НАВЧАЛЬНО-НАУКОВИЙ ЦЕНТР ГУМАНІТАРНОЇ ОСВІТИ

Кафедра іноземних мов

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HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (OLD ENGLISH)

Конспект лекцій

(англійська мова)

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Видання підготовлено до програми навчальної дисципліни і є складовою частиною навчально-методичного комплексу дисципліни «Вступ до літературознавства».

Конспект лекцій ґрунтується на міждисциплінарному підході до дослідження й опису історії мовних процесів. Він висвітлює основні історичні події у староанглійському періоді, які зумовили зміни у фонетиці, морфології та синтаксисі англійської мови. У цьому конспекті лекцій розглядаються загальні проблеми походження і розвитку англійської мови, іншомовні впливи на становлення мови, а також простежується розвиток її звукового ладу. Цей конспект лекцій допоможе студентам усвідомити положення англійської мови серед інших індоєвропейських мов, і в той же час дасть можливість краще зрозуміти цілий ряд явищ, властивих самій англійській мові. Ретельно підібраний матеріал розподілений за окремими проблемами та складається із чотирьох розділів.

Конспект лекцій розроблено відповідно до робочої програми дисципліни і є складовою частиною УМКД

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THEME 1

Before studying the course of «A History of the English Language», it is important to know about Language itself. So, what is Language? Language is the phonological, lexical, and grammatical system which is used to express our thoughts, creative ideas and, of course, to communicate with people around us. There exist 6,000 to 7,000 different languages in the world. However, some languages disappeared due to historical changes and some became very popular. English, Chinese, Spanish and some others are among the widespread. While studying the specific language, philologists are interested in facts of historical change in structure and vocabulary of this language. Understanding of how language has changed and varies, they will obtain knowledge of the society where this language is spoken and they will be able to read the literature of earlier periods. It is interesting to follow the stages throughout which vocabulary has been and is being enriched. It is exciting to trace complex relationships among varieties of speech which are gathered under the single name of the English language. Despite the fact that English is Germanic in origin about half of its words derive from Latin and French. The word "English" has different meanings. For instance, it refers to people who live in a particular part of Great Britain and also to the language these people speak. So, the purpose of this course is to present the English Language not only from the historical point of view but also as a cultural subject.

Nobody knows with any certainty when language appeared: one hundred thousand years ago? Later? It probably began as signs and calls, gestures and facial and bodily expressions, many of which we still use. We use our 'body language' during our conversation. Expression on our faces can inform an addressee whether we are happy, sad, angry, etc. These expressions might not differ much from those which early people showed thousands years ago. Overtime language began to build but we don't know and might never know who laid the foundations. However, thanks to written records of different periods linguists managed to reconstruct history of the English language. The earliest written texts in English are dated in the 7th c.; the earliest records in other Germanic languages go back to the 3rd or 4th c. A.D. So where did it begin? When and where did it begin

to assume the form we know, begin to sound like an English we can recognise? These are questions that we are going to try to answer during our course as well.

The Importance of a Language

Speaking of language, we should also pay attention to its importance.

We can notice that some nationalities consider their language as more important than other languages. Of course, it is natural for people to be proud of their own language and the English are among them because as everyone could notice English is widespread. It is the official language of the United Kingdom, the United States and countries of the former British Empire. It is interesting to know that nowadays English is spoken only by 400 million people whereas Chinese is spoken by about 1.3 billion people only in China. Nevertheless, English is believed to be the most used. Scientists think that no language obtains its importance just because of its beauty or some internal advantages. Languages become important because of power balance. Thus, if people who speak the language are powerful in economics, politics, technology or military, it is likely that their language would be some stairs higher than other languages. Art, literature and science are very important too. The deficit of the words in other languages makes a particular language prestigious and widespread. As we can see such languages as English, German, French and Spanish are important languages because they have had their influence on other populations not only in modern times but in ancient ones as well. These languages are learnt intensively by many people outside their countries.

So, as you see the status of the language depends on extralinguistic factors as well.

Overtime the English language underwent numerous changes. **Language change** is usually of two types: *internal change* (also *intra-linguistic* and *systemic*) and *external change* or *extralinguistic*.

Internal changes. In Old English (OE) many words had */h/* (aitche) in combination with other consonants at the start of the word. Such clusters as */hl-/, /hn-/, /hr-/, /hw-/* (eg., *hlaf (loaf,) hring* (ring), *hwat* (what)) were normal. In Modern English this aitch is not used in most of the words any more. Linguists call this change as «drift of

language». So, why did people begin to drop their aitches? It is believed that this */h/* represented strong *aspiration* and probably was associated with emphatic expression. After its loss in such combinations as */hl-/, /hn-/, /hr-/,* it would then be expected in intemperate speech. Perhaps, that's why the combination /hw-/ has been remained longest in question words which are pronounced more individually and emphatically ***(What! Why! When!)***.

Another internal change is connected with the use of pre-nominal demonstratives. A demonstrative was used before a noun and had the effect of specifying the following noun. In emphatic speech styles this must have been common usage. For example, ***se fisc*** (lit. «that fish»), ***purh pone hunger*** («by that hunger»).

Internal change also occurs when speakers stop using endings (or inflections) on verbs and nouns and start to rely on words such as *of, for, the,* and *have.* The traditional reason for the loss of endings is that the stress shifted in Germanic to a fixed position, namely the root of a word, and that the endings became phonetically less important. Unfortunately, nobody knows what caused the shift of stress.

External changes occur due to language contact (between speakers of different languages), or innovations, or issues of political or social identity. In this case words from one language (loanwords) find their way into another language and are assimilated into it. Sometimes external changes have great influence on the language and at times relatively superficial. External changes are unpredictable since it is impossible to foresee who will migrate where, or what fashion will catch on. Looking at when loanwords first appear in a language gives a good clue to social change. For example, lots of French loans appeared around 1250 tell us about a change that happened to society as a whole.

If we compare Modern English to earlier English and other languages, we will see that English has at least 25 **consonants.** Other languages have different numbers: Polish has 35, Hawaiian 8, and Finnish 13. The most unusual English consonant is perhaps the one spelled as *th,* which, as we will see, represents two different sounds. Many other languages, and many varieties of English, do not have this sound. When speakers of such languages first learn a variety of English where *th* does occur, they often pronounce *th* as *d* in *that,* as *t* in *thing,* as *f* in *mouth,* or as *v* in *mother.*

As for the vocabulary of language, it can change very rapidly. Lexical changes are quite noticeable and easy to observe. New words are usually built according to the existing ways of word-formation which are very slow to change. New words or new formations are made with the help of the following elements — roots, affixes and with the help of word-building patterns by extending them to new samples: eg. *motel* and *hotel*, *typescript* and *manuscript.*

Speaking of the mechanism change in the language we shouldn't forget about *diachronic* and *synchronic* variation. *Diachronic* in Greek means something that lasts for long time (but not forever). In linguistics it refers to the development of a language: how it has changed and how it changes over time. *Synchronic* means «at the same time». In linguistics it refers to the state of a language as it is at a particular time, so a synchronic study of language examines and describes a language as it is (at a particular point in its development), rather than its history.

A linguistic change begins with synchronic variation. New units appear parallel to the existing language units such as words, forms, affixes, pronunciations, spellings, syntactic constructions. They may be similar in meaning but slightly different in form, stylistic connotations, social values, etc. New meanings may arise in the existing words or forms in addition to their main meanings. Both kinds of variation — formal and semantic — supply the *raw material* for inevitable changes. Synchronic variation is to be found in every language at every stage of its history.

Cosmopolitan Vocabulary

Albert C. Baugh in his book A History of the English Language writes us that present-day English can be characterized as the language of large size and mixed vocabulary. English belongs to a Germanic group as well as German, Dutch, Flemish, Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian. It shares with these languages similar grammatical structure and many common words. English also shares a great number of words with those languages of Europe that are derived from Latin, notably French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. All of this means that anyone who speaks either a Germanic or a Romance language can see the resemblance with present English. The English vocabulary contains borrowings from many other languages. If we

compare the formation of new words in German and in English, we will see that German made new words chiefly by the combination of existing elements, as for English, it borrowed words from other languages. In the course of centuries of this practice, English has built up an unusual capacity for assimilating outside elements. We do not feel that there is anything "foreign" about the words *chipmunk, moose, raccoon,* and *skunk,* all of which were borrowed from the Native American. Such words as *brandy, landscape, measles, uproar,* and *wagon* are from Dutch and there are many other words in daily use. For example, *balcony, duet, granite, opera, piano, umbrella,* and *volcano* derived from Italian*; alligator, cargo, contraband, cork, hammock, mosquito, tornado,* and *vanilla* are from Spanish*; acrobat, anthology, barometer, catarrh, catastrophe, chronology, elastic, magic, tactics, tantalize* derived from Greek, directly or indirectly; *steppe, vodka, ruble, troika, glasnost,* and *perestroika* are from Russian*; caravan, divan, khaki, mogul, shawl, sherbet jasmine, paradise, check, chess, lemon, lilac, turban* derive from Persian. A few minutes spent on the examination of any good etymological dictionary will show that English has borrowed from Hebrew and Arabic, Hungarian, Hindi-Urdu, Bengali, Malay, Chinese, the languages of Java, Australia, Tahiti, Polynesia, West Africa, and from one of the aboriginal languages of Brazil.

Lots of people learning English ask one and the same question, «***Why is English spelling irregular***?» The fact is that the English spelling system has absorbed words from many other languages and many varieties of spoken English have been used for centuries. That's why the symbols do not accurately represent the sounds. In addition, there has never been a spelling reform in English as it was in Modern German and Dutch.

There are many arguments against spelling reforms. Pronunciation differs so much in English spoken around the world that it would be hard to create one spelling system. Let's imagine that various governments, newspapers and book editors in areas where English is an official language would allow having several different spellings. In that case, we would have multiple spelling systems, and English speakers from India, for instance, might no longer be able to read what speakers in the United States write. So the main reason English spelling is irregular is that many sound changes have occurred since it was (unofficially) standardized.

In Old and Middle English, scribes used a modified Roman alphabet to transcribe their own speech or to copy from other manuscripts. There are often a lot of variations within the writings of one scribe as well as between different scribes from the same area: *sealm, selm, salm, spalme, sphalme* and many others are listed in the Old English Dictionary (*OED*) for 'psalm'. Examine, for instance, the variations of *shirt* and *though* in the *OED.* The current online version of the *OED* lists 23 different spellings of *shirt* and 29 of *though* throughout the history of English! Despite the variation, a standard version was established since scribes often copied earlier manuscripts and many indeed copied the symbols indicative of an earlier pronunciation.

At the end of the Middle English period (in 1420 to be precise), scribes working at the Chancery (Chancery is a general term for a medieval writing office) began writing in English rather than Latin and seem to have been following a Midlands dialect, i.e. the area to the North of London.

The Chancery produced a huge number of documents, and this was connected with the rise of London as a major centre for trade and politics. Chancery English is characterized by relatively free spelling, but some rules evolve (1) *gh* at the end of *high* even though the consonant is no longer pronounced; (2) *th* endings for third person verbs, as in *he doth* even though many varieties already have *he does;* (3) past tense *(e)d* endings and not *t* even though many sound like *t* and (4) *such* and *which* for *su(l)ch* and *(h)wi(l)ch.*

Chancery English may be the beginning of a written standard, one that does not necessarily represent spoken English. Some linguists have looked at migration patterns into London and confirm that the Midlands was crucial for a steady flow of workers. All medieval cities needed immigration to maintain their population levels and the Midlands was characterized by population growth and the rise of a middle class. The Chancery also generated scientific and religious texts. Thus, the Midlands and London were important to the development of an unofficial standard, where 'unofficial' refers to the fact that English has never had an Academy or any other body regulating it.

A major boost to the standard comes after the introduction of the printing press in 1476. William Caxton started the printing press in

London, physically close to the Chancery, even though he himself came from Kent and had spent much time abroad. Standardization is automatically established when a document, book, or pamphlet is reproduced the same way many times. Caxton relied on the writings of scribes rather than inventing a new system and was not himself interested in standardizing spelling. One of his first books, *Malory's Morte d'Arthur,* was published in 1485, based on an older manuscript. The printed result contains a lot of variations (*duke* and *duk, when* and *whanne, hyr* and *hir* for 'her'); it is quite possible that words no longer sounded the way Caxton printed them. Spelling variations stayed around for a long time; *Shakespeare's First Folio* of 1623 contains many of them (*heart* and *hart, do* and *doe).* Other important developments towards standardization were the publication of the first English dictionaries around 1600 and *the King James Bible* in 1611.

Thus, a standard began to evolve between the 1430s and the 1480s.

There are other factors that influenced on the irregularity of English spelling: *etymological respellings* and the combination of words from other languages. They changed pronunciation but kept the original spelling. The English word *debt* can be an example of an etymological respelling. It is borrowed from French and occurs for the first time in 1300 as *dete*, *dette,* and *dett,* without a *b.* However, the Latin forms have *b* in the same word and people who knew Latin those times were considered educated, the *b* was introduced by writers wishing to show their status. The *OED* says that it was «artificially spelt *debte,* after which *debt* has become the English spelling since the 16th c».

Dialectal Differentiation

It is important to remark that if different groups, living in the same territory, have constant communication with each other then differences become merged in the general speech. But if any separation of one community from another takes place and lasts for a long time, differences grow up between them. The differences may be slight if the separation is slight, and then we have only local dialects. On the other hand, they may become so considerable that it becomes difficult to differentiate the language of one district to another. In this case, we generally have the development of separate languages. However, sometimes it is possible to recognize a sufficient number of

features that still retain in common to indicate that at one time they were one. Albert C. Baugh in his book A History of the English Language writes that we can easily notice a close connection between English and German. *Milch* and *milk, brot* and *bread, fleisch and flesh, wasser* and *water* are obviously words that have derived from a common form. In the same way, a connection between Latin and English is indicated by such correspondences as *pater* with English *father or frāter*. When we notice that *father* corresponds to Dutch *vader,* Gothic *fadar,* Old Norse *faðir*, German *vater,* Greek *patēr,* Sanskrit *pitar-*, and Old Irish *athir* (with loss of the initial consonant) or that English *brother* corresponds to Dutch *broeder,* German *bruder,* Greek *phrātēr,* Sanskrit *bhrātar,* Old Slavic *bratū,* and Irish *brathair,* we are led to the hypothesis that the languages of a large part of Europe and part of Asia were at one time identical. This hypothesis can be confirmed by the **Discovery of Sanskrit**. Sanskrit is a language of ancient India. Sanskrit preserves an unusually full system of declensions and conjugations. With their help it became possible to trace the inflections of English and Sanskrit to a common origin. Compare the following forms of the verb to *be:*

Old English	*Gothic*	*Latin*	*Greek*	*Sanskrit*
eom (am)	im	sum	eimini	asmi
eart (art)	is	es	ei	asi
is (is)	ist	est	esti	asti
sindon (are)	sijum	sumus	esmen	smas
sindon (are)	sijuþ	estis	este	stha
sindon (are)	Sind	sunt	eisi	santi

The Sanskrit forms in detail show us that at one time this verb had the same endings *(mi, si, ti, mas, tha,* and *nti)* as were employed in the present tense of other verbs, for example:

Sanscrit	*Greek*	
Dadāmi	didōmi	(I give)
Dadāsi	didōs	
Dadāti	didōsi	
Dadmas	didomen	
Dattha	dodote	
dada(n)ti	didoāsi	

Thanks to Hindu grammarians who had compared and analyzed Sanskrit long time ago, linguists could see the relation that exists among the languages to which Sanskrit was allied. Grammarians had recognized the roots, classified the formative elements, and worked out the rules according to which certain sound changes occurred.

Grimm's Law

An important step was made by Jacob Grimm in 1822. He was a German philologist. He tried to explain why certain consonants in the Germanic languages differ from consonants in the related words in Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin. His conclusions are called Grimm's Law or the First Consonant shift.

The figure shows the correspondence between an early Indo-European sound and an English, Dutch, or other Germanic sound.

Early Indo-European:	p	t	k	b	d	g	bh	dh	gh
	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Germanic:	f	θ	h	p	t	k	b	d	g

Sanscrit	***English***
bhrater	brother
dhwar	door
pitar	father
tu	thou

As Verba L. writes in her book History of the English Lanuage, there are some exceptions to Grimm's law: *p t k* did not change into *f θ h,* if they were preceded by *s* (*tres — ðreo,* but *sto — standan*).

Another exception was formulated by a Danish linguist *Karl Adolph Vern*er (1846-96) in 1877: if an Indo-European voiceless stop was preceded by an unstressed vowel, the voiceless fricative which developed from it in accordance with Grimm's Law became voiced, and later this voiced fricative became a voiced plosive (stop). That is *p t k* changed into *b d g.* Greek *pater* has a Germanic correspondence *fadar, fæder* because the stress in the word was on the second syllable, and so voiceless plosive was preceded by an unstressed vowel.

Verner's Law explains why some verbs in Old English changed their root consonant in the past tense and in the Participle II — originally, these grammatical forms had the stress on the second syllable. Hence the basic forms of such verbs as *snīðan* (to cut) and *weorðan* (to become) were *snīðan — snāð — snidon — sniden*; *weorðan — wearð* — wurdon — worden.

So, in present-day English we may find the words and morphemes of common Indo-European origin that differ in sound form from their counterparts in other languages, but Grimm's law will show their similarity to the words of other Indo-European languages. For example:

fish but *piscine* (related to fish)

fist but *pistol*

five but *pentagon, pentagram, pentathlon*

three but *triangle, tripod, trident* and so on.

Very often comparing the words, a non-linguist will not find the relations between the words, yet for a linguist it is quite transparent.

However, nobody knows what caused the change. It might have happened over time after the separation of the Germanic from neighboring dialects of the parent language. There are words in Finnish borrowed from Germanic that do not show the change and that therefore must have resulted from a contact between Germanic and Finnish before the change occurred. There is also evidence that the shifting was still occurring as late as about the fifth century B.C. It is often assumed that the change was due to contact with a non-Germanic population. The contact could have resulted from the migration of the Germanic tribes or from the penetration of a foreign population into Germanic territory. Whatever its cause, the Germanic Sound Shift is the most distinctive feature marking off the Germanic languages from the languages to which they are related.

THEME 2

The Indo-European Family of Languages

A language family is a group of languages that are related to each other. They come from a common older language which is called the proto-language of that family. The languages in such a family are

similar in their vocabulary or structure. Thus the languages which originated from a parent speech are called a family of languages. German philologists used a term *Indo-Germanic* to determine this family, but some philologists are against this term because they think that it gives unnecessary emphasis to the Germanic languages. So, *Indo-European* is the term which is now most widely used because it suggests more clearly the geographical belonging of the family. We know little about the parent tongue from which the Indo-European languages have derived because they started to be divided before the beginning of history. As by whom these languages are spoken peoples have lost all knowledge of their former association there is no written record of the common Indo-European language left.

Languages that survived show different similarity to one another. They are usually divided into eleven principal groups: Indian, Iranian, Armenian, Hellenic, Albanian, Italic, Balto-Slavic, Germanic, Celtic, Hittite and Tocharian. These are the branches of the Indo-European family tree and we will look briefly at some of them.

Indian

There are sacred books of India called the Vedas. They are the oldest literary texts preserved in any Indo-European language. They contain a collection of about a thousand hymns, incantations and ritual formulas connected with many kinds of current religious practice. It is difficult to know when all these books appeared because they were written priests passed those religious items orally. Some linguists suggest that these hymns, ritual formula date back to nearly 1500 B. C. The language they are written in is Sanskrit.

Later people started using Sanskrit everyday life. Thanks to native grammarians this language gained the form with fixed rules. This form is known as Classical Sanskrit.

Beside Sanskrit there were a great number of local dialects. The present languages of India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan derived from these various dialects have spoken by some 600 million people.

Italic

The Italic branch has its center in Italy. Many people associate Latin with Rome. However, we shouldn’t forget that in prehistoric times, people spoke many other languages on this territory.

Unfortunately, we know little about them. Many of them had been replaced or absorbed before the middle of the first millennium B.C.

The various languages that represent the survival of Latin in the different parts of the Roman Empire are known as the Romance or Romanic languages. The most extensive of the Romance languages are French, Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian.

The Romance languages are not derived from the Classical Latin because Classical Latin was a literary language with a somewhat artificial grammar. The spoken language of the masses, Vulgar Latin (from Latin *vulgus,* the common people), differed from it not only in being simpler in inflection and syntax but it also differed in vocabulary. It was naturally the Vulgar Latin of the marketplace and camp was carried into the different Roman provinces. Vulgar Latin, like all languages, was constantly changing, and because the Roman provinces were established at different times and the language carried into them would be more or less the language then spoken in the meets of Rome, there would be initial differences in the Vulgar Latin of the different colonies. These differences can be explained by the influence of the native languages which people spoke in that territory.

Germanic

This group is also known as Germanic or Proto-Germanic. The languages descended from it fall into three groups: **East Germanic, North Germanic, and West Germanic.** Philologist made this conclusion based on the earliest written records of the family.

The main language of *East Germanic* is Gothic. By the third century, the Goths set off from the banks of the River Vistula and moved to the shore of the Black Sea. In the third century, they were Christianized by a missionary named Ulfilas (311-383). His father seems to have been a Goth and his mother a Greek. Ulfilas translated the Gospels and some parts of the New Testament into the Gothic language. That is why our knowledge of Gothic is almost absolute. We can consider them as the earliest records of a Germanic language we have. The exception can be some runic inscriptions in Scandinavia. For some time, the Goths played a prominent role in European history. They conquered both Italy, by the Ostrogoths, and Spain, by the Visigoths where soon the Latin language emerged. Gothic survived

longest in the Crimea, where remnants of it were noted down in the sixteenth century.

North Germanic is found in Scandinavia, Denmark, Iceland, and the Faroe Islands. The earliest traces of the language are related to the third century and they are Runic inscriptions. In its earlier form, the common Scandinavian language is conveniently spoken of as Old Norse. From about the eleventh century on, dialectal differences become noticeable. The Scandinavian languages fall into two groups: an eastern group including Swedish and Danish and a western group including Norwegian and Icelandic. Norwegian ceased to be a literary language in the fourteenth century, and Danish (with Norwegian elements) is one written language of Norway. Of the early Scandinavian languages, Old Icelandic is by far the most literary. Iceland was colonized by settlers from Norway about 874 A.D. Among the more important written monuments are *the Elder or Poetic Edda*, a collection of poems that probably date from the tenth or eleventh century.

West Germanic is of great interest to us because it is the group to which English belongs. It is divided into two branches, High and Low German. Accordingly, in early times, we distinguish as Low German tongues Old Saxon, Old Low Franconian, Old Frisian, and Old English. The last two are closely related and constitute a special or Anglo-Frisian subgroup. High Herman comprises a number of dialects (Middle, Rhenish, and East Franconian, Bavarian, Alemannic, etc.). It is divided chronologically into Old High German (before 1100), Middle High German (1100-1500), and Modern High German (since 1500). High German, especially spoken in the Midlands and used in the imperial chancery, was popularized by Luther's translation of the Bible (1522-1532) and since the sixteenth century has gradually established itself as the literary language of Germany.

Celtic

The Celtic languages at one time formed one of the most extensive groups in the Indo-European family. At the beginning of the Christian era, the Celts were found in Gaul and Spain, in Great Britain, in western Germany, and northern Italy—indeed, they covered the greater part of Western Europe. A few centuries earlier, their triumphal progress had extended even into Greece and Asia

Minor. However, it retreated before Italic and Germanic languages. Today, Celtic languages are found only in the far corners of France and the British Isles.

People in Gaul were the Celts and spoke the language known as Gallic. They were conquered by Caesar and their language was replaced by Latin. We know almost nothing about it. A few inscriptions, some proper names (eg. *Orgetorix),* one fragmentary text, and a small number of words preserved in modern French are all that survive. We have no confidence how the Celts came to England. The older view, which is now questioned, holds that the first to come were Goidelic or Gaelic Celts. Some of these may have been driven to Ireland by the later invaders and from there may have spread into Scotland and the Isle of Man. Their language is represented in modern times by Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Manx. The later Brythonic Celts, after occupying for some centuries what is now England, were in turn driven westward by Germanic invaders in the fifth century. Some of the fugitives crossed over into Brittany. The modern representatives of the Brythonic division are Welsh, Cornish, and Breton.

The remnants of this one-time extensive group of languages are everywhere losing ground at the present day. Spoken by minorities in France and the British Isles, these languages are faced with the competition of two languages of wider communication, and some seem destined not to survive this competition. Cornish became extinct in the eighteenth century, and Manx, once spoken by all the native inhabitants of the Isle of Man, has died out since World War II. In Scotland, Gaelic is found only in the Highlands. It is spoken by about 50,000 people, all of whom know English as well. Welsh is still spoken by about one-quarter of the people, but the spread of English among them is indicated by the fact that the number of those who speak only Welsh had dropped from 30 percent in 1891 to 2 percent in 1950 and continues to slowly decrease. Irish is spoken by about 500,000 people, most of whom are bilingual. If this tendency continues, it seems inevitable that eventually another branch of the Indo-European family of languages will disappear.

Periods of the English Language

Now let’s get acquainted with lists of the major periods of the English language that are usually divided into:

Old English (OE)	450-1066
Middle English (ME)	1066-1500
Modern English (ModE)	1500-present days

Each period has its own specific features of phonology, grammar and vocabulary. The changes which had happened in the language during these periods were a mixture of external and internal factors. An exception can be only at the beginning because that change was spontaneous.

If we look closer, for example, at Old and Middle English, we would see an internal difference between them because Old English has numerous endings on nouns and verbs whereas Middle English uses more grammatical words, such as prepositions, articles, and auxiliaries.

Old English

The Old English Period, in our study is the period from the fifth up to mid-eleventh century. The language of this period is represented in the form of several dialects. Seven kingdoms lived on the island at that time and the vocabulary of each of them included mostly words of native origin (Indo-European, Germanic and specifically English). Word order was relatively free and words in the sentences were connected through a system of endings. Indo-European has some common peculiarities: 1) double negation or formation of impersonal sentences without any subject in the nominative case are quite common; 2) phonetic structure is marked by a noticeable drift of the sound system away from other Germanic languages; 3) new short diphthongs appear as a result of assimilative changes, the system of consonants develops more marked pairs of voiced and voiceless fricative sounds.

The Origins and the Languages in England before English

The remains which were found by archeologists on the territory of present England show that the British Isles have been inhabited by different peoples for a long time even before they were islands. Unfortunately, we know little about the earliest inhabitants and their language. Nevertheless, the remains can tell us that people who are now called English lived in the place possibly 500,000 years ago.

The first people in England about whose language we have definite knowledge are the Celts. It used to be assumed that the coming of the Celts to England coincided with the introduction of bronze into the island. But the use of bronze probably preceded the Celts by several centuries. So before English the first Indo-European language spoken on the Isles might have been Celtic. However, for about four centuries Latin was spoken there as well. It was during the time when Britain was a province of the Roman Empire.

The Romans in Britain

After Julius Caesar had managed to conquer Gaul, he decided to attack England. It happened in summer of 55 B.C. Historians think that the cause of this invasion was not to conquer Britain but to prevent the Celts of Britain from helping the Celts in Gaul. Julius Caesar made two attempts to conquer Britain but he didn't succeed at first. His ships faced a terrible storm while crossing the Channel and he lost part of his cavalry. Secondly, the Celts resisted his army strongly. Nevertheless, Julius Caesar and his army could land but could not move deeper into the island. They had to return to Gaul. The next year he made one more attempt which was successful. Julius Caesar did not stay on the islands but demanded tribute from the Celts and returned to Gaul. It should be mentioned that they never paid the tribute but Julius Caesar reached his aim: the Celts were terrified and Romans did not disturb this territory for nearly a hundred years.

Almost a century later, another Roman Emperor named Claudius decided to conquer the islands. He considered thoroughly the experience of Caesar's invasion and took into account all the problems that might occur. Claudius sent an army which consisted of 40,000 soldiers. It took him three years to conquer the peoples of the central and southeastern regions. Almost all of the territory that is now England was soon ruled by Romans. It lasted about 300 years.

Of course, it was inevitable that 300 years brought the Romanization to the island. New roads which linked important military villages and civil centres were built. There were houses with heating apparatus and water supply. There was Roman mosaic on the floors. As for walls, they were decorated with painted stucco. People used Roman utensils, pottery and glassware. One could also find Roman baths, temples and theatres which proved the Roman style of life.

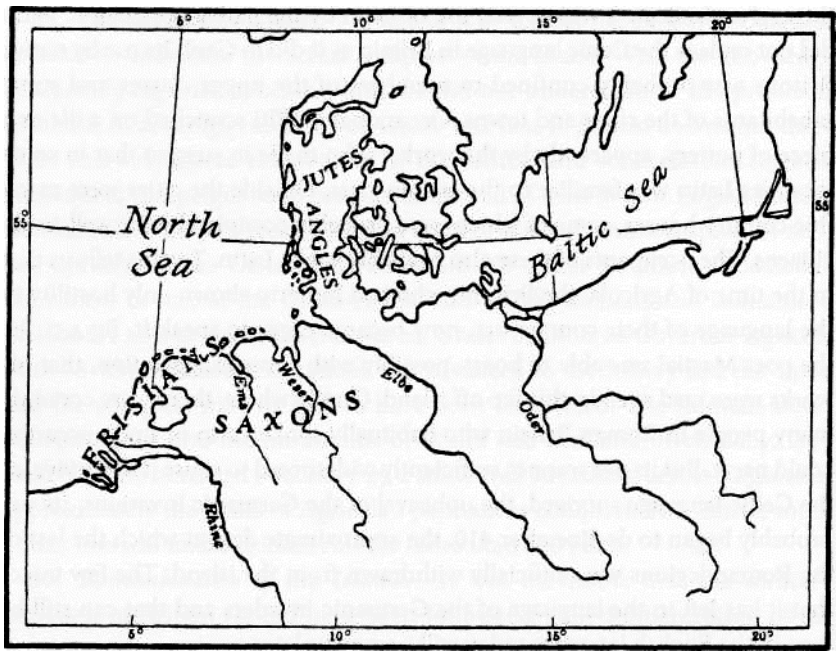
Another evidence of Romanization was the use of the Latin language. Inscriptions that have been found were written in Latin. The Latin language was spoken by the upper class and it was familiar to the artisan class as well. There were found pieces of pottery and tiles with occasional graffiti in Latin on them. Despite the fact that Latin was the official language of the military and official class, it did not replace the Celtic language as it did in Gaul. Many people in Roman Britain understood and some spoke Latin but it was not widespread and after the last of the Roman legions left England because of withdrawn, it started to decline.

The Germanic Conquest

In his book A History of the English Language Albert C. Baugh writAbout the year 449, the invasion of Britain by certain Germanic tribes, the founders of the English nation began that strongly affected the course of history. For more than a hundred years, bands of conquerors and settlers migrated from their continental homes in the region of Denmark and the Low Countries and established themselves in the south and east of the island, gradually extending the area they occupied until it included all but the highlands in the west and north. The events of these years are wrapped in much uncertainty. Although historians can form a general idea of their course, we are still in doubt about some of the tribes that took part in the movement, their exact location on the continent, and the dates of their respective migrations.

The traditional account of the Germanic invasions goes back to Bede (an English monk at the monastery of St. Peter) and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Bede in his Ecclesiastical History of the English People, completed in 731, tells us that the Germanic tribes that conquered England were the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles. From what he says and from other indications, it seems possible that the Jutes and the Angles had their home in the Danish peninsula, the Jutes in the northern half (hence the name Jutland) and the Angles in the south, in Schleswig-Holstein, and perhaps in a small area at the base. The Saxons were settled to the south and west of the Angles, roughly between the Elbe and the Ems, possibly as far as the Rhine. A fourth tribe, the Frisians, some of whom almost certainly came to England, occupied a narrow strip along the coast from the Weser to the Rhine, together with the islands opposite. But by the time of the invasions,

the Jutes had apparently moved down to the coastal area near the mouth of the Weser and possibly also around the Zuyder Zee and the lower Rhine, thus being in contact with both the Frisians and Saxons.



THE HOME OF THE ENGLISH

Note. The location of the Germanic tribes that invaded England is still a matter of dispute. The above map presents the traditional view, based upon the rather late testimony (eighth century) of Bede. An alternative opinion places the Angles on the middle Elbe and the Jutes near the Frisians.

Britain had been exposed to attacks by the Saxons from as early as the fourth century. Even while the island was under Roman rule, these attacks had become sufficiently serious to necessitate the appointment of an officer known as the Count of the Saxon Shore, whose duty it was to police the south-eastern coast. At the same time, the unconquered Piets and Scots in the north were kept out only at the price of constant vigilance. Against both of these sources of attack the Roman organization seems to have proved adequate. But the Celts had come to depend on Roman arms for this protection. They had, moreover, under Roman influence, settled down to a more peaceful mode of life, and their military traditions had lapsed. Consequently, when the Romans withdrew in 410, the Celts found themselves at a disadvantage. They were no longer able to keep out the warlike Piets

and Scots. Several times they called upon Rome for aid, but finally the Romans, fully occupied in defending their own territory at home, were forced to refuse assistance. It was on this occasion that Vortigern, one of the Celtic leaders, is reported to have entered into in agreement with the Jutes whereby they were to assist the Celts in driving out the Picts and Scots and to receive as their reward the Isle of Thanet on the northeastern tip of Kent.

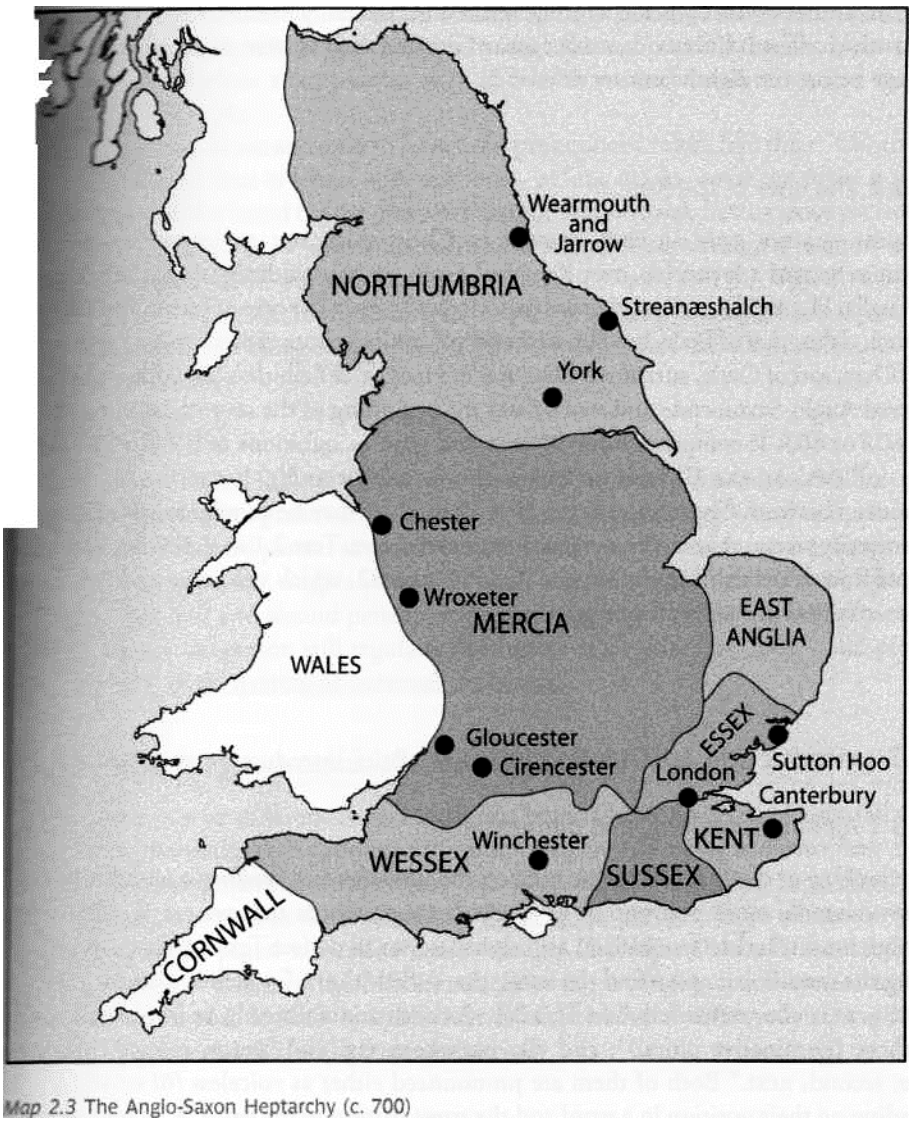
The Jutes, who had not been softened by contact with Roman civilization, were fully a match for the Picts and Scots. But Vortigern and the Celts soon round that they had in these temporary allies something more serious to reckon with than their northern enemies. The Jutes, having recognized the weakness of the Britons, decided to stay on the island and began making a forcible settlement in the southeast, in Kent. The settlement of the Jutes was a very different thing from the conquest of the island by the Romans. The Romans had come to rule the Celtic population, not to dispossess it. The Jutes came in numbers and settled on the lands of the Celts. They met the resistance of the Celts by driving them out. Moreover, the example of the Jutes was soon followed by the migration of other continental tribes. According to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, some of the Saxons came in 477, landed on the south coast, and established themselves in Sussex. In 495, further bands of Saxons settled a little to the west, in Wessex. Finally, in the middle of the next century, the Angles occupied the east coast and in 547 established an Anglian kingdom. Of course, historians argue about these statements or dates but they are sure that a succession of settlements extended over more than a century and it completely changed the character of the island of Britain.

Anglo-Saxon Civilization

The Anglo-Saxon settlement of Britain describes the process which changed the language and culture of most of what became England from Romano-British to Germanic. The Germanic-speakers in Britain, themselves of diverse origins, eventually developed a common cultural identity as Anglo-Saxons. This process occurred from the mid-fifth to early seventh centuries, following the end of Roman power in Britain around the year 410. The settlement was followed by the establishment of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in the south

and east of Britain, later followed by the rest of modern England. It is difficult to speak with surety about the relations of the newcomers and the native population. In some districts where the inhabitants were few, the Anglo-Saxons probably settled down beside the Celts in more or less peaceful contact. In others, as in the West Saxon territory, the invaders met with stubborn resistance and succeeded in establishing themselves only after much fighting. Many of the Celts undoubtedly were driven into the west and sought refuge in Wales and Cornwall, and some emigrated across the Channel to Brittany. In any case, such civilization as had been attained under Roman influence was largely destroyed. The Roman towns were burnt and abandoned. Town life did not attract a population used to life in the open and finding its occupation in hunting and agriculture. The organization of society was by families and clans with a sharp distinction between eorls, a kind of hereditary aristocracy, and the ceorls or simple freemen. The business of the community was transacted in local assemblies or moots, and justice was administered through a series of fines—the wergild—which varied according to the nature of the crime and the rank of the injured party. Guilt was generally determined by ordeal or by compurgation. In time, various tribes combined either for greater strength or, under the influence of a powerful leader, to produce small kingdoms. Seven of these are eventually recognized, Northumbria, Mercia, East Anglia, Kent, Essex, Sussex, and Wessex, and are spoken of as the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy.

But the grouping was not very permanent; sometimes two or more being united under one king, at other times kingdoms being divided under separate rulers. In the early part of the seventh century, Northumbria gained political supremacy over a number of the other kingdoms and held an undoubted leadership in literature and learning as well. In the eighth century, this leadership passed to Mercia. Finally, in the ninth century, Wessex under the guidance of Egbert (802-839) began to extend its influence until in 830 all England, including the chieftains of Wales, acknowledged Egbert's overlordship. The result can hardly be called a united kingdom, but West Saxon kings were able to maintain their claim to be kings of all the English, and under Alfred (871-889) Wessex attained a high degree of prosperity and considerable enlightenment.



Map 2.3 The Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy (c. 700)

The Celts called their Germanic conquerors Saxons indiscriminately, probably because they had had their first contact with the Germanic peoples through the Saxon raids on the coast. (The Anglo-Saxons, on the other hand, called the Celts *Wealas* (foreigners), from which the word *Welsh* is derived.) Early Latin writers, following Celtic usage, generally call the Germanic inhabitants of England Saxones and the land Saxonia. But soon the terms Angli and Anglia occur beside Saxones and refer not to the Angles individually but to the West Germanic tribes generally. Æthelbert, king of Kent, is styled rex Anglorum by Pope Gregory in 601, and a century later Bede called his history the Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum. In time, Angli and Anglia become the usual terms in Latin texts. From the beginning, however, writers in the everyday language never call their language anything but Englisc (English). The word is derived from the name of the Angles (OE Engle) but is used without distinction for the

language of all the invading tribes. In like manner, the land and its people are early called *Angelcynn* (Anglekin or race of the Angles), and common name until after the Danish period. From about the year and (land of the Angles) begins to take its place. The name *English* is thus older than the name England. It is not easy to say why England should have taken its name from the Angles. Possibly a desire to avoid confusion with the Saxons who remained on the continent and the early supremacy of the Anglian kingdoms were the predominant factors in determining usage.

The English language of today is the language that has resulted from the history of the dialects spoken by the Germanic tribes who came to England in the manner described. It is impossible to say how much the speech of the Angles differed from that of the Saxons of the Jutes. The differences were certainly slight. Even after these dialects had been subjected to several centuries of geographical and political separation in England, the differences still were not great. As we have seen in the previous lectures English belongs to the Low West Germanic branch of the Indo-European family. This means in the first place that it shares certain characteristics common to all the Germanic languages. For example, it shows the shifting of certain consonants described earlier under the head of Grimm's Law. It possesses a “weak” as well as a “strong” declension of the adjective and a distinctive type of conjugation of the verb—the so-called weak or regular verbs such as *fill, filled, filled,* which form their past tense and past participle by adding ~ed or some analogous sound to the stem of the present. And it shows the adoption of a strong stress accent on the first or the root syllable of most words, a feature of great importance in all the Germanic languages because it is chiefly responsible for the progressive decay of inflections in these languages. In the second place, it means that English belongs with German and certain other languages because of features it has in common with them and that enable us to distinguish a West Germanic group as contrasted with the Scandinavian languages (North Germanic) and Gothic (East Germanic). These features have to do mostly with certain phonetic changes.

The Dialects of Old English

Old English was not an entirely uniform language. Not only are there differences between the language of the earliest written records (about A.D. 700) and that of the later literary texts, but the language also differed somewhat from one locality to another. We can distinguish four dialects in Old English times: Northumbrian, Mercian, West Saxon, and Kentish. Northumbrian and Mercian are found in the region north of the Thames settled by the Angles. They possess certain features in common and are sometimes known collectively as Anglian. But Northumbrian, spoken north of the Humber, and Mercian, between the Humber and the Thames, each possessed certain distinctive features as well.

THE DIALECTS OF OLD ENGLISH

Unfortunately, we know less about them than we should like because they are preserved mainly in charters runic inscriptions, a few brief fragments of verse, and some interlinear translations of portions of the Bible. Kentish is known from still small remains and is the dialect of the Jutes in the southeast. The only dialect in which there is an extensive collection of texts is West Saxon, which was the dialect of the West Saxon kingdom in the southwest. Nearly all of Old English literature is preserved in manuscripts transcribed in this region. The dialects probably reflect differences already present in the continental homes of the invaders. There is evidence, however, that some features were developed in England after settlement. With the dominance of the West Saxon kingdom, the West Sax dialect received something of the position of a literary standard, and both this reason and because of the plenty of the materials it is made the basis of the study of Old English. The Norman Conquest cut short standard speech of England and reduced all dialects to a common level of unimportance. And when in the late Middle English period a standard English once more began arise, it was on the basis of a different dialect, that of the East Midlands.

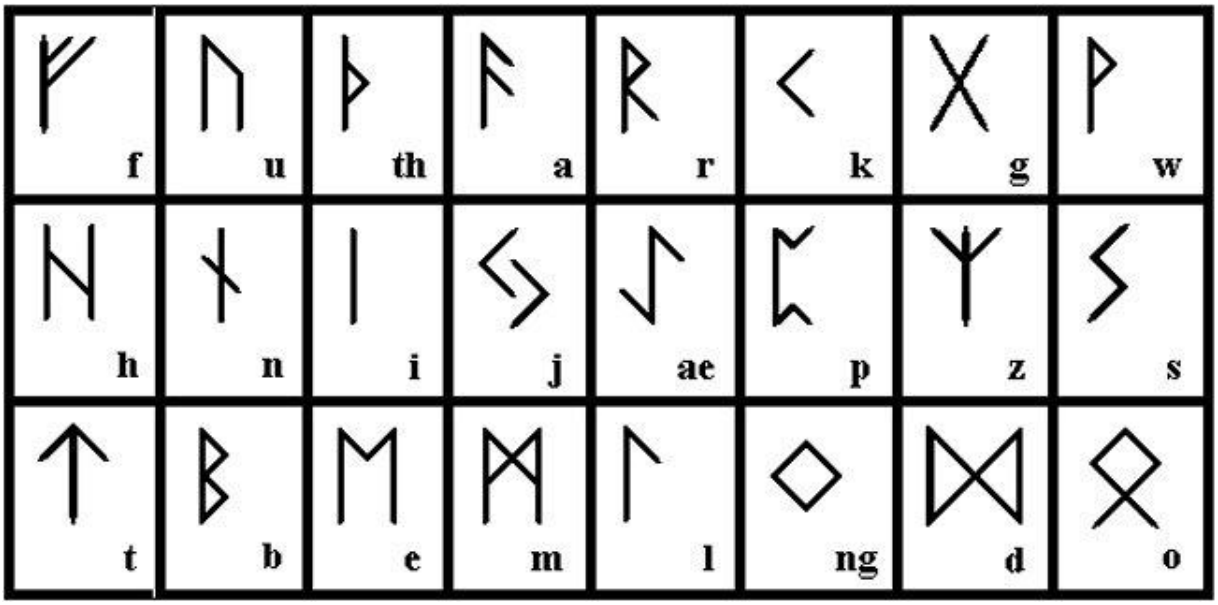
THEME 3

Old English Alphabet

The system of writing in Old English was changed with the introduction of Christianity. Before that, the English used the runes. The runic alphabet was known from the first century AD among all Germanic tribes around the North Sea and the Baltic Sea and is not to be found in languages of other groups. The word rune originally meant ’secret’, ‘mystery’ and hence came to denote inscriptions believed to be magic. The runes might at the same time denote a sound, a syllable or a whole word. This alphabet is also called *futhark* after the first six letters. Runic letters are angular; straight lines are preferred, curved lines avoided; this is due to the fact that runic inscriptions were cut in hard material: stone, bone or wood. The shapes of some letters resemble those of Greek or Latin, other have not been traced to any known alphabet, and the order of the runes in the alphabet is certainly original. The number of runes in different

languages varied. The oldest version of the runic alphabet had 24 runes.

As compared to continental, the number of runes in England was larger: new runes were added as new sounds appeared in English (from 28 to 33 runes in Britain against 16 or 24 on the continent). Each “letter” or figure is called a rune, and it has a phonetic sound, but similar to the Chinese alphabet, it also has a distinct meaning, and these meanings are directly linked to Norse mythology.



The Furthark

So, with the introduction of Christianity the Latin alphabet was carried to the Irish in the 6th century and the Anglo-Saxons and Germans in the 7th.

The letters of the Old English alphabet were as follows, and they denoted the following sounds:

1) a [a] *ȝān* (go) and (and) ð
2) æ [æ] *ðæt* (that)
3) b [b] *bān* (bone)
4) c [k] *caru* (care) and [tʃ] before front vowels *cild* (child)
5) d [d] *dēor* (deer)
6) e [e] *mete* (meat)
7) f [f] *findan* (find) and [v] in intervocal position *lufu* (love)
8) ȝ was one of the remnants of the runic alphabet called *joh* (yoke),

and it had several readings

[g] *ȝān* (go)

[j] *ȝēar* (year)

[y] at the beginning of the word before back vowels and after n and between two back vowels: *sorȝian* (sorrow), *folȝian* (follow), *ȝuma* (man, human), *daȝas* (days)

9) h [h] *hām* (home), *him* (him), *huntoð* (hunting)

10) i [i] *hit* (it), *him* (him), *lim* (limb)

11) l [l] *lytel* (little), *līf (*life), *lufu* (love)

12) m [m] *man* (man), *macian* (make)

13) n [n] *nama* (name), *nēah* (near)

14) o [o] *fōn* (catch), *mōna* (moon)

15) p [p] *pera* (pear), *up* (up)

16) r [r] *right*(right), *rinȝan* (ring), *wyrcan* (work)

17) s [s] *sittan* (sit), *sinȝan* (sing)

18) t [t] *treo* (tree), *tellan* (tell)

19) ð was developed from the rune *thorn* [θ] *ðæt* (that), *ðirda* (third), *ðinȝ* (thing); [ð] in the intervocal position *ōðer* (other), *broðor* (brother)

20) u [u] *wudu* (wood)

21) w [w] in original Old English texts it was ƿ *wynn* from the rune meaning *joy*: *winnan* (win), *weorðan* (become)

22) x [ks] *oxa* (ox)

23) y [u] *fyllan* (fill), *lytel* (little)

The stress in the Old English was dynamic, and shifted to the first syllable. Originally in common Indo-European the stress was free; the stress in the Old English words was always on the first syllable (verbs with prefixes, however, had the stress on the root vowel). The nouns having the same prefix had the stress on the first syllable too.

Old English Phonology

The system of vowels in Old English included seven long and eight short vowels (monophthongs).

a æ e i o u y e — ā ǣ ē ī ō ū ȳ

and four short and four long diphthongs:

ea eo ie io — ēa ēo īe īo

The length of the vowel was a phonemic quality. The words having long and short vowels differed in meaning: *ȝod* (god) — *ȝōd* (good), *west* (west) — *wēst* (waste), *for* (preposition for) — *fōr* (past tense of the verb *fāran* — go). Comparing Old English sounds with the system of sound of other Germanic languages, one can see that in English it is more complicated and the origin of some sounds is blurred. Some of the sounds had counterparts in other Indo-European languages So, for instance, such sounds as *i, u* can be found in similar words in other Germanic and non-Germanic Indo-European languages: Old English *niman* (Ukr. знімати); Old English *sunu* (Lat. *sunus*). But the majority of sounds deviated from the way they were pronounced in other languages.

There are some more interesting letters that were used frequently in Old Ages but are not used any more as letters. *þ* and *ð* represent the sound of *th*: *wiþ* (with) or *ða* (then). The sound of *a* in *hat* was expressed by a digraph æ (ash). Likewise Old English represented the sound of *sh* by *sc*, as in *sceap* (sheep) or *scēotan* (shoot), and the sound of *k* by *c*, as in *cynn* (kin) or *nacod* (naked); *c* was also used for the affricate now spelled *ch*, as in *spræc* (speech).

Various changes occurred in the Old English phonology. These can be called spontaneous, independent and assimilative, influenced by the surrounding sounds.

What had changed spontaneously, or independently is the following: Gothic *ai* corresponds to long *ā*; *āu* to long *ēa*; *īu* to long *ēo* in Old English *dāuð* — *dēað* (dead); *āust* — *ēast* (east); *dīups* — *dēop* (deep). These changes occurred irrespective of whatever sounds surrounded the sounds in question.

Assimilative changes are the changes that occurred in the language in specific surroundings — the sound might change when it was preceded or followed by some other sound or sound cluster. Many of the sounds that appeared in the language as a result of these changes returned to their previous quality in the next period, some did not, but we are concerned with these because the changes transformed the words formerly common in Germanic languages to their Anglo-Saxon variety.

There are two types of assimilation —- regressive and progressive assimilation. If a sound influences the preceding sound, the assimilation is regressive, if it influences the following it sound —

it is called progressive assimilation. Both types of assimilation are found in Old English.

Old English Vocabulary

The vocabulary of Old English is almost purely Germanic. A 1arge part of this vocabulary, moreover, has disappeared from the language. When the Norman Conquest brought French into England as the language of higher classes, much of the Old English vocabulary appropriate to literature and learning died out and was replaced later by words borrowed from French and Latin. An examination of the words in an Old English dictionary shows that about 85 percent of them are no longer in use. Those that survive, to be sure, are basic elements of our vocabulary and by the frequency with which they recur make up a large part of any English sentence. Apart from pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, auxiliary verbs, and the like, they express fundamental concepts like *mann* (man), *wīf* (wife, woman), *cild* (child), *hūs* (house), *weall* (wall), *mete* (meat, food), *gærs* (grass), *lēaf* (leaf), *fugol* (fowl, bird), *gōd* (good), *hēah* (high), *strang* (strong), *etan* (eat), *drincan* (drink), *slæpan* (sleep), *libban* (live), *feohtan* (fight). But the fact remains that a considerable part the vocabulary of Old English is unfamiliar to the modern reader.

Old English Grammar

In addition to the sound system and the lexicon, a fundamental feature that distinguishes Old English from the language of today is its grammar. Inflectional languages fall into two classes: *synthetic* and *analytic*. A *synthetic language* is one that indicates the relation of words in a sentence largely by means of inflections. In the case of the Indo-European languages, these most commonly take the form of endings on the noun and pronoun and the adjective and the verb. Thus, in Latin there were four cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative. So, let’s compare the Latin word *mures* and its modern variant *wall*:

Nominative	*mures*	*wall*
Genitive	*muri*	*of the wall*
Dative	*muro*	*to the wall*
Accusative	*murum*	*wall*

Moreover, due to different grammatical endings the word-order in Old English was not fixed.

Languages that make extensive use of prepositions and auxiliary verbs and depend upon word order to show other relationships are known as *analytic languages*. It would be more precise to say that various languages are *analytic* at one end and *synthetic* at the other. Modern English is relatively analytic, Old English synthetic.

In its grammar, Old English resembles modern German. Theoretically, the noun and adjective are inflected for four cases in the singular and four in the plural. The inflection of the verb is less elaborate than that of the Latin verb, but there are distinctive endings for the different persons, numbers, tenses, and moods.

The Old English had two adjective declensions, a strong and a weak. The weak forms were used generally after demonstrative pronouns, and possessive adjectives; the strong were used independently. The comparison of adjectives and adverbs in Germanic differs from that in the Romance languages. Generally, -r and -st endings are added: long, longer, longest.

Free stress (accent) became recessive, and precise accent rules became dominant, with the first root syllable carrying the stress. Umlauting, a process of modifying vowel sounds, took place extensively in formation of paradigmatic forms (*man — men; fot — fēt*) and word building. A system of strong verbs developed as the result of vowel alternation (ablaut), and a unique way of forming the past tense using dental suffix for weak verbs was created. The number of strong verbs in Germanic is steadily being reduced, and the system does not seem to permit the creation of new strong verbs. Conversely, the number of weak verbs is increasing.

The Noun

Nouns in Old English had the categories of number, gender and case. Gender is actually not a grammatical category in a strict sense of the word, for every noun with all its forms belongs to only one gender (the other nominal parts of speech have gender forms); but case and number had a set of endings. Nouns used to denote males are normally masculine — *mann, fæder, brōðor, abbod (man, father, brother, abbot)*. Naturally, those denoting females should be all feminine, — *modor, sweostor, cwēne, abbudissa (mother, sister, queen, abbess).*

Yet there are curious exceptions, such words as *mæʒen (maid), wīf (wife)* are neuter (compare in Ukrainian хлоп'я, дівча). And *wīfman (woman)* is masculine, because the second element of the compound is masculine. The gender of the other nouns is unmotivated, the same as in Ukrainian. Still in Ukrainian nouns have endings that can indicate the gender of the nonun — степ (чол.), вікно (сер.) вода (жін.). In Old English there are no such endings, and words very similar in form may be of different genders.

There are two numbers — singular and plural, and four cases — nominative, genitive, dative and accusative. Comparing with what we have now we can see that number proved to be a stable category, relevant for rendering the meanings and expressing the true state of things in reality. Case expresses the relations between the words in a sentence, whereas gender disappeared altogether.

The nouns in Old English are commonly classified as belongings to strong and weak declension.

The Pronoun

Pronoun as a part of speech is a very specific class of words; it does not have meaning, it simply points to something mentioned earlier or situated within the range of visibility of the speakers.

There are several types of pronouns in Old English: personal, demonstrative, definite, indefinite, negative and relative. Not all of them are equally developed; they are different in the type of deixis (deixis refers to words and phrases, such as "me" or "here", that cannot be fully understood without additional contextual information); the very existence of some classes is sometimes disputed. But no one ever denied the existence of:

Personal pronouns constitute a system of words replacing nouns; they are also called noun-pronouns. In Old English they had:

- 3 persons: the first, the second and the third
- 3 numbers: singular, plural, and the remains of the dual number in the second person
- 3 genders: masculine, feminine, neuter.

The Adjective

Most historians agree that the number of adjectives in Old English is not very significant. There are primary adjectives, dating

back from the very old times and derivative adjectives made by adjective-forming suffixes from nouns. The adjectives of those times are similar to our Slavic adjectives, that is, this part of speech agrees with the noun it modifies in number, gender and case. Consequently, the adjectives have the same categories as the nouns do. The adjective in Old English had the following categories:

- number — the singular and the plural;
- gender — masculine, neuter and feminine;
- case — 4/5 (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative and partly instrumental).

Besides, the adjectives had two declensions, strong and weak. The weak form of the adjective is used after a demonstrative pronoun, a personal pronoun or a noun in the genitive case, no matter whether the adjective is before the noun or after it and may be a stable epithet to the noun. When the adjective is not so accompanied, or is preceded by an adjective of quantity or number, it is declined strong.

Qualitative adjectives had degrees of comparison (positive, comparative, superlative). The forms of the comparative and the superlative degree are made synthetically, be adding suffixes *–ra* and *–ost/est.*

e.g. *soft – softra – softest (soft)*
blæc – blæcra –blacost (black)

Four adjectives in Old English had suppletive degrees of comparison, that is their comparative and superlative degrees are formed by adding the suffixes to the stems of other adjectives. These adjectives have counterparts in other languages, too — in Ukrainian and Russian languages corresponding adjectives have suppletive degrees of comparison.

ʒōd — betera — betst, sēlre, s lest (good)
yfel — wiesra — wierest (bad)
mycel — māra — mæst (much)
lytel — læssa — læst (little)
Compare: поганий — гірший, великий — більший, etc.

The Verb

Old English distinguished only two simple tenses by inflection, a present and a past, and, except for one word, it had no inflectional forms of the passive as in Latin or Greek. It recognized the indicative,

subjunctive, and imperative moods and had the usual two numbers and three persons.

A peculiar feature of the Germanic languages was the division of the verb into two great classes, the weak and the strong, often known in Modern English as regular and irregular verbs. The strong verbs, like; *sing, sang, sung,* which represent the basic Indo-European type, are so called because they have the power of indicating change of tense by a modification of their root vowel. In the weak verbs, such as *walk, walked, walked,* this change is effected by the addition of a «dental», sometimes of an extra syllable.

The apparent irregularity of the strong verbs is due to the fact that verbs of this type are much less numerous than weak verbs. In Old English, if we exclude compounds, there were only a few over 300 of them, and even this small number falls into several classes. Nowadays these verbs, generally speaking, have different vowels in the pres tense, the past tense, and the past participle. In some verbs, the vowels of past tense and past participle are identical, as in *break, broke, broken,* and in some all three forms have become alike in modern times *(bid, bid, bid).* In Old English, the vowel of the past tense often differs in the singular and the plural; or, to be more accurate, the first and third person singular have one vowel while the second person singular and all persons of the plural have another. In the principal parts of Old English strong verbs, therefore, we have four forms: the infinitive, the preterite singular (first and third person), the preterite plural, and the past participle. In Old English, the strong verbs can be grouped in seven general classes. While there are variations within each class, they may be illustrated by the following seven verbs:

I	drīfan	*(drive)*	drāf	drifon	(ge) drifen
II	cēosan	*(choose)*	cēas	curon	coren
III	helpan	*(help)*	healp	hulpon	holpen
IV	beran	*(bear)*	bær	bæron	boren
V	sprecan	(speak)	spræc	spræcon	sprecen
VI	faran	*(fare, go)*	fōr	fōron	faren
VII	feallan	*(fall)*	fēoll	fēollon	feallen

The origin of the dental suffixes by which weak verbs form their past tense participle is strongly debated. It was formerly customary to

explain these as part of the verb *do,* as though I *worked* was originally I *work—did* (i.e., *I did work*).

Old English Vocabulary

The full extent of the Old English vocabulary is not known to present-day scholars. There is no doubt that there existed more words in it. Surely, some Old English words were lost altogether with the texts that perished; some might not have been used in written texts as they belonged to some spheres of human life which were not of great interest (some colloquial words, for instance).

Modern estimates of the total vocabulary (recorded and preserved in written documents) range from 30 000 words (some even say 100 000 — Smimitsky, Pei).

It is mainly homogeneous. Loan words are fairly insignificant, and are grouped around some specific spheres of life.

Native words, in their turn can be subdivided into: **Common Indo- European words and Common Germanic**. ***Common Indo-European*** words were inherited from the common Indo-European language. They belong to the oldest layer and denote the names of natural phenomena, plants and animals, agricultural terms, names of parts of the human body, terms of kinship; verbs belonging to this layer denote the basic activities of Old English man, adjectives indicate the basic qualities; personal and demonstrative pronouns and most numerals are of this origin too.

These have already been mentioned previously to illustrate the shift of sounds according to Grimm's law — *fæder* (father), *modor* (mother), *brōðor* (brother), *sweostor* (sister); *etan* (to eat), *sittan* (to sit), *slepan* (to sleep), *beran* (to bear), *cnāwan* (to know), *wītan* (to know); *ceald* (cold), *cwēne* (woman), *dōr* (door), *stān* (stone), *wæter* (water), *fōt* (foot), *heorte* (heart).

Some contained more stable sounds and in common Germanic were closer to their Indo-European counterparts. They changed only in the course of the Old English assimilative changes: *sunu* (son), *sunne* (sun), *earm* (arm), *neowe* (new), *ʒeonʒ* (young), *meolc* (milk), *mūs* (mouse), *nosu* (nose), *ruʒe* (rye), *snāw* (snow).

These words belong to the sphere of everyday life, and denote vital objects, qualities, and actions.

Common Germanic words are the words than can be found in all Germanic languages, old and new, eastern, western and northern. Here belong such words, for instance, as

eorðe (earth: Goth. *airða*, OHG *erda*, OSax *ertha*, Mn Germ. *Erde*);

ʒēne (green: OHG *gruoni*, OSax *groni*, OFr *grene*, OScand *groene*, Mn Germ *grün*);

heall (hall: *hall* OHG, OSax *halla*, Mn Germ. *Halle*), etc.

Word-building in Old English

Apart from taking words from other languages, there were internal ways of enriching the vocabulary — word-building techniques:

- *morphological* — creating new words by adding new morphemes;
- *syntactic* — building new words from syntactic groups;
- *semantic* — developing new meanings of the existing words.

Morphological word-building is the way of adding morphemes to new words, known as affixation. Here we distinguish two major groups of affixes — prefixes and suffixes, infixes being non-characteristic for the English language.

Affixation. Suffix is a morpheme that is added to the root-morpheme and which modifies its lexical meaning. Additionally, they may (and in the majority of do) transfer the word into another part of speech.

Noun-suffixes:

-ere was used to form masculine nouns from stems of nouns and verbs, denoted the profession or the doer of the action (it is related to Gothic -*areis*, Lat,-*arius*):

fiscere (fisherman), *writere* (writer), *bōcere* (bookman).

The corresponding feminine suffix was

-estre: *bæcestre* (woman baker), *witeʒestre* (prophetess).

-end was used to form masculine nouns from verb stems (originally the suffix of Participle II): *frēond* (friend), *dēmend* (judge),

-inʒ— masculine; *cyninʒ* (king), *æðelinʒ* (son of a nobleman), *Eanuwulfinʒ* (son of Eanwulf).

There were also some other suffixes: ***-linʒ, -en, -nis, -nes, -ð, -uð, -oð, -ðu, -u.***

A group of derivational morphemes used in Old English may be called *semi-* or *half-suffixes*: they originated from nouns and still preserve to some extent their original meaning (compare the status of *-man* in *policeman, spokesman, sportsman*, etc.):

-dōm (the noun *dōm* meant ‘doom’) *freodōm* (freedom), *wīsdōm* (wisdom).

We also refer ***-lāc*** (the noun *lāc* meant ‘gift, game’), ***-ræden*** (the noun *ræden* meant ‘arrangement, agreement') to **semi-** or **half-suffixes** as well.

Adjective-forming suffixes: ***-ede, -en, -feald, -full, -iʒ, -ihte, -isc, etc.***

Adverb-forming suffix: ***-e*** was usually added to adjectives stems – *wīd – wīde* (wide - widely), *lanʒ - lanʒe* (long – for a long time).

Verbs suffixes ***-an/ian, -ettan*** were added the to noun, adjective and adverb stems, sometimes this process was accompanied by adding prefixes: *ʒehīersum* (obedient) — *ʒehīersumian* (obey), *clæne* (clean) — *clænsian* (to cleanse), etc.

Prefixes. The use of prefixes in Old English was a productive way of forming new words, and their number exceeds that of prefixes in modem times. They were especially frequent with the verbs:

ʒān — go
ā-ʒān — go away
be-ʒān — go round
fore-ʒān — precede
ʒe-ʒān — go, go away

Some important prefixes are: ***ā-, æt-, be-, ʒe-, mis-, for-, in-, etc.***

Composition is *syntactic word-building* (makes a new word from two or more stems).

The most common patterns are:

N+N *āc-trēo* (oak tree), *stān-brycʒ* (stone-bridge);

Adj+N *wīd-weʒ*(wide road);

N+V lustfullian (rejoice);

V+N *bæc-hūs* (bakery);

and some other: N+Adj/PII; Adj+Adj; PII+N; Adv+V.

Semantic word-building is actually a metaphoric extension of meaning of a word to name something other, similar to original word in some aspects. Here belong:

mūð (mouth, part of human face) —> *mūð* (mouth, part of the river)

wendan (to turn) —> *wendan* (to translate), etc.

THEME 4

Old English Literature

The language of a past time is known by the quality of its literature. Charters and records gave their secrets to the philologist and contribute their part of words and inflections to our dictionaries and grammars. But it is in literature that a language displays its full power, its ability to convey in vivid and memorable form the thoughts and emotions of a people. The literature of the Anglo-Saxons is fortunately one of the richest and most significant of any preserved among the early Germanic peoples.

Generally speaking, this literature is of two sorts. Some of it was undoubtedly brought to England by the Germanic conquerors from their continental homes and preserved for a time in oral tradition. Two streams thus mingle in Old English literature, the pagan and the Christian.

The greatest single work of Old English literature is *Beowulf*. It is a poem of some 3,000 lines belonging to the type known as the folk epic. It is a narrative of heroic adventure relating how a young warrior, Beowulf, fought the monster Grendel, which was ruining the land of King Hrothgar, slew it and its mother, and years later met his death while trying to free his own country of an equally destructive foe, a fire-breathing dragon. The portrayal of the motives and ideals that animated people in early Germanic times makes the poem one of the most vivid records we have of life in the heroic age. It is not an easy life. It is a life that calls for physical endurance, unthinkable courage, and a fine sense of duty, loyalty, and honor.

Outside of Beowulf, Old English poetry of the native tradition is represented by a number of shorter pieces. Anglo-Saxon poets sang of the things that entered most deeply into their experience—of war and of exile, of the sea with its hardships and its fascination, of ruined cities, and of minstrel life. One of the earliest products of Germanic tradition is a short poem called *Widsith* in which a scop or minstrel pretends knowing many famous kings and princes before whom he

has exercised his craft and in his poem he lists their names. *Deor* is another poem about a minstrel, who for years has been in the service of his lord and now finds himself thrust out by a younger man. *The Wanderer* is a tragedy in the medieval sense, the story of a man who once enjoyed a high place and has fallen upon evil times. His lord is dead and he has become a wanderer in strange courts, without friends. *The Seafarer* is a monologue in which the speaker alternately describes the dangers and hardships of the sea and the eager desire to experience again its dangers. In *The Ruin*, the poet reflects on a ruined city, once prosperous and imposing with its towers and halls, its stone courts and baths, now but the tragic shadow of what it once was. Two great war poems like *The Battle of Brunanburh* and *The Battle of Maldon*, show how the English are equally heroic in victory and defeat.

More than half of Anglo-Saxon poetry is concerned with Christian subjects. There exist also translations and paraphrases of books of the Old and New Testament, legends of saints. The most important of this poetry had its origin in Northumbria and Mercia in the seventh and eighth centuries.

Foreign Influences on Old English

The language that was described in the preceding lectures was not merely the product of the dialects brought to England by the Jutes, Saxons, and Angles. Other elements entered into it. In the course of the first 700 years of its existence in England it was brought into contact with at least three other languages, the languages of the Celts, the Romans, and the Scandinavians. From each of these contacts it shows certain effects, especially additions to its vocabulary. The nature of these contacts and the changes that were effected by them will form the subject of this lecture.

While studying any influences on the specific language, one of the most interesting questions is the accurate data of borrowed words. However, it’s difficult to determine the date and in the case of some words it is impossible. But in a large number of cases it is possible to assign a word to a specific period. Written texts and changes in the phonetic form of the word can help to distinguish the date at which a word was borrowed.

The Celtic Influence. Nothing would seem more reasonable than to expect that the conquest of the Celtic population of Britain by the Anglo- Saxons and the subsequent mixture of the two peoples should have resulted in a corresponding mixture of their languages. So we can find in the Old English vocabulary numerous instances of words that the Anglo- Saxons heard in the speech of the native population and adopted. For it is apparent that the Celts were by no means exterminated except in certain areas, and that in most of England large numbers of them were gradually assimilated into the new culture. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle reports that at Andredesceaster or Pevensey a deadly struggle occurred between the native population and the newcomers and that not a single Briton was left alive. But this was probably an exceptional case.

Celtic Place-Names and Other Loanwords. The kingdom of Kent, for example, owes its name to the Celtic word Canti or Cantion, the meaning of which is unknown, while the two ancient Northumbrian kingdoms of Deira and Bernicia derive their designations from Celtic tribal names. Other districts, especially in the west and southwest, preserve in their present-day names traces of their earlier Celtic designations. Moreover, a number of important centers in the Roman period have names in which Celtic elements are embodied. The name London itself, although the origin of the word is somewhat uncertain, most likely goes back to a Celtic designation. The greater number of Celtic names of rivers, hills and places survived. Thus, the Thames is a Celtic river name as well as the Avon, the Esk, the Usk, the Dover.

Outside of place-names, however, the influence of Celtic upon the English language is very small. Within this small number it is possible to distinguish two groups: (1) those that the Anglo-Saxons learned through everyday contact with the natives, and (2) those that were introduced by the Irish missionaries in the north. The former was transmitted orally and were of popular character; the latter were connected with religious activities and were more or less learned.

Not many of Celtic words attained a very permanent place in the English language. Some soon died out, and others acquired only local currency.

Latin Influences on Old English. If the influence of Celtic upon English was slight, it was doubtless so because the relation of the Celt

to the Anglo-Saxon was that of a submerged culture and because the Celt was not in a position to make notable contributions to Anglo-Saxon civilization. It was quite otherwise with the second great influence upon English— that of Latin—and the circumstances under which they met. Latin was not the language of a conquered people. It was the language of a highly regarded civilization, one from which the Anglo-Saxons wanted to learn.

First Latin words appeared during the early contact between the Romans and the Germanic tribes. But there were not many of them because Roman military operations seldom extended as far as the district occupied by the Angles and the Jutes. After Caesar conquered Gaul, Roman influence on the language was increased. As the chief occupation of the Germanic tribes in the empire was war, this experience is reflected in words like camp *weall* (wall), *pytt* (pit), *stræt* (road, street), *mīl* (mile). More numerous are the words connecter with trade. They traded amber, furs, slaves, and probably certain raw material for the products of Roman handicrafts, articles of utility, luxury, and adornment. The words *cēap* (bargain; cf. Eng., *cheap*, *chapman*) and *mangian* (to trade) with its derivatives *mangere* (monger), *mangung* (trade, commercer and *mangunghūs* (shop) are fundamental.

Later Roman missionaries reintroduced Christianity into the island and this new cultural influence resulted in a quite extensive adoption of Latin elements into the language which began in 597.

A well-known story tells that Pope Gregory the Great sent one of his friends Augustine to England to introduce Christianity. It was not an easy task because they had to change the philosophy of the nation. The religious of Anglo-Saxons shared the one with other Germanic tribes and exalted physical courage, independence, loyalty to one's family or leader, whereas Christianity showed meekness, humility and patience under suffering. However, within a hundred years of the arriving of Augustine, all England was Christian. The introduction of Christianity meant the building of churches and the establishment of monasteries. Latin was the language of the services and schools were established in most monasteries and larger churches.

It would be a mistake to think that the enrichment of the vocabulary that now took place occurred overnight. Some words came in almost immediately, others only during the period of 500 years. In

fact, it is fairly easy to divide the Latin borrowings into two groups, more or less equal in size but quite different in character. The one group represents words whose phonetic form shows that they were borrowed early and whose early adoption is attested also by the fact that they had found their way into literature by the time of Alfred. The other contains words of a more learned character first recorded in the tenth and eleventh centuries and owing their introduction clearly to the religious revival that accompanied the Benedictine Reform.

It is obvious that the most typical as well as the most numerous class of words introduced by the new religion would have to do with that religion and the details of its external organization. Words are generally taken over by one language from another in answer to a definite need. They are adopted because they express ideas that are new. These are the examples of the borrowed words: *abbot, alms, altar, angel, anthem, noon, nun, offer, organ, pall, palm, pope,* etc.

The Scandinavian influence. ***The Viking Age*** for some centuries the Scandinavians had remained quietly in their northern home. But in the eighth century a change, possibly economic, possibly political, occurred in this area and they began a series of attacks upon all the lands adjacent to the North Sea and the Baltic. The Swedes established a kingdom in Russia; Norwegians colonized parts of the British Isles, the Faroes and Iceland, the Danes founded the dukedom Normandy and finally conquered England. In the beginning of the eleventh century Cnut, king Denmark, obtained the throne of England, conquered Norway, and from his English capital ruled the greater part of the Scandinavian world. The sea fighters who managed to make unusual achievements are commonly known as Vikings, and the period of their activity, extending from the middle of the eighth century to the beginning of the eleventh, is popularly known as the Viking Age.

Scientists usually distinguish three stages of Scandinavian attacks:

1) from 785 until about 850 (the Scandinavians just robbed towns and monasteries);

2) from 850 until 878 (large armies and a Danish fleet tried to capture the islands. After numerous terrible attacks, the Treaty of Wedmore was signed and only the east territory remained to the Danes);

3) from 878 to 1042 (the period of political adjustment and assimilation).

Scandinavians spoke the language commonly known as Old Norse. The similarity between Old English and the language of the Scandinavian invaders makes it at times very difficult to decide whether a given word in Modern English is a native or a borrowed one. Many of the more common words of the two languages were identical, and if we had no Old English literature from the period before the Danish invasions, we should be unable to say that many words were not of Scandinavian origin. In certain cases, however, we have very reliable criteria by which we can recognize a borrowed word. The simplest and most reliable test depends upon differences in the development of certain sounds in the North Germanic and West Germanic areas. One of the simplest to recognize is the development of the sound *sk*. In Old English this was early palatalized to *sh* (written *sc*), except possibly in the combination *scr*, whereas in the Scandinavian countries it retained its hard sk sound. Consequently, while native words like *ship, shall* and *fish* have *sh* in Modern English, words borrowed from the Scandinavians are generally still pronounced with *sk*: *sky, skin, skill, scrape, scrub*. The OE *scyrte* has become *shirt,* while the corresponding ON form *skyrta* gives us *skirt*. In the same way, the retention of the hard pronunciation of *k* and *g* in such words as *kid, get, give, gild, egg* is an indication of Scandinavian origin. Though not very often, the vowel of a word gives clear proof of borrowing. For example, the Germanic diphthong *ai* becomes *ā* in Old English (and has become *ō* in Modern English) but it became *ei* or *ē* in Old Scandinavian. Thus *reindeer* and *swain* are borrowed words.

Speaking of Language changes, we shouldn't forget about the Scandinavian effect on grammar and syntax. For example, it is considered that the *–s* of the third person singular, present indicative and the participle ending *–ing* refers to Scandinavian influence. As for syntax, we could often find German turns of expression in the English spoken in those parts where German and English mingled and the English acquired certain Danish habits of expression in the districts where many Danes lived.

Conclusion

The lectures have traced the influence of Celtic, Latin, Scandinavian, French and other languages on OE. Each of these languages has a unique relationship with English, noticeable in the kinds of words borrowed and in how grammar and phonetics are affected. The lectures have also traced some of the consequences of the Roman and Vikings presence in Britain, and we got acquainted with OE literature.

TEST QUESTIONS

1 What is Language?

2 What are philologists interested in during the research of the specific language?

3 What languages did half of English words derive from?

4 Why do some languages become powerful? What are the backgrounds for that?

5 What are the two main types of language change?

6 What are internal language changes? What is «drift of language»?

7 What are external language changes?

8 What is diachronic variation?

9 What is synchronic variation?

10 What languages did the following words derive from: *moose, brandy, chipmunk, balcony, wagon, hammock, magic*?

11 Why is English spelling irregular?

12 How many spellings of the word *shirt* does the current online version of the *OED* list?

13 How is Chancery English characterized by?

14 What event caused a major boost of the English standard?

15 Give the definition to Grimm's Law.

16 Who formulated the exception to Grimm's Law? And when?

17 What is a language group?

18 What is proto-language?

19 How many branches of the Indo-European family tree do you know?

20 What group of languages does English belong to?

21 What are the major periods of the English language?

22 What was word order in the OE period and how were words in the sentences connected?

23 Name some Indo-European common peculiarities during the OE period.

24 When did Julius Caesar attack Britain? Was he successful?

25 When did the Emperor Gladius decide to invade Britain?

26 How long did the Romans rule in Britain?

27 Give examples that prove Romanization of the Island.

28 What status did Latin have during Romanization of the Island?

29 When did the Germanic Conquest start?

30 What Germanic tribes conquered England?

31 How many dialects can be distinguished in OE times and what are they?

32 What OE alphabet is considered to be the first one?

33 What did the word *rune* mean?

34 How was the runic alphabet called and how many letters did it have?

35 How many long and short vowels were there in the OE language?

36 What types of assimilation in OE do you know?

37 What is regressive and progressive assimilation?

38 What classes do inflectional languages fall into?

39 What language do we call synthetic?

40 What language do we call analytic?

41 Is the OE language synthetic, analytic or both?

42 What categories does OE noun have?

43 Why is *wīfman* (woman) considered to be masculine?

44 Name the grammatical cases of the noun in the OE language?

45 What types of pronouns are there in OE?

46 How many persons do personal pronouns have?

47 What categories does OE adjective have?

48 What declensions does OE adjective have?

49 How many tenses does OE verb have and what are they?

50 What moods does OE verb have?

51 How many numbers and persons of OE verb are recognized?

52 What word-building techniques in OE do you know? Give the definition to each technique.

53 How do we call sound [ə] in OE?

54 What kind of literature was in the OE period?

55 What is the greatest work of the Old English literature? What is it about?

56 Give the names of short poems in OE. What do Anglo-Saxon poets sing of in their short poems?

57 Give the examples of the Celtic Influences on OE.

58 Give the examples of the Latin Influences on OE.

59 How did Christianity influence on OE?

60 How many stages of Scandinavian attacks do scientists usually distinguish?

61 What language did the Scandinavians commonly speak?

62 What origin are the words *scyrte* and *skyrta*? What are their equivalents in Modern English?

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