Prior to attending the Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic Subject Masterclass on Tuesday 1 June, please read through the materials below, which will be discussed in one of your taster sessions.

Read and compare, thinking about the different types of information provided by the various sources.

How can we tell what is reliable?

How might we account for differences?

What kinds of information can the hoard itself provide?

How does it reflect the cultural and political background of the period?

Think about the type of source and also its date.
A Meeting of Cultures: the Cuerdale Hoard and North Britain in the Early Tenth Century

The Cuerdale hoard is the largest assemblage of early medieval silver ever found in Britain or Ireland. It was found on the banks of the River Ribble near Preston in Lancashire on 15 May 1840, and included over 42kg of silver in some 8,600 coins and objects. The coins indicate that the hoard was assembled at some point in the period c. 905–10.

Below is a collection of records pertaining to the hoard and to events in the region, including several that relate to the same events but from a number of different perspectives. Read and compare, thinking about the different types of information provided by the various sources. How can we tell what is reliable? How might we account for differences? What kinds of information can the hoard itself provide? How does it reflect the cultural and political background of the period? Think about the type of source and also its date.

1. **Annals of Ulster** 902 CE, a collection of records from Ireland, written in Irish

   **Translation**
   The heathens (*gennti*) were driven from Ireland, i.e. from the fortress of Dublin by Máel Findia son of Flannacán, with the men of Brega [eastern Ireland] and by Cerball son of Muircán with the men of Leinster [eastern Ireland] and they abandoned a good number of their ships, and escaped half dead after they had been wounded and broken.

2. A related collection of records, **Chronicon Scotorum ‘The Chronicle of the Irish’**, 902, written in Irish

   *Indarbadh gennti a hEirinn .i. longport Atha Cliath oc Cerball mac Muirecáin co Laign bh et Mael Finnia mac Flanacáin go fferoib Bregh go fargsad drecht mor do lonccaibh.*

   ‘The heathens (*gennti*) were driven from Ireland, i.e. from the fortress of Dublin, by Cerball son of Muirecán with the men of Leinster, and by Mael Finnia son of Flannacán with the men of Brega and they abandoned a good number of their ships.

3. **Annales Cambriae ‘The Annals of Wales’**, a collection of records from Wales written in Latin

   **Translation**
   Igmund came to Mona [Anglesey, N. Wales] and took Maes Osfeilion [on the eastern side of Anglesey]

4. **Brut y Tywysogion (The Chronicle of the Princes)**, a collection of records from Wales written in Welsh

   **Translation**
   DCCCC Christ’s age was 900 when Igmund came to the island of Angelsey and he took the territory (*maes*) of Ros Meilon.
5. The Fragmentary Annals of Ireland (eleventh century)

Translation
We have related above, that is, in the fourth year previously, that the Norwegian armies were driven out of Ireland, thanks to the fasting and prayers of the holy man, Céle Dabaill, for he was a saintly and pious man, and he had great zeal for the Christians; and besides inciting the warriors of Ireland against the pagans, he laboured himself through fasting and prayer, and he strove for freedom for the churches of Ireland, and he strengthened the men of Ireland by his laborious service to the Lord; and he removed the anger of the Lord from them. For it was on account of the Lord’s anger against them that the foreigners were brought to destroy them (i.e. the Norwegians and Danes) to plunder Ireland, both church and tribe.

Now the Norwegians left Ireland, as we said, and their leader was Ingimund, and they went then to the island of Britain. The son of Cadell son of Rhodri was king of the Britons at that time. The Britons assembled against them, and gave them hard and strong battle, and they were driven by force out of British territory.

After that Ingimund with his troops came to Aethelflaed, Queen of the Saxons; for her husband, Aethelred, was sick at that time. (Let no one reproach me, though I have related the death of Aethelred above, because this was prior to Aethelred’s death and it was of this very sickness that Aethelred died, but I did not wish to leave unwritten what the Norwegians did after leaving Ireland.) Now Ingimund was asking the Queen for lands in which he would settle, and on which he would build barns and dwellings, for he was tired of war at that time. Aethelflaed gave him lands near Chester, and he stayed there for a time.

What resulted was that when he saw the wealthy city, and the choice lands around it, he yearned to possess them. Ingimund came then to the chieftains of the Norwegians and Danes; he was complaining bitterly before them, and said that they were not well off unless they had good lands, and that they all ought to go and seize Chester and possess it with its wealth and lands. From that there resulted many great battles and wars. What he said was, ‘Let us entreat and implore them ourselves first, and if we do not get them good lands willingly like that, let us fight for them by force.’ All the chieftains of the Norwegians and Danes consented to that.

Ingimund returned home after that, having arranged for a hosting to follow him. Although they held that council secretly, the Queen learned of it. The Queen then gathered a large army about her from the adjoining regions, and filled the city of Chester with her troops.

Almost at the same time the men of Foirtriu [in northern Scotland] and the Norwegians fought a battle. The men of Scotland fought this battle steadfastly, moreover, because Colum Cille was assisting them, for they had prayed fervently to him, since he was their apostle, and it was through him that they received faith. For on another occasion when Imar Conung was a young land and he came to plunder Scotland with three large troops, the men of Scotland, lay and clergy alike, fasted and prayed to God and Colum Cille until morning, and beseeched the Lord and gave profuse alms of food and clothing to the churches and to the poor and received the Body of the Lord from the hands of their priests and promised to do every good thing as their clergy would best urge them and that their battle-standard in the van of every battle would be the Crozier of Colum Cille – and it is on account of that account that it is called the Cathbuaid ‘Battle-triumph’ from then onwards; and the name is fitting, for they have often won victory in battle with it, as they did at that time, relying on Colum Cille. The acted the same way on this occasion. Then this battle was fought hard and fiercely; the men of Scotland won victory and triumph and many of the Norwegians were killed after their defeat, and their king was killed there, namely Oittir son of Iarngna. For a long time after that neither the Danes nor the Norwegians attacked them, and they enjoyed peace and tranquillity. But let us turn to the story that we began.

The armies of the Danes and the Norwegians mustered to attack Chester, and since they did not get their terms accepted through request or entreaty, they proclaimed battle on a certain day. They came to attack the city on that day, and there was a great army with many freemen in the city to meet them. When the
troops who were in the city saw, from the city wall, the many hosts of the Danes and Norwegians coming
to attack them, they sent messengers to the king of the Saxons, who was sick and on the verge of death at
that time, to ask his advice and the advice of the Queen. What he advised was that they do battle outside,
near the city, with the gate of the city open, and that they choose a troop of horsemen to be concealed on
the inside; and those of the people of the city who would be strongest in battle should flee back into the
city as if defeated, and when most of the army of the Norwegians had come in through the gate of the city,
the troop that was in hiding beyond should close the gate after that horde, and without pretending any
more they should attack the throng that had come into the city and kill them all.

Everything was done accordingly, and the Danes and Norwegians were frightfully slaughtered in that way.
Great as that massacre was, however, the Norwegians did not abandon the city, for they were hard and
savage; but they all said that they would make many hurdles, and place props under them, and that they
would make a hole in the wall underneath them. This was not delayed; the hurdles were made, and the
hosts were under them making a hole in the wall, because they wanted to take the city, and avenge their
people.
It was then that the king (who was on the verge of death) and the queen sent messengers to the Irish who
were among the pagans (for the pagans had many Irish fosterlings), to say to the Irishmen, ‘Life and health
to you from the king of the Saxons who is ill and from the queen, who holds all authority over the Saxons,
and they are certain that you are true and trustworthy friends to them. Therefore, you should take their
side, for they have given no greater honour to any Saxon warrior or cleric than they have given to each
warrior or cleric who has come to them from Ireland, for this inimical race of pagans is equally hostile to
you also. You must, then, since you are faithful friends, help them on this occasion’. This was the same as
saying to them, ‘Since we have come from faithful friends of yours to converse with you, you should ask
the Danes what gifts in lands and property they would give to the people who would betray the city to
them. If they will make terms for that, bring them to swear an oath in a place where it would be
convenient to kill them, and when they are taking the oath on their swords and their shields, as is their
custom, they will put aside all their good shooting weapons’.

All was done accordingly, and they set aside their arms. And the reason why those Irish acted against the
Danes was because they were less friends to them than the Norwegians. Then many of them were killed in
that way, for huge rocks and beams were hurled onto their heads. Another great number were killed by
spears and by arrows, and by every means of killing men.

However, the other army, the Norwegians, was under the hurdles, making a hole in the wall. What the
Saxons and the Irish who were among them did was to hurl down huge boulders, so that they crushed the
hurdles on their heads. What they did to prevent that was to put great columns under the hurdles. What
the Saxons did was to put the ale and water they found in the town into the towns cauldrons, and to boil it
and throw it over the people who were under the hurdles, so that their skin peeled off them. The
Norwegians response to that was to spread hides on top of the hurdles. The Saxons then scattered all the
beehives there were in the town on top of the besiegers, which prevented them from moving their feet
and hands because of the number of bees stinging them. After that they gave up the city, and left it. Not
long afterwards there was fighting again ...

6. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (9th–12th centuries)

Translation
1093: … When [the vikings] came to Essex to their fortress and their ships, the survivors collected again
before winter a large army from the East Angles and Northumbrians, placed their women and ships and
property in safety in East Anglia, and went continuously by day and night till they reached a deserted city in
Wirral, which is called Chester. Then the English army could not overtake them before they were inside
that fortress. However, they besieged the fortress for some two days, and seized all the cattle that was
outside, and killed the men whom they could cut off outside the fortress, and burnt all the corn, or consumed it by means of their horses., in all the surrounding districts.

894: And then in this year, immediately after that, the Danish army went into Wales from Wirral, because they could not stay there. That was because they were deprived both of the cattle and the corn which had been ravaged …

907 (Mercian Register): In this year Chester was restored.

915 (Mercian Register): … then afterwards in the next year after Christmas, [Æthelflæd] built [the fortress] at Chirbury, and that at Wearbyrig; and in the same year before Christmas, that at Runcorn.

TEXTUAL SOURCES IN THE ORIGINAL

1. Annals of Ulster 902 CE, a collection of records from Ireland, written in Irish

Entry in Irish (Gaelic)
Indarba ngennti a hEre .i. lonport Atha Cliath o Mael Findia mac Flandacáin co feraibh Brega ocus o Cherball mac Muircáín co Laignibh co farcabsat drecht mar dia longaibh co n-erlasat leth-marba iarna nguin ocus a mbrisith.


Entry in Irish (Gaelic)
Indarbadh gennti a hEirinn .i. longport Atha Cliath oc Cerball mac Muirecáin co Laignibh et Mael Finnia mac Flanacáin go fferoib Bregh go fargsad drecht mor do lonccaibh.

3. Annales Cambriae (The Annals of Wales)

Igmunt in insula Mon uenit et tenuit Maes Osmeliaun.

4. Brut y Tywysogion (The Chronicle of the Princes)

DCCCC Naw cant mlyned oed oet Crist pan deuth Igmund y ynys Von, ac y kynhalyawd maes Ros Meilon.

5. The Fragmentary Annals of Ireland (eleventh century)


Ra cuadar tra na Lochlannaigh a hEirinn, amhui adubhramar, & ba taoisioch dóibh Hingamund, & as ann ra chuaadar a nlnis Breatan [in margin: nó i mBreathnuibh]. As è ba ri Breatan an tan sin .i. mc. Caitill mc.
Ruadhhrach. Ro thionoilsid Breatain doibh, & tugadh cath crúaidh sonairt doibh, & ra cuirid ar eigin a criochaibh Breatan iad.

Tainig iar sin Hingamund cona shluaghaibh d’ionsoigíd Edelfrida, bainrioghan Saxan; úair bóí a fear-sidhe an tan sa i n-galar, .i. Edelfrid. (Na h-increachadh nach mé ge ra innisius reamham écc Edelfrid, úair taoisiocha so ionás écc Edelfrid, & as don galar sa as marbh Edelfrid, acht niorbh áil dhamh a fhagbhall gan a scribhheann na n-dearnsad Lochlannaig ar n-dul a h-Eirinín.) Ro bhaoi iaramh Hingamund ag iarraidh fearainn ar an rioghan a t-sairisfeadh, & i n-dingneadh croadh & treabhadh, ar ba tuirsioch e an tan sin do chogadh. Tug iaramh Edelfrida fearainn a f-fogus Castra dó, & ro an seal ann sin.

As eadh ro fhás de sin, ó do chnacht a cathraígh lánsaibhir, & as fearann toghadh ime, tugadh mián a teachtadh dó. Tainig Hingamund iar sin d’ionsoighidh thaoisich Lochlannach & Danar; ro bhaoi go gearán mór ’n f-fadhnaise, & as eadh ro ráidh, nach maith ro bhfadar gan fearann maith aca, & gur bo cóir doibh uile toidheadh do ghabhail Castra, & da teachtadh cona maithius & cona fearannaibh. Ro fhás tra tríd sin catha & cogadh iomdha mora. As eadh ro ráidh: ’Guidheam & aitcheam iad féin ar túis, & muna fhagham iad amlaidh sain ar áis, cosnam iad ar éigin.’ Ro faomhsattar uile taoisigh Lochlannach & Danair sin.

Tainic Ingamund iar ttaín dá tháigh iar ndal tionóil ’na deaghaidh. Cidh deirrid do ro thionsgnamar. Iarnghna. As càin iar ttaín ná marbhaid imorro na Lochlannaig go hiomdha ar maidhm forra, & marbhthar a rígh ann .i. Oittir mac an tain sa. Ra cuiriodh iaramh an cath sa go cruaidh feochair; rugsad na nDanar a bhaoí slógh mór go natach nó guidhe, ro earfhualadh. Ro thionoilsat slúaghaí na nDanar & na Lochlannach d’ionsoighidh Castra, & ó nach fuarattar a faomhadh tré atach nó guidhe, ro earfhuaíradh cath ar ló dhhairithe. Tangadar ’san ló sin d’ionsoighidh na cátharach; & ro bhaoi slógh mór go n-iomad saorochlann ’san ccathraigh ara ccionn. O ro connattar na slúagh ra bhattar isin cathraigh, do mhúr na cáthraigh, slóigh iomdha na n-Danar & na Lochlannach da n-ionsoighidh, ro chuirsiod teacha d’ionsoighidh righ Saxan, ro bhaoi a n-galar & ar bhrú écc a an uair sin, d’iarraidh a chomhairle-siomh & comhairle a riogha. As iomhairle tug-saidhe, cathgadh do ghéamh a f-fogus don chathraigh allamhá, & doras na cathraigh a dheath oibéla; & sléipnitéraire do thogha & a mbeith-sidhe i ffolach alla anall; & an buadh treisi do lucht na cathrach ag an chathughadh, teichheadh doibh dara n-ais isin chathraigh mur ba i maidhm, & an uair nó thicoideais earnmór slóigh na Lochlannach dar dhorus na cathrach asteach, an slógh bhias a f-folach thall do dhúnadh an doruis dar éis na dreimi sin, & gan ní a mó dó leagean orra, gabhail fon dreim sin tiogaide isin chathraigh & a marbhadh uile.

Do rónadh uile amlaidh sin, & ro marbhadh deargar na nDanar & na Lochlannach amlaidh sin. Cidh móir dna an marbhadh sin, ní headh do rónasd na Lochlannaig, fagbail na cathrach, úair ba crúaidh aindighidh iad; acht as eadh adrubharratt uile, cíathra iomdha do ghéamh acca, & gabhla do chur fótha, & tolladh an mhúir fótha; & as eadh ón ra fuírgead, do rónadh na cíathra, & ro bhadar na slóigh fótha ag tolladh an mhúir, uair ba saint léo gabhail na cathrach, & dioghail a muintire.

5
Is ann sin an t-áir (b'é foighriobh do bhás) & an ríoghan teachtta uatha d'ionsoighidh na n-Gaoidhiol ro bhattach eair do paganaibh (ar ba hionadta dalta Gaoidhealach ag na paganaibh), daradh risna Gaoidhealúibh, 'Beatha & sláinte o rí Saxon atá a ngalor & ò na rioghain, 'gfa fuil uile neart Saxabm duibh-si, & ro dheimhngioidscomadh forcaraid tairis doibh-siomh sibh-si. As amhlaidh sin as gabtha duibh-si iadsomh; uair gach oglach & gach cleireach Gaoidhealach tainig cuca-somh a hEirinn, ní tugsat-som a iomarcaoidh onora do óglach nó cleireach Saxan: uair as coimmet as namhaid duibh maile an cineadh naimhirdi sin a paganda. Is eadh didiu as libh-si, amhail as caraid tairisi sibh, a ffortacht-somh an chuairt si.'

Amlaidh so ón a radh riu-som. 'Gonidh ó chairdibh dhuibh tangamur ne da bhar a n-againné, do radh duibh-si risna Danaraibh; cidne comhadha fearainn & iomnhais do beardáois don lucht nó braithfeadh an chathraigh doibh. Ma ro foemabhait-siomh sain, a mbreith dochum luighe a ffail in mbía soirbhé a marbhtha, & mar bheid-siom ag tabhairt an luighe fa cclaidhmhribh & fa sgiathail, amhuil as bés doibh, cuirft uatha a n-ule arm sodiobraigthe.'

Do righneadh uile amhlaidh sin, & ro chuirsión a arma uatha. Agus as aire is risna Danaraibh do rónsad na Gaoidhil sin, uair ba lúgh ba caraid doibh iad iomhaid na Lochlannaigh. Sochaidhe iararbh ra marbadh amhlaidh sin, ar lecadh carrag mór & sabhadh mór 'na gceann. Socuidhe mór oile do ghaith & do shaighdhibh, & ó uile amchoinge marbhtha dáoine.

Ro battar imorro an slógh oile, Lochlannaigh, fóthna cliathabhair ag tolladh na mór. As eadh do rónsad na Saxan & na Gaoidhil ro bhattach eatarra, caige diomhóra do lecadh anuas, go trásairideal na cliatha 'na cceann. As eadh do rónsad-sumh na 'aighidh sin, columnna móra do chur fona cliathabhair. As eadh do rónsad na Saxain, na fuairadar do lionn & d'uisge sin bhaile do chur a coiriúnach an bhaile, & fuchoide forra a legan i mullach in lucht ro bhaoi fona cliathabhair, go ro scomha in leathan dibh. As é freagra tugsa

Do rónsad na Saxan, gach a rabha do clathbhaith beach isin bhaile do sgóileadh ar na cliathabhair anuas. As eadh do rónsad na Saxain, gach a rabhas do cíathbhaith. As é freagra tugsa, teagmhál a bhfuil ag an uachtar céad a bheidh i mbhaile, nó an uachtar a bhfuil in mbhaile, a bheidh in mbhaile.

6. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (9th–12th centuries): annual entries on recent historical events, written in Old English

893: … Þa hie on Eastseaxe comon to hiora geweorce. 7 to hiora scipum. Þa gegaderade sio laf eft of Eastenglum, 7 of Neðhymrum micelne here onforan winter 7 befreoton hira wif, 7 hira scipu, 7 hira feoh on Eastenglum, 7 foron anstreces dæges 7 nihtes, Þa tæt hie gedydon on anar westre ceastre on Wirhealum, seo is Legaceaster gehat; Þa ne mehto seo fird hie na hindan offaran, ær hie wæron inne on þæm geweorce; Besæton þæt geweorc utan sume twegen dagas, 7 genamon ceapes eall Þæt þæt buton wæs, 7 þæt men ofslogan þe hie foran forridan mehton butan geweorce, 7 þæt corn eall forbærndon, 7 mid hira horsum fretton on ælcre efenehde …

894: Ond þa sona æfter þæm on ðys gere for se here of Wirheale in on Northwealas, forþæm hie ðær sittan ne mehton; Þæt wæs forðy þe hie wæron bumenene ægðer ge þæs ceapes, ge þæs cornes, ðe hie gehergod hæfdon …

907: Her wæs Ligcester geedniwod.

915: Þa þæt ofre geare on ufán midne winter þa æt Cyricbyrig 7 þa æt Weardbyrig, 7 ðý ilcan gere foran to middan wintra þa æt Rumcofan.
7. Photograph of a selection of items from the Cuerdale hoard (British Museum).
8. Painting (c. 1790) of Cuerdale Hall, Lancashire, showing the eroding banks of the River Ribble in the foreground, where the hoard was discovered (private collection).

9. Map produced for the Duchy of Lancaster’s inquest into the discovery of the hoard in 1840, showing the location of its discovery at the lower right (Duchy of Lancaster).
## Estimated Contents of the Cuerdale Hoard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>No. identifiable</th>
<th>Estimated original total</th>
<th>Estimated total weight (in silver)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coins</td>
<td>7,193+</td>
<td>c. 7,500</td>
<td>c. 10.5kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objects</td>
<td>1,153</td>
<td>c. 1,200</td>
<td>10.44kg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ingots/fragments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.23kg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rings/fragments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.71kg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brooch/pin fragments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.40kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL WEIGHT</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>c. 42.6kg</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. Estimated Contents of the Cuerdale Hoard; totals are rounded up based on smaller fractions (Based on J. Graham-Campbell (ed.), *The Cuerdale Hoard and Related Viking-Age Silver and Gold from Britain and Ireland in the British Museum* (London: The British Museum, 2011)).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>In British Museum</th>
<th>Estimated original total where available</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglo-Saxon</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>c. 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercian kings [to c. 879]</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Anglian kings [to c. 870]</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wessex/Mercia [Alfred the Great (871–99)]</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>c. 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wessex/Mercia [Edward the Elder (899–924)]</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archbishops of Canterbury</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anglo-Viking</td>
<td>1,169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imitations of English coinage</td>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Anglia</td>
<td>664</td>
<td>c. 1,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northumbria/York</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>c. 3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolingian</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>c. 1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papal Rome</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3/4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Islamic dirhams</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>c. 50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Byzantine Empire</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Main categories of coins from the Cuerdale hoard held in the British Museum (including the Assheton collection) (based on G. Williams in Graham-Campbell, *The Cuerdale Hoard*).
13. Selected coin types represented in the Cuerdale hoard (all images from CNG).
14. Map of all mint-places represented among coins from Cuerdale.
15. Map of probable regions of origin for selected types of metalwork in the Cuerdale hoard. Dotted arrows indicate uncertain attribution to two or more regions.