermarriages settled in the Rock<sup>lxxxix</sup>, the Reach<sup>lxxxii</sup>, and the Stormlands<sup>lxxxiii</sup>, while Dorne remained a peninsula of bickering, feuding states of First Men and Andal origin, and the ethnic composition of the north remained mostly unscathed by the invaders<sup>lxxxiv</sup>.

The distribution of subgroups  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta1\alpha$  ( $\lambda51$ ) mainly among northern peoples and  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta1\beta$  ( $\zeta2103$ ) among southern ones and among the Knights of the Vale supports further bottlenecks among expanding clans.

The finding of  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta1$  ( $\lambda23$ ) sister group  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta2$  ( $\pi\phi7562$ ) in the neck and around central Westeros also confirms the role of  $\rho1\beta1\alpha1\beta$  ( $\mu269$ ) in the expansion of the Andals.

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<sup>lxxxix</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Westerlands.

<sup>lxxxii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Reach: Andals in the Reach.

<sup>lxxxiii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Andals in the Stormlands.

<sup>lxxxiv</sup> *A Song of Ice and Fire Campaign Guide*.

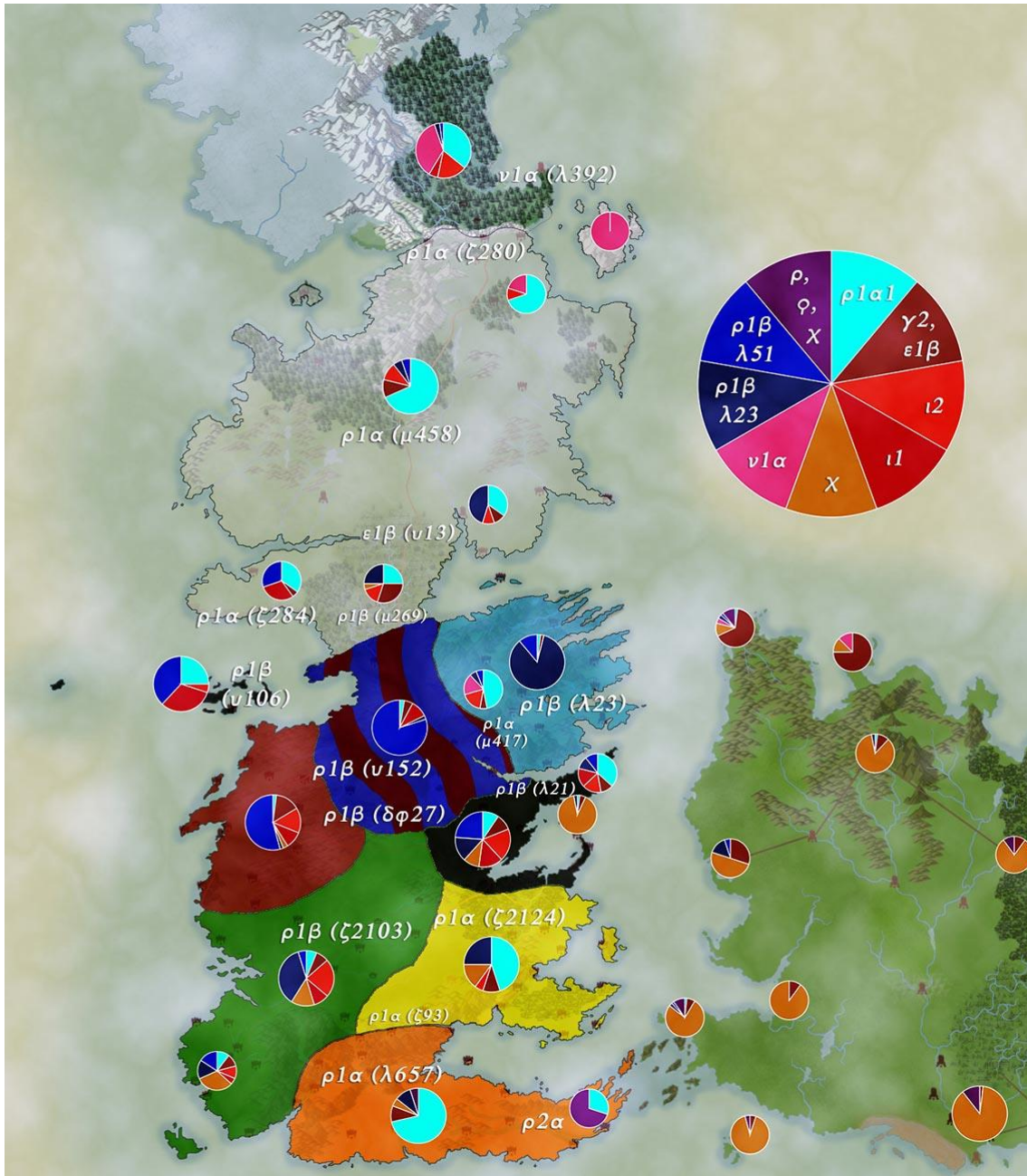


Figure 15. Estimated modern distribution of bloodlines per region. Specific regions and cities have a smaller pie chart. Peaks of specific bloodlines are labelled with the corresponding name. Based on published [ethnic plurality estimates](#) and correspondence to the real world.

## II.6. Rhoynar ancestry

Ancient Rhoynar from city-states along the river Rhoyme<sup>lxxxv</sup> show a mixed ancestry made up mainly of *Summer Sea* blood (ca. 8 in 10) also related to that ghost population found forming *Flatlands* ancestry, and blood related to ancient peoples close to the Bone Mountains.

Their blood ancestry and main bloodline  $\rho 2\alpha$ , which seems to have replaced  $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha$  ( $\lambda 388$ ) tribes in the Middle Rhoyme, points to an origin of their people and language near the grasslands, consistent with the description of Rhoynish as related to the Old Tongue (see above), and with their origin further south and east inferred from the account of Garris the Grey having driven hairy men from the Noyne<sup>lxxxvi</sup>.

Rhoynar ancestry is found today in the Lower Rhoyme, among populations descended from those enslaved by Valyrians after the Rhoynish War<sup>lxxxvii</sup>, and among Dornishmen clans who intermingled with Rhoynar since the consolidation of the rule of House Nymeros Martell of Sunspear<sup>lxxxviii</sup>.

Rhoynar ancestry is especially conserved among the so-called salty Dornishmen<sup>lxxxix</sup>, who no longer speak the language of the ancient Rhoynar, although they speak the Common Tongue with a distinctive drawl<sup>xc</sup>, which may be associated with the distinctive Indo-Aryan pronunciation spoken in the Broken Arm.

Pure Rhoynar blood can be found in the “orphans of the Greenblood”, who still speak the Rhoynish language in secret<sup>xcii</sup>. Stony Dornishmen have the most Andal and First Men blood<sup>xciii</sup> depending on the individual clans, and they would most likely correspond to Mitanni-like Indo-Aryan and potentially other Indo-Iranian-speaking clans like Nuristani, less influenced by Rhoynish.

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<sup>lxxxv</sup> *The Lands of Ice and Fire*, The Free Cities.

<sup>lxxxvi</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Coming of the First Men.

<sup>lxxxvii</sup> *The Lands of Ice and Fire*, The Free Cities.

<sup>lxxxviii</sup> *A Feast for Crows*, Chapter 21, The Queenmaker.

<sup>lxxxix</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Dorne: Queer Customs of the South.

<sup>xc</sup> *A Feast for Crows*, Prologue.

<sup>xcii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Dorne: Queer Customs of the South.

<sup>xciii</sup> *A Storm of Swords*, Chapter 38, Tyrion V. *The World of Ice & Fire*, Dorne.

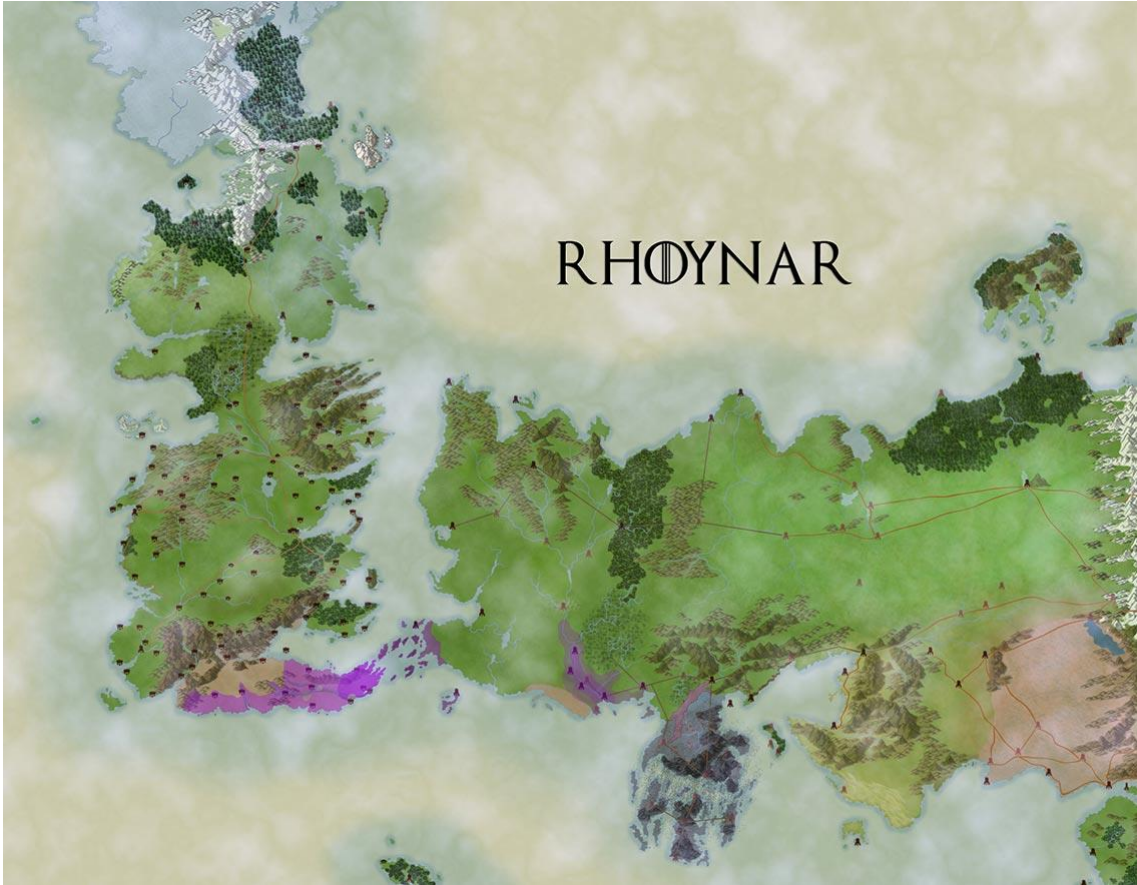


Figure 16. Modern Rhoynar blood ancestry distribution. Based on published [ethnic plurality estimates](#).

## II.7. Hairy men ancestry

It is common since Maester Wyk's<sup>xciii</sup> *The North* to associate wildlings with bloodline  $v1\alpha$ , which made scholars suppose that *Wildling* ancestry would also be associated with the spread of the First Men.

Nevertheless, First Men are known to have spread with *Flatlands* ancestry, samples from First Men, free folk, and mountain clans have showed relevant amounts of  $\rho1\alpha1\alpha1$  ( $\mu417$ ) blood groups, especially  $\rho1\alpha1\alpha1\beta$  ( $\zeta645$ ) which spread to the north (1 in 2 to 1 in 5, depending on the tribe).

It is known that *Flatlands* ancestry peaks among northerners, whereas the so-called *Wildling* ancestry has been recently discovered to peak among Skagosi and around Ibben, and to be widely distributed along the shores and isles of northern Essos, especially beyond modern settlements.



Figure 17. Hairy men ancestry distribution.

This wide ancient and modern distribution suggests that this ancestry spread with the so-called hairy men, and is compatible with the theory that forebears of the men of Ib

<sup>xciii</sup> See e.g. Kalevi Wiik's [Where Did European Men Come From](#). *Journal of Genetic Genealogy*, 4:35-85, 2008

were raiders and slavers who attacked the White Knife in the north of Westeros before the coming of the Andals<sup>xciv</sup>; that Andals coming from the east conquered the region from hairy men<sup>xcv</sup>; that Pentoshi are partly descended from Ibbenese or hairy men from Andalos<sup>xcvi</sup>; that hairy men lived on Norvos before it became a Valyrian settlement<sup>xcvii</sup>; and that Lorath became a refuge for freedmen and escaped slaves from the Valyrian freehold, including men from Ib<sup>xcviii</sup>.

This has led some scholars to propose that the expansion of  $v1\alpha1\alpha1\alpha$  ( $\lambda392$ ) among the Free Folk is the result of an infiltration of this bloodline with sailors and later severe bottlenecks, especially beyond the Wall, and strong inbreeding among certain isolated free folk clans.

Particularly interesting is the finding of  $\rho1\alpha1\alpha1$  (M417) subgroups among peoples from the Mountains of the Moon, along the Bay of Crabs, and among stony Dornishmen, which supports the prevalent presence of these bloodlines among the First Men.

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<sup>xciv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Arrival of the Andals.

<sup>xcv</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Arrival of the Andals.

<sup>xcvi</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, Ancient History: The Arrival of the Andals.

<sup>xcvii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Free Cities: Norvos.

<sup>xcviii</sup> *The World of Ice & Fire*, The Free Cities: Lorath.

## II.8. An Ancient Western people and tongue?

The widespread distribution of  $\rho 1\beta$  bloodline in west Essos and to the south in islands of the Summer Sea among different ancient groups could be interpreted as the expansion of a common ancestral tongue from the east thousands of years ago, before diverging into the known ancient branches:

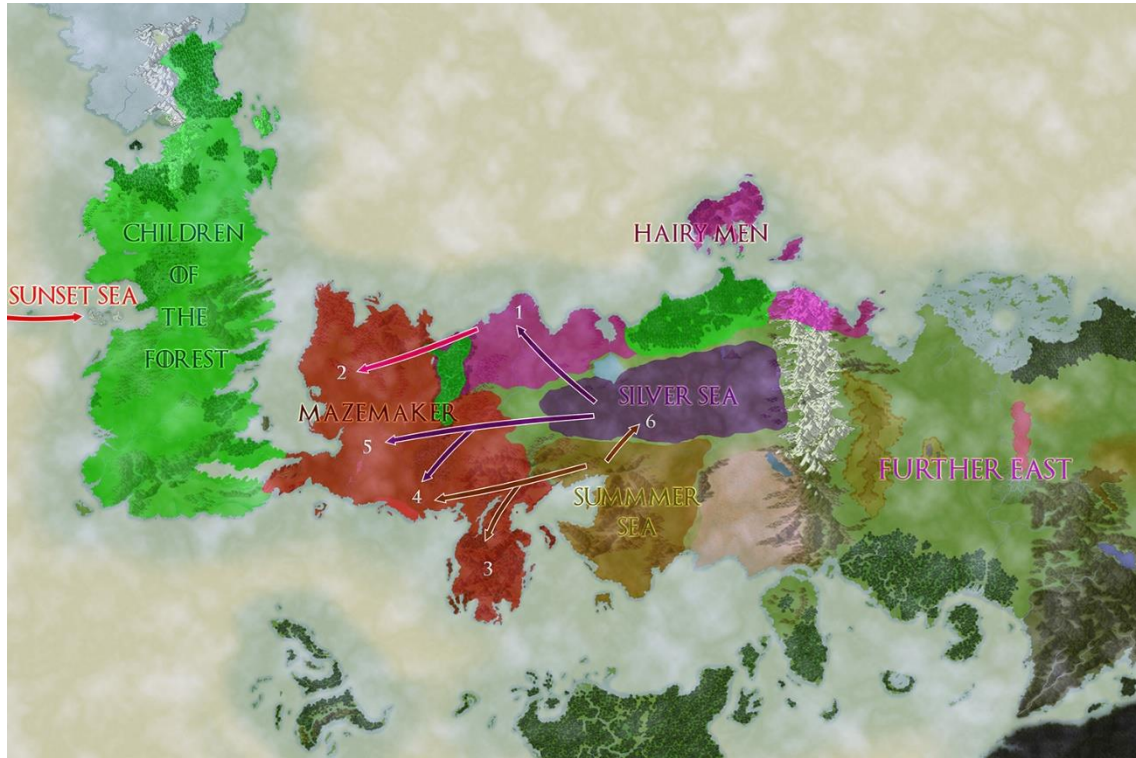


Figure 18. Ancient distribution and expansion of known blood ancestries: 1 – Silver Sea ancestry expands into the north-west (mainly with  $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha 1$   $\lambda 388$ ) to develop the Sarnori ancestry; 2 – a movement of hairy men into west Essos must have happened after Mazemakers expanded there, but before speakers of the Ancient Tongue; 3 – Summer Sea ancestry expands into Valyria, admixing with local populations, and into the Lower Rhoyné 4 – Ancient Tongue speakers expand to the west with Ancient Rhoynish through the Lower Rhoyné, admixing with Summer Sea ancestry and creating Rhoynar ancestry and 5 – to the Narrow Sea (mainly under  $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha 1\beta$   $\mu 269$ ) with the Ancient Old Tongue, creating Flatlands ancestry; 6 – Summer Sea ancestry (originally from a group of  $\rho 1\beta 1\beta$   $\nu 88$  close to the Silver Sea ancestry) expands to the north with Ancient Qaathi speakers.

- $\rho 1\beta$  bloodlines are found east ( $\rho 1\beta 2$ ) and west ( $\rho 1\beta 1$ ) of the Bone Mountains.
- $\rho 1\beta 1\beta$  ( $\nu 88$ ) is found in southern Essos, and especially in the islands of the Summer Sea.
- $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha 1$  ( $\lambda 388$ ) is found in scattered ancient samples east and west of the Middle Rhoyné, and particularly among modern Sarnori.
- $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha 1$  ( $\pi 297$ ) shows the widest distribution, and is found from the Narrow Sea to Sarnor, and especially among western Dothraki tribes as  $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha 1\alpha$  ( $\mu 73$ );
- The expansion of  $\rho 1\beta 1\alpha 1\beta$  ( $\mu 269$ ) is probably related to the expansion from the east into the Flatlands, representing probably the westward expansion of the



language ancestral to the Old Tongue. Other eastern bloodlines, such as ρ1α2 and ρ1α1, must have accompanied these lineages at some point during the development of the Old Tongue.

Bloodlines remain the best way to identify the expansion of different cultures and languages who trace their ancestry predominantly through patrilineal descent, with few known cultural exceptions known in history, like the Rhoynar<sup>xcix</sup>.

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<sup>xcix</sup> [So Spake Martin: The Martell Name's Inheritance \(June 13, 2001\)](#)

## REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

### Online resources

Apart from the books, I have used these online resources for reference (information may have been retrieved since March 2017):

- Westeros: <<https://westeros.org/>>.
  - Especially important has been **A Wiki of Ice and Fire** for citations: <[https://awoiaf.westeros.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://awoiaf.westeros.org/index.php/Main_Page)>.
- Atlas of Ice and Fire: <<https://atlasoficeandfireblog.wordpress.com/>>.

### Maps of the Known World

These are some of the most relevant tools I used to draw the maps:

- The base map is a free black and white template map published in *Canción de Hielo y Fuego* Wiki at <<https://hieloyfuego.fandom.com/wiki/Portada>>
- For mountains, forests, swamps, and symbols, *Sketchy Cartography Brushes*, by StarRaven: <<https://starraven.deviantart.com/art/Sketchy-Cartography-Brushes-198264358>>.
- For cliffs, brushes by Schwarzkreuz: <<https://www.cartographersguild.com/showthread.php?t=19431&highlight=cliff+brush>>.
- For the wall, *Rubble and Broken Wall Ruins PS Map Brush Pack*, by MissTakArt: <<https://misstakart.deviantart.com/art/Rubble-and-Broken-Wall-Ruins-PS-Map-Brush-Pack-477659218>>.
- For ice and desert cracks: <<https://lordandre.deviantart.com/art/Cracks-87468049?q=favby%3Ajmelisio%2F59594752&qo=33>>.