# On the Origins of Complexity: Evidence from Germanic

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This presentation deals, in part I, with some major issues of complexity in current epistemological research, starting out with a (short) survey on the *nature* of complexity in general, followed by some conclusions about the *causes* of linguistic complexity, including some of its corollaries. Then, a generally applicable *definition* of linguistic complexity is presented that leads over to (four) deeper investigations into the nature of complexity, especially with respect to small and isolated languages/linguistic communities.

Part II shows, in greater detail, (a) how a reduced contact language, Ancient Germanic, acquired (again) more complexity by grammatical replication (or code copying), predominantly from Latin as the dominant contact language that functions as a model for grammatical expansion. Then, (b), examples from the two Insular Scandinavian languages and some North Frisian varieties are presented in order to show, if applicable, in which way *isolated communities* and linguistic structures of small languages correlate. Moreover, it will be demonstrated (c) how a small and rather isolated language, Faroese, *duplicated* many linguistic structures from the dominant and ubiquitous contact language, Danish, gaining thus more grammatical complexity. Finally, two frequently occurring grammatical categories, (d) possession and definiteness, are scrutinised with respect to variation and increase of complexity. This survey is based again on data from different North Germanic varieties.