



## ARCHAISMS THROUGHOUT ENGLISH LITERARY TRADITION

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### Research aim

To overview the use of archaisms throughout English literary history and determine a) the popularity of archaism use and b) the functions that archaisms perform.

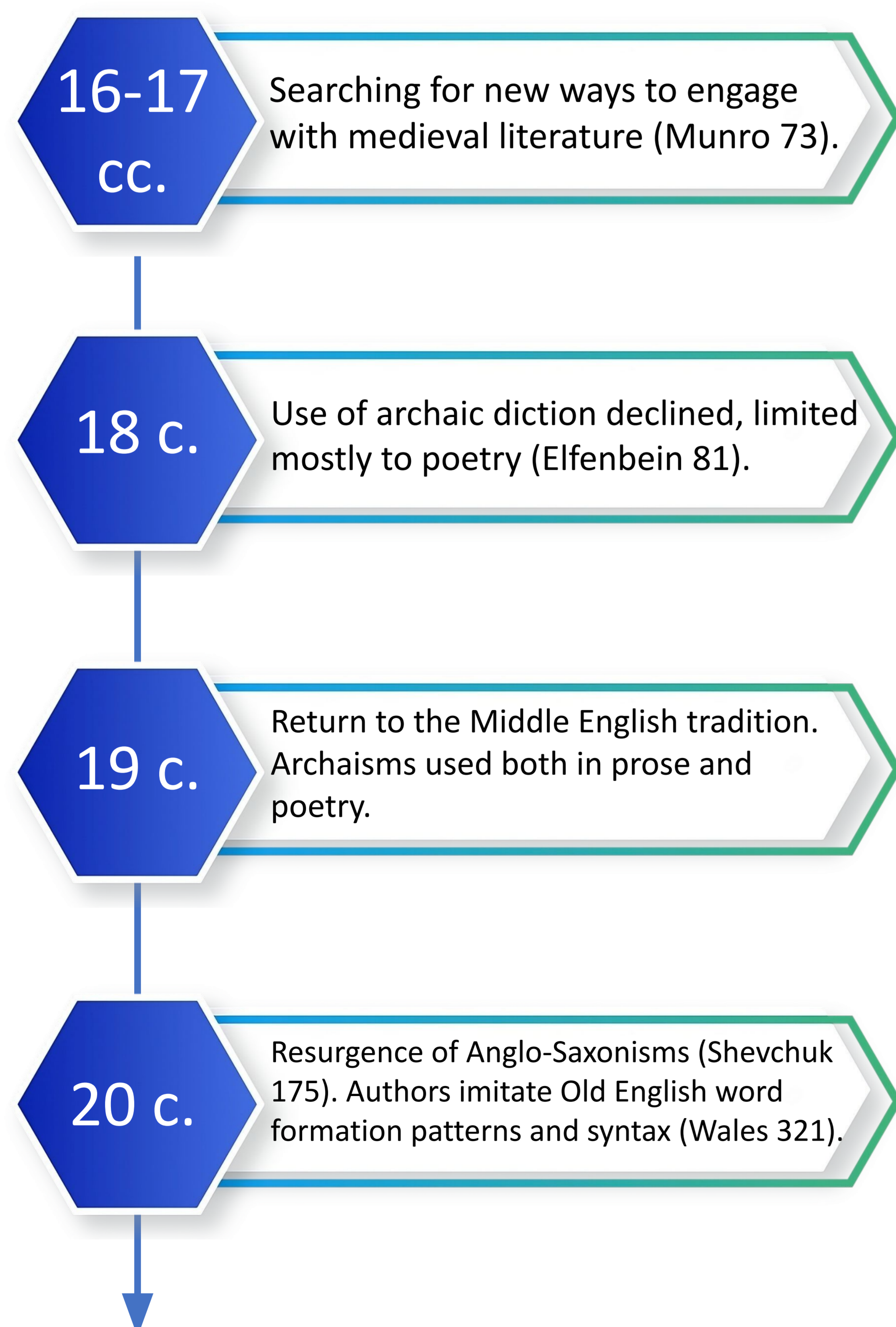
### Objectives:

- 1 to overview the history of archaisms in English literature;
- 2 to identify the functions that archaisms perform throughout the studied periods.

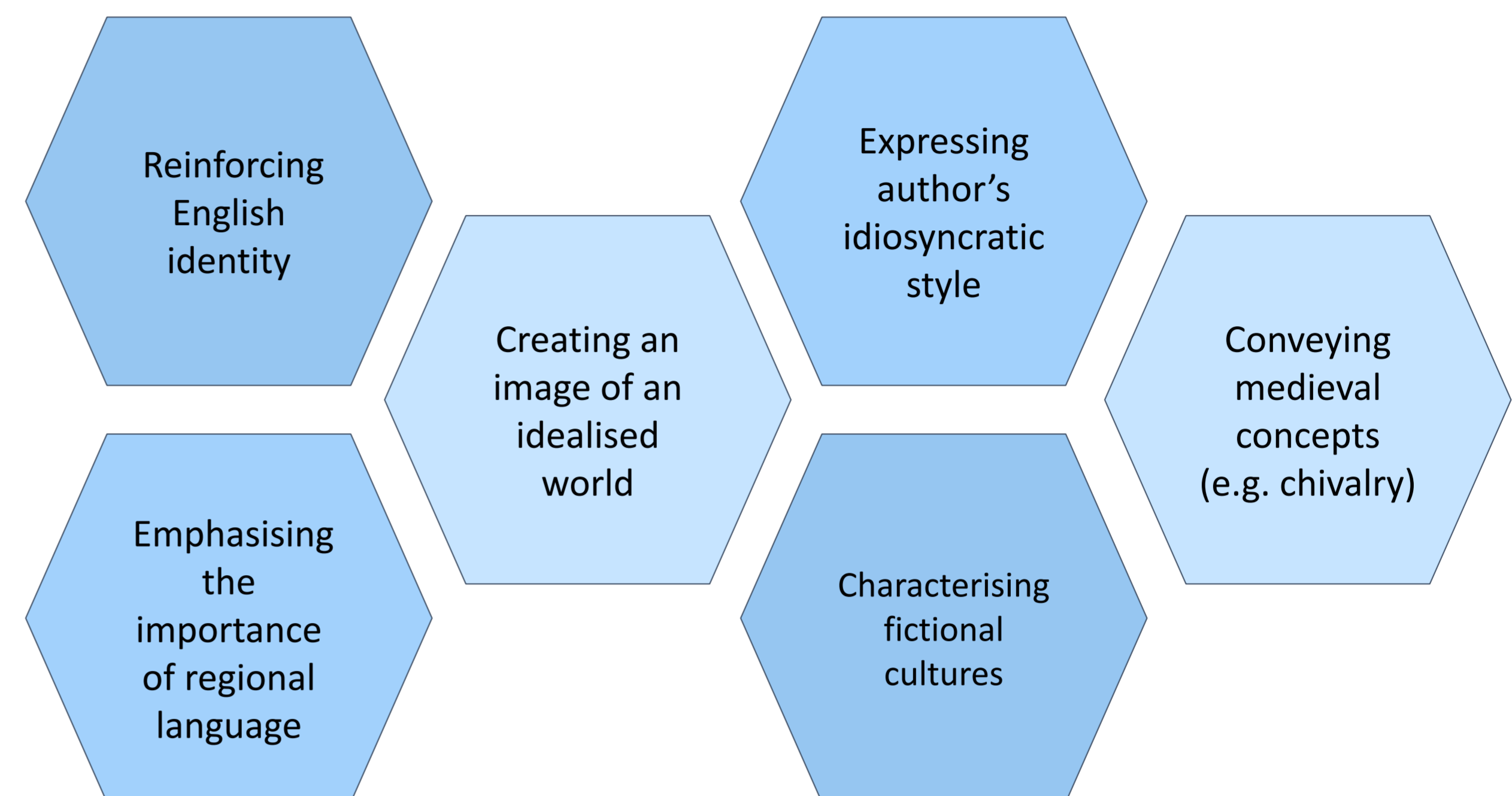
### Research question:

How does the use of archaisms influence English literary tradition?

### Archaisms in English literary tradition



### Functions performed by archaisms



### Examples

Now the name of this House was the Wolfings, and they bore a Wolf on their banners, and their warriors were marked on the breast with the image of the Wolf, that they might be known for what they were if they fell in battle, and were stripped.  
- the syntax reflects the style of Germanic and Old English poets.

(from *The House of the Wolfings*)

*grameful* - cf. OE *gramelic* (from *Ulysses*)

*yglauunst* - use of archaic participle prefix *y-*  
*displeasen*, *skyen* - use of archaic infinitive ending *-en* (from *Faerie Queene*)

### Conclusions

1. Use of archaisms was not consistent throughout English literary history.
2. 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> cc. witnessed to larger usage of archaic forms, compared with 18<sup>th</sup> c., which witnessed the lowest.
3. There is a shift in popularity from Old English-based archaisms to Middle English-based ones, and the resurgence of Old English-based linguistic units in the 20<sup>th</sup> c.
4. The purposes for archaism use are numerous and changed in accordance with (or in defiance of) the leading ideas of the period.

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