**1. The old Germanic languages, their classification and principal features**

The history of the Germanic group begins with the appearance of what is known as the Proto-Germanic language. As the Indo-Europeans extended over a large territory, the ancient Germans or Teutons moved further north than other tribes and settled on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea in the region of the Elbe. PG is an entirely pre-historical language: it was never recorded in written form. The first mention of Germanic tribes was made by Pitheas, a Greek historian and geographer of the 4th. C.B.C. in COMMENTARIES ON THE GALLIC WAR. In the 1st c. A.D. Pliny the Elder, a prominent Roman scientist and writer, in NATURAL HISRORY made a classified list of Germanic tribes grouping them under six headings. Tacitus – the Roman historian – compiled a detailed description of the life and customs of the ancient Teutons. According to this division PG split into three branches: East Germanic (Vindili in Pliny’s classification), North Germanic (Hillevonies) and West Germanic (which embraces Ingveones, Istevones and Herminones),

**East Germanic**. The East Germanic subgroup was formed by the tribes who returned from Scandinavia at the beginning of our era. The most numerous and powerful of them were Goths. Their western branch, *the Visigote*, invaded Roman territory. Linguistically the Western Goths were soon absorbed by the native population, the Romanised Celts. The Eastern Goths, *Ostrogote*, consolidated into a powerful tribal alliance in the lower basin of the Dniester. They set up a kingdom in Northern Italy. The Gothic language, now dead, has been preserved in written records of the 4th – 6th century. The Goths were the first of the Teutons to become Christian. In the 4th c. Ulfilas, a West Gothic bishop, made a translation of the Gospels from Greek into Gothic using a modified form of the Greek alphabet. It is written on red parchment with silver and golden letters and is known as the SILVER CODEX. It is one of the earliest texts in thelanguages of the Germanic group.

**North Germanic**. The North Germanic tribes lived on the southern coast of the Scandinavian peninsula and in Northern Denmark. They didn’t take part in the migrations and were relatively isolated. The speech of the North Germanic tribes showed little dialectal variation until the 9th c. and called Old Norse or Old Scandinavian. It has come down to us in runic inscriptions. RI were carved on objects made of hard material in an original Germanic alphabet known as the runic alphabet or the runes. The principal linguistic differentiation in Scandinavia corresponded to the political division into Sweden, Denmark and Norway. The earliest written records in Old Danish, Old Norwegian and Old Swedish date from the 13th c. Later Danish and Swedish developed into national literary languages. Norwegian was the last to develop into an independent national language.

Also this group include the Icelandic and Faroese languages, whose origin goes back to the Viking Age. In the Faroe Islands the West Norwegian dialects brought by the Scandinavians developed into a separate language called Faroese. For many centuries all writing was done in Danish, it was until 18th c. Faroese is spoken nowadays by about 30.000 people. Icelandic developed as a separate language in spite of the political dependence of Iceland upon Denmark and the dominance of Danish in official spheres. Icelandic has retained a more archaic vocabulary and grammatical system, Written records date from the 12th and 13th c. The most important records are: the ELDER EDDA- a collection of heroic songs of the 12th c., the YOUNGER EDDA (a text-book for poets) and Old Icelandic Sagas.

**West Germanic**. The would-be West Germanic tribes dwelt in the Lowlands between the Oder and the Elbe bordering on the Slavonian tribes in the East and the Celtic tribes in the South. The West Germans include several tribes: the Franconians (or Franks), occupied the lower basin of the Rhine. They divided into Low, Middle and High Franconians. The Angles anf the Frisians, the Jutes and the Saxons inhabited the coastal area of the modern Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and the southern part of Denmark. A group of tribes known as High Germans (the Alemanians, the Swabians, the Bavarians, the Thuringians and others) lived in the mountainous southern regions of the Federal Republic of Germany. In the Early Middle Ages the Franks consolidated into a powerful tribal alliance. Towards the 8th c. their kingdom grew into one of the largest states in Western Europe. In the 9th c. it broke up into parts. Its western part eventually became the basis of France. The eastern part, the east Franconian Empire, comprised several kingdoms: Swabia or Alemania, Bavaria, East Franconian and Saxony, Lorraine and Friesland. The Franconian dialects were spoken in the extreme north of the Empire; in the later Middle Ages they develop into Dutch – the language of the Low Countries (the Netherlands) and Flemish – the language of Flanders. The earliest texts in Low Franconian date from the 10th c. The modern language of the Netherlands, formerly called Dutch, and its variant in Belgium, known as the Flemish dialect, are now treated as a single language, Netherlandish (20 mln people). The High German group of tribes did not go far in their migration. The High German dialects consolidated into a common language known as Old High German. The first written records in OHG date from the 8th and 9th c. Towards the 12th c. High German had intermixed with neighboring tongues, especially Middle and High Franconian, and eventually developed into the literary German language. (100 mln people) Yiddish grew from the High German dialects which were adopted by numerous Jewish communities in the 11th and 12th c. These dialects blended with elements of Hebrew and Slavonic. At the later stage of the great migration period – in the 5th c. – a group of West Germanic tribes started out on their invasion of the British Isles. They were The Angles, part of the Saxon and Frisian, and, probably, the Jutes. Their dialects in the British Isles developed into the English language.

**2. The chronological division of the History of English. General characteristics of the OE language**

The historical development of a language is a continuous uninterrupted process without sudden breaks or rapid transformation. The commonly accepted, traditional periodisation divides English history into three periods: Old English, Middle English, and New English, with boundaries attached to definite dates and historical events affecting the language. OE begins with the Germanic settlement of Britain (5th c.) or with beginning of writing (7th c.) and ends on the Norman Conquest (1066), ME begins with the Norman Conquest and ends on the introduction of printing (1475), which is the start of the Modern or New English; the New period lasts to the present day. The History of the English language can be subdivided into seven periods.

*The first* – pre-written or pre-historical period, which may be termed Early Old English, lasts from the West Germanic invasion of Britain till the beginning of writing, that is from the 5th to the close of the 7th c. It is the stage of tribal dialects of the West Germanic invaders (Angels, Saxon, Jutes and Frisians) The tribal dialects were used for oral communication, there were no written form of English*. The second* historical period extends from the 8th c. till the end of the 11th. The English language of that time is referred to as Old English or Anglo-Saxon; it can also be called Written OE. The tribal dialects gradually changed into local or regional dialects. Towards the end of the period the differences between the dialects grew and their relative position altered. OE was a typical OG language, with a purely Germanic vocabulary, and few foreign borrowings; it displayed specific phonetic peculiarities. As far as grammar is concerned, OE was an inflected language with a well-developed system of morphological categories, especially in the noun and adjective. *The third* period, known as Early Middle English, starts after 1066, the year of the Norman Conquest, and covers 12, 13, and half of the 14th c. It was the stage of the greatest dialectical divergence caused by the feudal system and by foreign influences – Scandinavian and French. The dialectical division of present day English owes its origin to this period of history. Under Norman rule the official language in England was French. The local dialects were mainly used for oral communication and were but little employed in writing. Early ME was a time of great changes at all levels of the language, especially in grammar and lexis. English absorbed 2 layers of lexical borrowings: the Scandinavian element in the North-Eastern area and the French element in the speech of townspeople in the Soth-east. Phonetic and grammatical changes proceeded at a high rate, unrestricted by written tradition. The *forth period* – from the later 14th c. till the end of the 15th – embraces the age of Chauser. We may call it Late or Classical Middle English. It was the time of the restoration of English to the position of the state and literary language and the time of literary flourishing. The main dialect used in writing and literature was the mixed dialect of London. The phonetic and grammatical structure had incorporated and perpetuated the fundamental changes of the preceding period. Most of the inflections in the nominal system – in nouns, adjectives, pronouns – had fallen together. The verb system was expanding, as numerous new analytical forms and verbal phrases on the way to becoming analytical forms were used alongside old simple forms. *The fifth period – Early New English* – lasted from the introduction of printing to the age of Shakespeare, that is from 1475 to c. 1660. The first printed book in English was published by William Caxton in 1475. This period is a sort of transition between two outstanding epochs of literary efflorescence: the age of Chaucer and the age of Shakespeare. The growth of the vocabulary was a natural reflection of the progress of culture in the new, bourgeois society, and of the wider horizons of man’s activity. Extensive phonetic changes were transforming the vowel system, which resulted n the growing gap between the written and the spoken forms of the word. The inventory of grammatical forms and syntactical constructions was almost the same as in Mod E, but their use was different. The abundance of grammatical units occurring without any apparent restrictions, or regularities produces an impression of great «freedom of grammatical construction». The six period extends from the mid-17th c. to the close of the 18th c. In the history of the language it is often called «the age of normalization and correctness». This age witnessed the establishment of «norms». The norms were fixed as rules and prescriptions of correct usage in the numerous dictionaries and grammar-books published at the time and were spread through education and writing. The neo-classical period discouraged variety and free choice in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar. Word usage and grammatical construction were subjected to restriction and normalization. The morphological system, particularly the verb system, acquired a more strict symmetrical pattern. The formation of new verbal grammatical categories was completed. The English Language of the 19th and 20th c. represents *the seventh period* in the History of English – *Late New English* or *Modern English*. The classical language of literature was strictly distinguished from the local dialects and the dialects of lower social ranks. The dialects were used in oral communication and, as a rule, had no literary tradition. In the 19th and 20th c. the English vocabulary has grown on an unprecedented scale reflecting the rapid progress of technology, science and culture and other multiple changes in all spheres of man’s activities. Linguistic changes in phonetics and grammar have been confined to alterations in the relative frequency and distribution of linguistic units^ some pronunciations and forms have become old-fashioned or even obsolete, while other forms have gained ground, and have been accepted as common usage.

**General characteristics of the OE language.** The history of the English language begins with the invasion of the British Isles by Germanic tribes in the 5th c. Prior to the Germanic invasion the British Isles must have been inhabited for at least fifty thousand years. The Celts came to Britain in three waves and immediately preceded the Teutons. Economically and socially the Celts were a tribal society made up of kins, kinship groups, clans and tribes; they practiced a primitive agriculture, and carried on trade with Celtic Gaul.

**3.** **OE dialects. The role of the Wessex dialect**

The Germanic tribes who settled in Britain in the 5th and 6th c. spoke closely related tribal dialects belonging to the West Germanic subgroup. Their common origin and their separation from other related tongues as well as their joint evolution in Britain transformed them eventually into a single tongue, English. The OU dialects acquired certain common features which distinguished them from continental Germanic tongues. Also they displayed growing regional divergence. Tribal dialects were transformed into local or regional dialects. The following four principal OE dialects are commonly distinguished: *Kentish*, a dialect spoken in the area known now as Kent and Surrey and in the Isle of Wight. It had developed from the tongue of the Jutes and Frisians. *West Saxon*, the main dialect of the Saxon group, spoken in the rest of England south of the Thames and the Bristol Channel, except Wales and Cornwall, where Celtic tongues were preserved. Other Saxon dialects in England have not survived in written form and are not known to modern scholars. *Mercian*, a dialect derived from the speech of southern Angles and spoken chiefly in the kingdom of Mercia, that is, in certain region, from the Thames to the Humber. *Nothumbrian*, another Anglian dialect, spoken from the Humber north to the river Forth. The boundaries between the dialects were uncertain and probably movable. The dialects passed into one another imperceptibly and dialectal forms were freely borrowed from one dialect into another. Throughout this period the dialects enjoyed relative equality; none of them was the dominant form of speech, each being the main type used over a limited area. At the time of written OE the dialects had changed from tribal to regional; they possessed both an oral and a written form and were no longer equal; in the domain of writing the West Saxon dialect prevailed over its neighbours.

In the 9th c. the political and cultural centre moved to Wessex. Culture and education made great progress there; it is no wonder that the West Saxon dialect has been preserved in a greater number of texts than all the other OE dialects put together. Towards the 11th c. the written form of the West Saxon dialect developed into a bookish type of language, which, probably, served as the language of writing for all English-speaking people.

**4. The Scandinavian Invasion and its effect on English**

In the 8th c. raiders from Scandinavia (the Danes) made their first plundering attacks on England. The struggle of the English against the Scandinavians lasted over 300 years, in the course of which period more than half of England was occupied by the invaders and reconquered again. The Scandinavians subdued Northumbria and East Anglia, ravaged the eastern part of Mercia, and advanced on Wessex. Like their predecessors, the West Germanic invaders, the Scandinavians came in large numbers and settled in the new areas. They founded many towns and villages in northern England; in many regions there sprang up a mixed population made up of the English and the Danes. Their linguistic amalgamation was easy, since their tongues belonged to the same linguistic group. The ultimate effect of the Scandinavian invasions on the English language became manifest at a later date, in the 12th-13th c., when the Scandinavian element was incorporated in the central English dialects; but the historical events that led to the linguistic influence date from the 9th and 10th c. Under King Alfred of Wessex, by the peace treaty of 878 England was divided into two halves: the north-eastern half under Danish control called *Danelaw* and the south-western half united under the leadership of Wessex. The reconguest of Danish territories was carried on successfully by Alfred’s successors but in the late 10th c. the Danish raids were renewed again; they reached a new climax in the early 11th c. headed by Sweyn and Canute. The attacks were followed by demands for regular payments of large sums of money. In 1017 Canute was acknowledged as king, and England became part of great northern empire, comprising Denmark and Norway. On Canute’s death his kingdom broke up and England regained political independence; by that time it was a single state divided into six earldoms.

Though the Scandinavian invasions of England are dated in the OE period, their effect on the language is particularly apparent in ME. The new settlers and the English intermarried and intermixed; they lived close together and did not differ either in social rank or in the level of culture and customs; they intermingled the more easily as there as no linguistic barrier between them. In the aries of the hearviest settlement the Scandinavians outnumbered the Anglo-Saxon population, which is attested by geographical names. Altogether more than 1400 English villages and towns bear names od Scandinavian origin (with the element *thorp* meanings «village», e.g. *Woodthorp, Linthorp*; *toft* ‘a piece of land’, e.g. Brimtoft, Lowestoft and others). Eventually the Scandinavians were absorbed into the local population both ethnically and linguistically. They merged with the society around them, but the impact on the linguistic situation and on the further development of the English language was quite profound. Due to the contacts and mixture with O Scand, the Northern dialects (to use OE terms, chiefly Northumbrian and East Mercian) had acquired lasting and sometimes indelible Scandinavian features. As the result of the Scandinavian invasion there were some borrowings: *fallow, husband, wrong, to call, to take.*

**5. The Norman Conquest and its effect on English**

The English king, Edward the Confessor, who had been reared in France, brought over many Norman advisors and favourities; he distributed among them English lands and wealth to the considerable resentment of the Anglo-Saxon nobility and appointed them to important positions in the government and church hierarchy. In many respects Edward paved the way for Norman infiltration long before the Norman Conquest. However, the government of the country was still in the hands of Anglo-Saxon feudal lords, headed by the powerful Earl Godwin of Wessex. In 1066 the elders of England proclaimed Harold Godwin king of England. As soon as the news reached William of Normandy, he mustered a big army by promise of land and plunder, and, with the support of the Pope, landed in Britain. In the battle of Hastings in October 1066, Harold was killed and the English were defeated. This date is the date of the Norman Conquest. Most of the lands of the Anglo-Saxon lords passed into the hands of the Norman barons, William’s own possessions comprising about one third of the country. The Normans occupied all the important posts in the church, in the government, and in the army. Hundreds of people from France crossed the Channel to make their home in Britain. Immigration was easy, since the Norman kings of Britain were also dukes of Normandy and, about a hundred years later, took possession of the whole western half of France, thus bringing England into still closer contact with the continent. French monks, tradesmen and craftsmen flooded the south-western towns. Much of the middle class was French.

The Norman Conquest was one of the greatest event in the history of the English language. Its earliest effect was a drastic change in the linguistic situation. The most immediate consequence of the Norman domination in Britain is to be seen in the wide use of the French language in many spheres of life. For almost 300 years French was the official language of administration. The intellectual life, literature an education were in the hands of French-speaking people; French, alongside Latin, was the language of writing. At first 2 languages existed side by side without mingling. Then, slowly and quietly, they began to permeate each other. The Norman barons and the French town-dwellers had to pick up English words to make themselves understood, while the English began to use French words in current speech. Probably many people became bilingual and had a fair command of both languages. The struggle between French and English was bound to end in the complete victory of English. The earliest sign of the official recognition of English by the Norman kings was the famous PROCLAMATION issued by Henry 3 in 1258 to the councilors in Parliament. It was written in 3 languages: French, Latin and English. During this period such changes were in English: there appeared prepositions and conjunctions, but the grammar was saved unchangeable. Such words as *servant, prince, guard* – (connected with life of royal families) were borrowed. With life of church – *chapel, religion, prayer, to compess;* with city life – *city, merchant*, *painter, tailor*. The names of animals were saved, but if their meanings were used as meal – the Norman’s names were given to them (*beef, pork, veal, mutton*).

**6. ME dialects. ME major written records. G. Chaucer and his Canterbury Tales**

The regional ME dialects had developed from respective OE dialects. ME dialects can be divided into 2 groups: early ME and late ME dialects. Early ME dialects are: The Southern group included Kentish and the South-Western dialects. Kentish was a direct descendant of the OE dialects known by the same name though it had somewhat extended its area. The South-Western group was a continuation of the OE Saxon dialects, – not only West-Saxon, but also East Saxon. The East Saxon dialect was not prominent in OE but became more important in Early ME, since it made the basis of the dialect of London in the 12th and 13th c. The group of Midland («Central») dialects – corresponding to the OE Mercian dialect – is divided into West Midland and East Midland as two main areas, with further subdivisions within: South-East Midland and North-East Midland, South-West Midland and North-West Midland. The Northern dialects had developed from OE Northumbrian. In Early ME the Northern dialects included several provincial dialects, e.g. the Yorkshire and the Lancashire dialects and also what later became known as Scottish. In Early ME, while the state language and the main language of literature was French, the local dialects were relatively equal. In Late ME, when English had been reestablished as the main language of administration and writing. The London dialect prevailed over the others. In the 14th and 15th c. there was the same grouping of local dialects: the Southern group, including Kentish and the South – Western dialects, the Midland group with its minute subdivisions and the Northern group. And yet the relations among them were changing. The London dialect prevailed over the others at that time. The History of the London dialect reveals the sources of the literary language in Late ME and also the main source and basis of the Literary Standard, both in its written and spoken forms. The London dialect became more Anglian than Saxon in character. ME major written records: the earliest samples of early ME prose are the new entries made in *the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles* from the year 1122 to the year 1154, known as the PETERBOROUGH CHRONICLES. The works in the vernacular were mostly of a religious nature. The great mass of these works are homilies, sermons in prose and verse, paraphrases from the Bible, psalms and prayers. The earliest of these religious works, the POEMA MORALE represents the Kentish dialect of the late 12th or the early 13th c. Of particular interest for the history of the language is ORMULUM, a poem composed by the monk Orm in about 1200 in the North-East Midland dialect. It consists of unrhymed paraphrases of the Gospels. The text abounds in Scandinavianisms and lacks French borrowings. Its most outstanding feature is the spelling system devised by the author. He doubled the consonants after short vowels in closed syllables and used special semicircular marks over short vowels in open syllables. The 13th c. is famous for POEMA MORALE (Kentish Sermons), ANCRENE RIWLE (South-western dialect – life of knights), PROCLAMATION of Henry 3 (political poems, London dialect), THE PROSE RULE OF ST BENEDICT (northern dialect). The 14th c. is famous for AY ENBITE OF INWIT (Dan Michael, Kentish dialect), a versified CHRONICLE, SIR GAWAINE AND THE GREEN KNIGHT (unknown author, SWd), translation of POLYCHRONICON (Hidgen, from latin into SWd, 7 books on world history, John de Trevisa of Cornwall), Adam Davy’s poems, Romances of Chivalry, Miracle Plays (midland or east midland dialect);, John Wyclif – translation of the Bible (London dialect).Most famous works are works of John Gower (VOX CLAMANTIS is in Latin, CONFESSIO AMANTOS- a composition of 40.000 octo-syllabic lines) and Chaucer. Geoffrey Chaucer (1340–1400) was by far the most outstanding figure of the time. In many books Chaucer is described as the founder of the literary language. He was born in London and had the most varied experience as student, courtier, official, and member of Parliament. His early works were more or less imitative of other authors – Latin, French or Italian. He never wrote in any other language than English. The culmination of Chaucer’s work as a poet is his great unfinished collectin of stories THE CANTERBURY TALES. Chaucer wrote in a dialect which in the main coincided with that used in documents produced in London. Although he did not really create the literary language, as a poet of outstanding talent he made better use of it than his contemporaries and set up a pattern to be followed in the 15th c. Chaucer’s literary language, based on the mixed London dialect is known as classical ME; in the 15th and 16th c. it became the basis of the national literary English language.

**7. The formation of the national English language**

The London dialect. The domination of the French language in England came to an end in the course of the 14th c. The vitory of English was predeterminated and prepared for by previous events and historical conditions. Towards the end of the 14th c. the English language had taken the place of French as the language of literature and administration. English was once more the dominant speech of all social classes in all regions. The history of the London dialect reveals the sources of the literary language in Late ME and also the main source and basis of the Literary Standard, both in its written and spoken forms. The Early ME records made in London – beginning with the PROCLAMATION of 1258 – show that the dialect of London was fundamentally East Saxon; in terms of the ME division, it belonged to the South-Western dialect group. Later records indicate that the speech of London was becoming more mixed, with East Midland features gradually prevailing over the Southern features. Most of the new arrivals came from the East Midlands; Norfolk, Suffolk, and other populous and wealthy counties of Medieval England, although not bordering immediately on the capital. As a result the speech of Londoners was brought much closer to the East Midland dialect. The official and literary papers produced in London in the late 14th c. display obvious East Midland features. The London dialect became more Anglian than Saxon in character. This mixed dialect of London, which had extended to the two universities (in Oxford and Cambridge) ousted French from official spheres and from the sphere writing.

**8. The Germanic languages in the modern world, their classification. Their common ancestor**

Languages may be classified according to different principles. The historical, or genealogical classification, groups languages in accordance with their origin from a common linguistic ancestor. Genetically, English belongs to the Germanic or Teutonic group of languages, which is one of the 12 groups of the IE linguistic family. The Germanic language in the modern world are as follows: 1. **English** – in Great Britain, Ireland, the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zeland, the South African Republic, and many other former British colonies and dominations, (dialects of the Angles, part of the Saxon and Frisians, and probably Jutes develop into the English, WG) wr 7c,; 2. **German** – in the Germany, Austria, Luxemburg, Liechtenstein, part of Switzerland, Old High German group dialects (Saxon, the Alemanians, Bavarians, and Thuringians) mixed with Middle and High Franconian, wr 16 c. 10 million; 3. **Netherlandish** – in the Netherlands and Belgium (known as Dutch and Flemish), WG, the Franconian dialects and Flemish dialect, wr 12 c.; 4. **Afrikaans** – in the South African Republic, WG, the Dutch, wr 19 c.; 5. **Danish** – in Denmark (north Germanic, Old Danish); 6. **Swedish** – in Sweden and Finland (North Germanic, Old Swedish), 7. **Norwegian** – in Norway (NG, Old Norwegian); 8. **Icelandic** – in Iceland (its origin goes back to the Viking Age, NG, the West Scandinavian dialect) spoken over 200., Elder edda 12–13 c. 000; 9. **Frisian** – in some regions of the Netherlands and Germany, dialects of Low German tribes, wr 13 c, WG; 10. **Faroese** – in the Faroe Islands (its origin goes back to the Viking Age, NG, the West Norwegian dialect), spoken nowadays by about 30.000, wr-18 c.; 11. **Yiddish** (Old High German dialects, WG)

– in different countries the total number of people speaking Germanic languages approaches 440 million.

**9. The Old English alphabets. OE major written records**

The earliest written records of English are inscriptions on hard material made in a special alphabet known as the *runes*. The word *rune* originally meant ‘secret’, ‘mystery, and hence came to denote inscriptions believed to be magic. There is no doubt that the art of runic writing was known to the Germanic tribes long before they came to Britain. The runes were used as letters, each symbol to indicate a separate sound. The two best known runic inscriptions in England is an inscription on a box called the «Franks Casket» and the other is a short text on a a stone known as the «Ruthwell Cross». Both records are in the Northumbrian dialect. Many runic inscriptions have been preserved on weapons, coins, amulets, rings. The total number of runic inscriptions in OE is about forty; the last of them belong to the end of the OE period. The first English words to be written down with the help of Latin characters were personal names and place names inserted in Latin texts. Glosses (заметки) to the Gospels (Евангелие) and other religious texts were made in many English monasteries, for the benefit of those who did not know enough Latin (we may mantion the Corpus and Epinal glossaries in the 8th c. Mercian).OE poetry is famous for Bede’s HISTORIA ECCLESIASTICA GENTIS ANGLORUM, which is in Latin, but contains an English fragment of 5 lines. There are about 30,000 lines of OE verse. OE poetry is mainly restricted to 3 subjects: heroic, religious and lyrical. The greatest poem of that time was BEOWULF, an epic of the 7th or 8th c. It was originally composed in the Mercian or Nuthumbrian dialect, but has come to us in a 10th c. West Saxon copy. OE prose: the ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLES. Also prose was in translating books on geography, history, philosophy from Latin. TE LIVES OF THE SAINTS by Alfric, the HOMILIES by Wulfstan (passionate sermons – страстные поучения). OE Alphabet. OE scribes (писцы) used two kinds of letters: the runes and the letters of the Latin alphabet. The runes were used as letters, each symbol to indicate a separate sound. Besides. A rune could also represent a word beginning with that sound and was called by that word. In some inscriptions the runes were found arranged in a fixed order making a sort of alphabet. After the first six letters this alphabet is called *futhark*. The runic alphabet is a specifically Germanic alphabet, not to be found in languages of other groups. The letters are angular (угловые), 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, others have not been traced to any known alphabet. Some OE letters indicate two or more sounds, even distinct phonemes. The letters could indicate short and long sounds. The length of vowels is shown by a macron or by line above the letter; long consonants are indicated by double letters.

**10. Major spelling changes in ME**

The written forms of the words in Late ME texts resemble their modern forms, though the pronunciation of the words was different. In the course of ME many new devices were introduced into the system of spelling; some of them reflected the sound changes which had been completed or were still in progress in ME; other were graphic replacements of OE letters by new letters and digraphs. In ME the runic letters passed out of use. Thorn – . – and the crossed d – ... were replaced by the digraph *th*, which retained the same sound value; [] and []; the rune «wynn» was displaced by «double *u*» – *w* –; the ligatures. and. fell into disuse. Next: for a long time writing was in the hands of those who had a good knowledge of French. Therefore many innovations in ME spelling reveal an influence of the French scribal tradition. The digraphs *ou*, *ie*, and *ch* which occurred in many French borrowings were adopted as new ways of indicating the sounds [u:], [e:], and [t.]. Compare the use of these digraphs in some borrowed and native ME words: ME *chief* [] from French and the native ME *thief* (NE chief, thief); ME *chaumbre* [], *chasen* [] (NE chamber, chase). The letters *j,* *k*, *v* and *q* were probably first used in imitation of French manuscripts. The two-fold use of *g* and *c*, which has survived today, owes its origin to French: these letters usually stood for [d.] and [s] before front vowels and for [g] and [k] before back vowels: ME *gentil* [], *mercy* [] (NE gentle, mercy). At that tine there was more wider use of digraphs. In addition to *ch*, *ou*, *ie*, and *th* mentioned above, Late ME notaries introduced *sh* (also *ssh* and *sch*) to indicate the new sibilant [], e.g. *ship* (from OE scip), *dg* to indicate [d] alondside *j* and *g* (before front vowels), e. g. ME *edge* [], *joye* [], (NE edge, joy); the digraph *wh* replaced the OE sequence of letters *hw* as in OE *hw t*, ME *what* [hwat], (NE what). Long sounds were shown by double letters, e.g. ME *book* [bo:k], *sonne* [sunn] (NE book, sun). The introduction of the digraph *gh* for [x] and [x’] helped to distinguish between the fricatives [x, x’], which were preserved in some positions, and the aspirate [h]; e.g. ME *knyght* [knix’t] and ME *he* [he:] (NE knight, he); in OE both words were spelt with h: OE *cnient*, *he.* Some replacements were probably made to avoid confusion of resembling letters: thus *o* was employed not only for [o] but also to indicate short [u] alongside the letter *u*; it happened when u stood close to *n*, *m*, or *v*. The letter *y* came to be used as an equivalent of *i* and was evidently preferred when *i* could be confused with the surrounding letters *m*, *n* and others. The letters *th* and *s* indicate voiced sounds between vowels, and voiceless sounds – initially, finally and next to other voiceless consonants: ME *worthy* [], *esy* [], *thyng* [] (NE worthy, easy, thing).

**11. The OE vowel system. Major changes during the OE period**

The development of vowels in Early oE consisted of the modification of separate vowels, and also of the modification of entire sets of vowels. The PG short [a] and the long [a:], which had arisen in West and North Germanic, underwent similar alterations in Early OE: they were fronted and, in the process of fronting, they split into several sounds.

The PG diphthongs [ei, ai, iu, eu, au] – underwent regular independent changes in Early OE; they took place in all phonetic conditions irrespective of environment. The diphthongs with the *i*-glide were monophthongised into [i:] and [a:], respectively; the diphthongs in – *u* were reflected as long diphthongs [io:], [eo:] and [ea:].

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Change illustrated | | Examples | |
| PG | OE | OE | NE |
| a + i | a: |  | stone |
| e+ i | i: |  | mine, my |
| a + u | ea: |  | east |
| e + u | eo: |  | choose |
| i + u | io: |  | deep |

**12. The development of monophthongs in ME**

The OE close labialized vowels [y] and [y:] disappeared in Early ME. In Early ME the dialectal differences grew. In some areas OE [y], [y:] developed into [e], [e:], in others they changed to [i], [i:], in the South-West and in the west Midlands the two vowels were for some time preserved as [y], [y:] but later were moved backward and merged with [u], [u:]. OE *fyllan* – ME Kentish *fellen* [], ME West Midland and South Western *fullen* [], ME east Midland and Northern *fillen* [] (NE fill). In early ME the long OE [a:] was narrowed to []. This was an early instance of the growing tendency of all long monophthongs to become closer; the tendency was intensified in Late ME when all long vowels changed in that direction. [a:] became [] in all the dialects except the Northern group. ME Northern *stan(e)* [], ME other dialects *stoon, stone* [], (NE stone). The resulting ME [] must have been a more open vowel than the long [o:] inherited from OE. The two phonemes [] and [o:] were well distinguished in ME, though no distinction was made in spelling: o, and double o were used for both sounds. The short OE [] was replaced in ME by the back vowel [a]. In OE [] was either a separate phoneme or one of a group of allophones distinguished in writing []. All these sounds were reflected in ME as [a], except the nasalized [a] which became [o] in the West Midlands. ME t*hat* [], NE that, ME *blak* [] NE black, ME West Midland *lond* [], ME other dialects *land* []. Most of the modern words going back to the OE prototypes with the vowel [a] have [a], e.g. NE *man, sand, and*, which means that they came from any dialect except west Midland; some words, however, especially those ending in [], should be traced to the West Midlands, e.g. *long, song, strong, from, bond*.

**13. Diphthongs in the History of English**

*OE period*. Under the influence of succeeding and preceeding consonants some Early OE monophthongs developed into diphthongs. The glide (if a front vowel stood before a velar (задненёбный) consonant), together with the original monophtong formed a dipthong. The front vowels [i], [e] and the newly developed [], changed into dipthongs with a back glide when they stood before [h], before long (double) [ll] or [l] plus another consonant. **The changes** is known as **breaking or fracture**. Breaking produced a new set of vowels in OE – the short dipthongs [ea] and [eo]. **Diphthongisation** of vowels could also be caused b preceding consonants: a glide arose after a palatal consonants as a sort of transition to the succeeding vowel. After the palatal [k’], [sk’] and [j] short and long [e] and [] turned into diphthongs with a more front close vowel as their first element. This process known as **diphthongization after palatal consonants**. *ME period*. One of the most important sound changes of the EaME was the loss of OE dipthongs and the growth of new dipthongs, with new qualitative and quantative distinctions. The vowel system lost two sets of diphogs, long and short. In Ea ME the sounds [j] and [] between and after vowels changed into [i] and [u] and formed **diphthongs** together with preceding vowels. These changes gave rise to two sets of diphthongs:with i-glide and u-glide. e+j= ei, e:+j=ei, +j=ai, a+ =au, o+ =ou, a:+w=ou, a:+x=au+x. *NE period*. The Great Vowel Shift: during this period all the long vowels became closer or were dipthongised.i: – ai (time) pr ME, a: – ei (maken), o: – ou (stone) – preserved from ME, u: – au (mous – mouse), but au – o: (cause). In Ea NE [r] was vocalized when it stood after vowels, either finally or followed by another consonant. It reduced to neutral sound, which was added to the preceding vowel as a glide thus forming diphthong. Formed э – glide diphthongs – iэ beer (бэр), eэ (there – зэрэ), uэ (moor o-+).

**14. Quantative changes of vowels in the History of English**

They are: 1. Because of the consonants [ss], [st], [ft], [nt], the vowel [a] became longer pla:nt, a:fter, mж ss. 2. Shortening of vowels – occurred in Early NE before single dental and velar consonants [T, d, t, k]. The long vowels subjected to this shortening – [e:] and [u:] – were changing, or had already changed under the Great Vowel Shift breeth – [brE:T – breT]. The long [u:] which became short before [k], and sometimes also before [t], was a product of the shift. Early ME lengthening of the vowels – before ld, nd, mb in open syllables. Shortening – before other consonant clusters. 1. Short vowels were lengthened before two homorganic consonants, a sonorant and a plosive [wi:ld], 2. All other groups of two or more consonants produce the reverse effect: they made the preceding long vowels short kepte-kept. 3. Short vowels became long in opensyllables [e], [a], [o], O:pqn, na:mq.

**15. Major vowel changes in NE. Great vowel shift. Vocalisation of [r]**

Extensive changes of vowels are one of the most remarkable features of English linguistic history. A variety of changes affected vowels in stressed syllables. The Great Vowel Shift, – which involved the change of all ME long monophthongs, and probably some of the diphthongs. The Great Vowel Shift is the name given to a series of changes of long vowels between the 14th and the 18th c. During this period all the long vowels became closer or were diphthongized. It affected regularly every stressed long vowel in any position. Some long vowels – [u:], [i:] and [a:] – broke into diphthongs [au] (хус – hause), [ai] (ликэ – like) and [ei] (take такэ), o: – u: (хо-who), – e: – i: – клэн – clean), au – O: (кауз-cause). As we see, the Great Vowel Shift did not add any new sounds to the vowel system; in fact, every vowel which developed under the Shift can be found in Late ME. [ou] (го – go) was preserved from ME. The pronunciation of all the words with these sounds was alerted. During the Shift even the names of some English letters werechanged: a: – ei, e: – i:, o: – ou, i: – ai, be: – bi:, ka: – kei. Changes of short vowels: only 2 short vowels out of 5 were altered: [a] – [ж] (man, that) and [u] – [0] (кумэн, come). The vocalization of [r] took place in the 16th or 17th c. In Early NE [r] was vocalized when it stood after vowels, either finally or followed by another consonant. [r] changed into the neutral sound, which was added to the preceding vowel as a glide forming a dipthong [TE:re – Deq]. Sometimes the only trace left by the loss of [r] was the compensatory lengthening of the preceding vowel [arm] – [a:m], [fOr – fO:]. If [r] stood in the final unstressed syllable after [q], the vocalization of [r] to [q] resulted in the survival of the ending [ri:dqrq – ri:dqr-raidq]. If the neutral [q] produced by the vocalization of [r] was preceded by a diphthong, it was added to the diphthong to form a sequence of sounds named «triphthong» [Su:r – Sauq]. O+r= O: for, a+r= a: bar; I, e, u+r =q: first, q+r= q brother/ long vowels i:+r=aiq shire, e:, E:+r= iq ear; E:+r= Eq there; a:+r=Eq hare, O:+r= Oq/O: floor; u:+r=auq flower. There developed a new set of diphthongs, and also triphthogs, with q-glides: [iq, Eq, uq, etc]; there arose a new central long monophthongs [q:]; the new long [a:] filled a vacant position in the system, since ME [a:] had been diphthongized under the GVS.

**16. The OE consonant system. Grimm’s and Verners Laws, treatment of fricatives**

The changes of consonants in PG were first formulated in terms of a phonetic law by Jacob Grimm in the early 19th c. and are often called Grimm’s law. It is also known as the First or Proto-Germanic consonant shift. By the terms of grimm’s law voiceless plosives developed in PG into voiceless fricatives (Act 1) *p-f, t – T, k-x*, IE voiced plosives were shifted to voiceless plosives (Act 2) *b – p, d – t, g – k* and IE voiced aspirated plosives were reflected either as voiced fricatives or as pure voiced plosives (Act 3) bh – v, dh – D rudhira rauDs, gh – Y (or g) hostis – gasts. Verner’s law explains some correspondences of consonants which seemed to contradict Grimm; s law and were for a long time regarded as exceptions. According to verner’s law all the early PG voiceless fricatives [f, T, x] which arose under Grimm’s law, and also [s] inherited fromPIE, became voiced between vowels if the preceding vowel was unstressed; in the absence of these conditions they remained voiceless. F-v – heafod – huvud, T-D, d pater, fadar, x – Y, g socrus – swaihro, s-z auris-auso. /////// PG voiced fricatives tended to be **hardened** to corresponding plosives while voiceless fricatives, being contrasted to them primarily as fricatives to plosives, developed new voiced allophones. The PG voiced [D] was always harderned to [d] in OE wasida – werede, The two other fricatives, [v] and [$] were hardened to [b] and [g] initially and after nasals. 2. PG [z] underwent a phonetic modifications through the stage of [Z] into [r] and thus became a sonorant, which ultimately merged with the older IE [r]. This process, termed **rhotacism,** maize-mara-more. 3. Voiceless fricatives [f, T, x, s] and also those of the voiced fricatives which had not turned into plosives, that is, [v] and [$], were subjected to a new process of voicing and devoicing. In early OE they became or remained voiced intervocally and between vowels, sonorants and voiced consonants; they remained or became voiceless in other environments, namely, initially finally and next to other voiceless consonants. V – v, f hlaifs – loaves; f – v, f wulfos – wolves, T – T, D sauT – seeDd, $ – $, x dagos-daZs – days; s-s, z kaus – chose. **Old English consonant system**. The system consisted of several correlated sets of consonants. According to **manner of articulation** All the consonants fell into noise consonants and sonorants m, m:, w, n, n:, r, l, j, N. The noise consonants were subdivided into plosives and fricatives; plosives were further differenriated as voiced b, b:, d, d:, g’:, g, g: and voiceless p, p:, t, t:, k’, k’:, k, k:, the difference being phonemic. The fricative consonants were also subdivided into voiced v, z, D, $, $’, j and voiceless f, f:, x’, x’:, x, x:, h, s, s:, T, T: The most universal distinctive feature in the consonant system was the difference in length. Place of articulation: labial, labiodentals p, p:, b, b:, f, f:, v, m, m:, w/ forelingual (dental) t, t:, d, d:, s, s;, z, T, T:, D; n, n:, r, l/ mediolingual (palatal) k’, k’:, x’, x’:, j,$/ back lingual (velar) k, k:, g, g:, x, x: h.

**17. The general features of the OE noun declension system. The peculiarities of the a-, n, r–and root – stem declensions**

The most remarkable feature of OE nouns was their elaborate system of declensions, which was a sort of morphological classification. The total number of declensions exceeded 25. All in all there were only 10 distinct endings and a few relevant root-vowel interchanges used in noun paradigms; yet every morphological class had either its own specific endings or a specific succession of markers. The OE system of declensions was based on a number of distinctions: 1. The stem-suffix, 2. The gender of nouns 3 genders, a derivation suffix reffered a noun to a certain gender, 3. The phonetic structure of the word, 4. Phonetic changes in the final syllables. In the first place, the morphological classification of OE nouns rested upon the most ancient grouping of nouns according to the stem-suffixes. Stem-suffixes could consist of vowels vocalic stems, e.g. a-stems, i-stems, of consonants (n-stems), of sound sequences (-ja-stems, – nd-stems). Some groups of nouns had no stem-forming suffix or had zero-suffix; they are usually tered root-stems and grouped together with consonantal stems, as their roots ended in consonants. **A-stems** included MASC. and NEUt. Nouns. The forms in the a-stem declension were distinguished through grammatical endings (including zero ending). In some words inflections were accompanied by sound interchanges: nouns with the vowel [ж] in the root had interchanged [a],

**18. Preterite-present verbs in OE and their further development**

In OE there were twelve preterite-present verbs (the had indicative, subjunctive moods; sin, pl, 3 persons, present and past tense). Six of them have survived in Mod. E – owe, ought, can, dare, shal, may, must. Most of the preterite-presentsdid not indicate actions, but expressed a kind of attitude to an action denoted by another verb, an Infinitive which followed the preterite-present. In other words, they were used like modal verbs, and eventually developed into modern modal verbs. In ME and early NE several preterite-present verbs died out. The surviving verbs lost some of their old forms and grammatical distinctions but retained many specific peculiarities. They lost the forms of the verbals which had sprung up in OE and thedistinctions between the forms of number and mood in the Present tense. In NE their paradigms have been reduced to two forms or even to one. Now dare has – s ending in the 3rd person and Past form dared.

**19. The anomalous verbs in OE and their further development**

Among the verbs of the minor groups there were several anomalous verbs with irregular forms. OE willan (past wolde) was an irregular verb with the meaning of volition and desire; it resembled the preterite-presennts in meaning and function, as it indicated an attitude to an action and was often followed by an Infinitive. Eventually willan became a modal verb, like the surviving preterito-presents, and, together with sculan developed into an auxiliary. Some verbs combined the features of weak and strong verbs. OE dLn formed a weak Past tense with a vowel interchange: and a Participle in – n: don-dyde-Zedon. Two OE verbs were suppletive. OE ZAn, whose Past tense was built from a different root: ZAn-eLde – Ze-Zan. BeLn. In ME verb willan was used as a modal verb expressing volition. In course of time it formed a system with shall, as both verbs, shall and will began to weaken their lexical meanings and change into auxiliaries. ZAn – in ME it acquired a new Past tense wente, which came from an entirely different verb, OE wendan

**20. The sources of Modern English verb groups**

The proportion of strong and weak verbs in the language has considerably altered in the course of history. The OE strong verbs reduced by over two thirds, constitute a small group of verbs in present day English: they belong to non-standard verbs, which include nowadays many more verbs coming from various sources. Several groups of modern non-standard verbs have developed from the weak verbs class 1. Nowadays they employ various form-building devices: the dental suffix, vowel and consonant interchanges. These are verbs like sellan – salde/ sellen-solde. **Another group** of weak verbs became irregular in Early ME as a result of quantitative vowel changes. In verbs like OE cepan, the long vowel in the root was shortened before two consonants in the Past and Participle 2. The long vowel in the Present tense stem was preserved and was altered during the GVS, keep-kept. **3** Verbs like OE settan, with the root ending in a dental consonant, added the dental suffix without the intervening vowel [e] – OE sette. When the inflections were reduced and dropped, the three stems of the verbs – Present, Past and Part. 2 fell together set-set-set; put-put-put, cast-cast, cast. The final – t of the root had absorbed the dental suffix.

**21. Changes in the verb conjugation in ME and NE**

Many markers of the grammatical forms of the verb were reduced, leveled and lost in ME and Early NE: the reduction, leveling and loss of endings resulted in the increased neutralization of formal oppositions and the growth of homonymy. Infinitive – OE-findan – ME finden – early NE find; Present tense ind. M. s. 1st – finde – finde – find, 2nd fintst-findest-findest, 3rd fint – findeth-findest; plural findaD – finden-find; Subjunctive – sin – finde-finde-find; pl. finden-finden-find; imperative OE-sg find, pl findaD; ME finde – early NE find; Participle 1 – findende – finding – finding, Past tense ind, sin 1st fond – fand, found, 2nd funde-founde-found, 3rd fond – fand – found, pl fundon – founden – found|| subj OE s, pl funde\funden – ME founde – early NE – found|| Participle 2 (Ze) fundon – founden – found. ME forms of the verb are represented by numerous variants, which reflect dialectal differences and tendencies of potential changes. The intermixture of dialectal features in the speech of London and in the literary language of the Renaissance played an important role in the formation of the verb paradigm.

**22. The history of the verbal grammatical categories in English**

In OE there were two non-finite forms of the verb: the Infinitive and the Participle. In many respects they were closer to the nouns and adjectives than to the finite verb: their nominal features were far more obvious than their verbal features, especially at the morphological level. Like finite forms they could take direct objects and be modified by adverbs. **Infinitive** had no verbal grammatical categories. Being a verbal noun by origin, it had a sort of reduced case-system: two forms which roughly corresponded to the Nom. And the Dat. Cases of nouns. Like the Dat. Case of nouns the inflected Infinitive with the preposition to could be used to indicate the direction or purpose of an action. The uninflected Infinitive was used in verb phrases with modal verbs or other verbs of incomplete predication. **The Participle** was a kind of verbal adjective which was characterized not only by nominal nut also by certain verbal features. Participle 1 was opposed to Participle 2 through voice and tense distinctions: it was active and expressed present or simultaneous processes and qualities, while

P2 expressed states and qualities resulting from past action and was contrasted to P1 as passive to active, if the verb was transitive. P2 of intransitive had an active meaning. Participles were employed predicatively and attributively like adjectives and shared their grammatical categories: they were declined as weak and strong and agreed with nouns in number, gender and case. **ME**. The development of analytical forms and new grammatical categories has transformed the verbals. Compound forms of the Infinitive appeared (passive Inf, perfect Inf, cont and perf cont). Part 1 perf, non-perf, pass and active. Compound forms of the ing form used in the functions of a noun, that is the Gerund, were the last to appear.

**23. The rise of analytical forms in the verbal system in ME**

The development of analytical forms and new grammatical categories has transformed not only the finite verb but also the verbals.

**24. The infinitive in the history of English**

In many respects it was closer to the nouns and adjectives than to the finite verb: its nominal features were far more obvious than their verbal features, especially at the morphological level. Like finite forms it could take direct objects and be modified by adverbs. **Infinitive** had no verbal grammatical categories. Being a verbal noun by origin, it had a sort of reduced case-system: two forms which roughly corresponded to the Nom. And the Dat. Cases of nouns. Like the Dat. Case of nouns the inflected Infinitive with the preposition to could be used to indicate the direction or purpose of an action. The uninflected Infinitive was used in verb phrases with modal verbs or other verbs of incomplete predication. The development of analytical forms and new grammatical categories has transformed the verbals. In ME texts we find different types of compound Inf: the Pass Inf, the Perf Inf in the Active and Pass forms. Evidently in the 17th c the Inf had the same set of forms as it has in present-day English.

**25. The Participle in OE and its further development**

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P2 expressed states and qualities resulting from past action and was contrasted to P1 as passive to active, if the verb was transitive. P2 of intransitive had an active meaning; it indicate a past action and was opposed to P1 only through tense. P! was fprmed from the Present tense stem with the help of the suffix – ende. P2 had a stem of its own – in strong verbs it was marked by a certain grade of the root-vowel interchange and by the suffix – en; with the weak verbs it ended in d/t. P2 was commonly marked by the suffix – Ze. Participles were employed predicatively and attributively like adjectives and shared their grammatical categories: they were declined as weak and strong and agreed with nouns in number, gender and case. ME Part 1 perf, non-perf, pass and active.

**26. The rise of the Gerund in English**

The Late ME period witnessed the growth of a new verbal known in modern grammars as the Gerund. The Gerund can be traced to three sources: the OE verbal noun in – unZ and inZ, thePresent Participle and the Infinitive. In ME the Present Participle and the verbal noun became identical: they both ended in – ing. This led to the confusion of some of their features: verbal nouns began to take direct objects, like participles and Infinitives. This verbal feature – a direct object – as well as the frequent absence of article before the – ing form functioning as a noun – transformed the verbal noun into a Gerund in the modern understanding of the term. The dissappearence of the inflected infinitive contributed to the change, as some of its functions were taken over by the Gerund. The earliest instances of a verbal noun resembling a Gerund date from 12th c. Chaucer uses the – ing – form in substantival functions in object. In Early NE the – ing form in the function of a noun is commonly used with an adverbial modifier and with a direct object – in case of transitive verbs. The nominal features, retained from the verbal noun, were its syntactic functions and the ability to be modified by a possessive pronoun or a noun in the G.case. In the course of time the sphere of the usage of the Gerund grew: it replaced the Infinitive and the Participle in many adverbial functions; its great advantage was that it could be used with various prepositions.

**27. Causes of changes in the morphological system in ME and NE**

The main direction of development for the nominal parts of speech in all the periods of history can be defined as morphological simplification. Simplifying changes began in prehistoric, PG times. They continued at a slow rate during the OE period and were intensified in Early ME. The period between c. 1000 and 1300 has been called an age of Great changes, for it witnessed one of the greatest events in the History of English grammar: the decline and transformation of the nominal morphological system. Some nominal categories were lost – Gender and Case in adjectives, Gender in nouns; the number of forms distinguished in the surviving categorie was reduced – cases in nouns and noun-pronouns, numbers in personal pronouns. Morphological division into types of Declension practically disappeared. In Late ME the adjective lost the last vestigates of the old paradigm: the distinction of number and the distinction of weak and strong forms.

**28. Agreement in the History of English**

In Old E we find a variety of word phrases. A noun pattern consisted of a noun as the head word and pronouns, adjectives (including verbal adjectives, or participles), numerals and other nouns as determiners and attributes. Most noun modifiers agreed with the noun in gender, number and case. Nouns which served as attributes to other nouns usually had the form of the Gen. case: hwales ban (whale’s bone). Some numerals governed the nouns they modified so that formally the relations were reversed. An adjective pattern could include adverbs, nouns or pronouns in one of the oblique cases with or without prepositions. Verb patterns included a great variety of dependant components: nouns and pronouns in oblique cases with or without prepositions, adverbs, infinitives and participles. Infinitives and participles were often used in verb phrases with verbs of incomplete predication. By Late ME agreement in noun patterns had practically disappeared, except for some instances of agreement in number. Formal markers of number had been preserved in nouns, demonstrative pronouns and some survivals of the strong declension of adjectives. The last traces of agreement in adjectives were lost in the 15th c. when the inflection – e was dropped; only the demonstrative pronouns, the indefinite article and nouns in apposition indicated the number of the head word, like in Mod E. When the adjective had lost its forms of agreement, its relationship with the noun were shown by its position.