Power and place-names: did early English rulers use Roman-style province names?

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Power and place in Later Roman and early medieval Europe: interdisciplinary perspectives on governance and civil organization
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A little motivation

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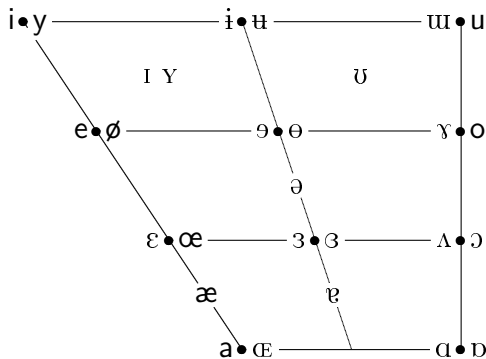- *salmuria = sælmeriġe* 'brine'
- *Elia = Eliġe* 'Ely'

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- *Assyria* = *Assyriġe*
- *Babylonia* = *Babiloniġe*
- *salmuria* = *sælmeriġe* 'brine'
- *Elia* = *Eliġe* 'Ely'
- *Sturia* = *Sturiġe* 'Sturry'

Vowels

The standard Jones vowel diagram, showing schwa (/ə/) in relation to /e/ and /a/. Front vowels are to the left; a point in the diagram correponds to the position of the highest point of the tongue. Unstressed /a/ is liable to be modified to /ə/, though OE had no way to represent this in writing except ⟨e⟩. Right-hand members of pairs have lip-rounding.

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Calvaria, Cappadocia, Frygia, Galatia, Gallia, Graecia, Hadria,
Hispania, India, Italia, Iudaia, Lybia, Lycia, Lydia, Macedonia,
Media, Mesopotamia, Pamphilia, Philadelphia, Samaria, Syria

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Gothic : Visigoths (c.590) *gens vel patria Gothorum . . . Spania, Gallia et Gallaecia*; Ostrogoths: *Italia*

English Latin -*ia* place-names

ASC : *Alemanie, Aluearnie, Bataille, Clunig, Elig, Hloðeringa, Hungrie, Ispanie, Lumbardige, Manige, Normandig, Sicilie*

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10th century coins : *Brydia, Bridiga, Brydige*

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▶ OE cognate should be **ǵēǵ*!

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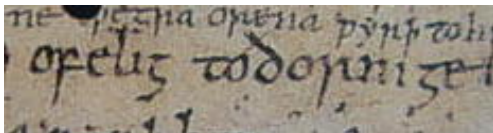
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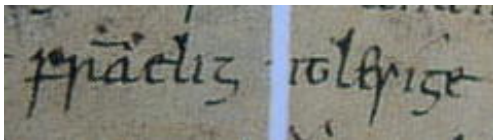➤ But then why -*ig*?

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- ▶ But then why *-ig*?
- ▶ Base form might be Latin *Elia*
- ▶ *Elia* < *Ælia*??

The Thorney Fragment

fra eliʒ [*to w*]*itlesige* and *of eliʒ to ðorniʒe*. From Michelle Brown, *Manuscripts from the Anglo-Saxon age*, British Library 2007, Plate 133; reproduced with permission. © British Library Board BL Add. MS 61735.

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➤ Perhaps named by an early bishop of London

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➤ The name is actually exactly what we would expect as a regular development of Latin *Austria*!

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➤ Etymology is river-name *Stūr+ia*

The place-name Lyminge

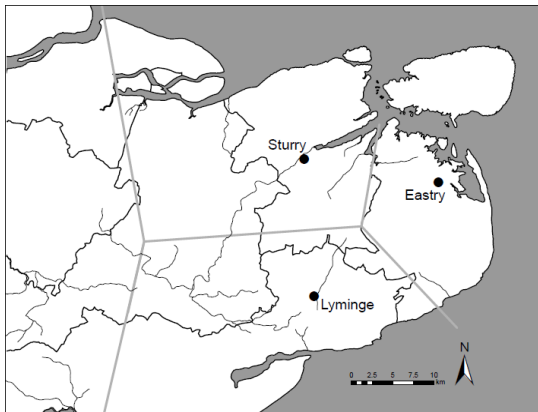➤ *ad cortem que appellatur Liminge* 689 (13th)

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Brookes map of Kent

Fig. 70 Thiessen polygons defined around the gē settlements and lathe boundaries in eastern Kent

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➤ See my paper *Early English region-names with the suffix -ia, with a special emphasis on the name Ely* for full data and argument