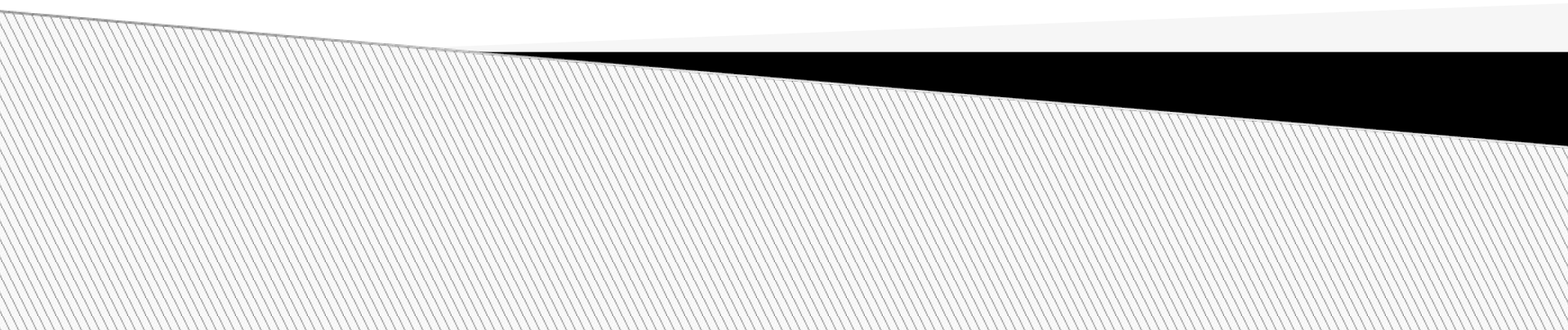
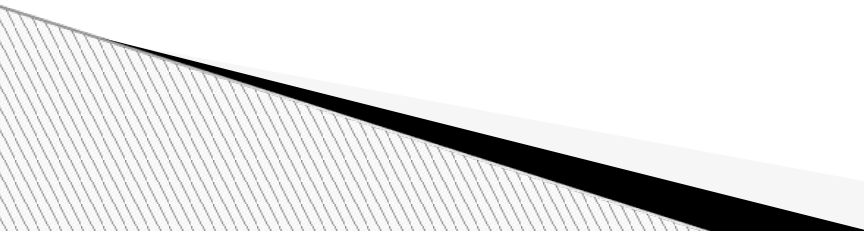


# **Old English Morphology**

## **Lecture 4**



# Old English

- a **typical synthetic** or **inflected**;
  - **parts of speech:** the noun, the pronoun, the adjective, the numeral, the verb, the preposition, the conjunction, and the interjection;
  - the nominal parts of speech had certain **grammatical categories.**
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# The Noun in Old English

## Categories:

- **gender** (not grammatical): stān 'камень' (м.р. -a-), scip 'корабль' (ср. -a-), fōr 'поездка' (ж.р. -ō-), hond 'рука' (ж.р. -u-); info about the gender was encoded in different attributes (pronouns, adjectives);
- **number** (plural vs. singular; rather stable);
- **case:** nominative, genitive, dative and accusative (many homonymous forms).

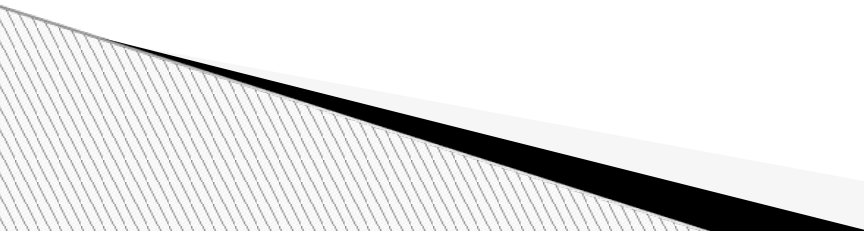
# Morphological classification of nouns

- nouns had an elaborate system of declensions;
- nouns were grouped according to: the **former stem-forming suffixes** and to some extent **gender**;
- vocalic stems, a-stems, i-stems; consonantal stems, n-stems; ja-stems, nd-stems; 'root-stems');
- the majority of OE nouns belonged to the a-stems,  $\bar{o}$ -stems and n-stems).

# The declension of a-stem nouns

a-stems				
<i>Singular</i>				
M	short-stemmed N	long-stemmed N	ja-stems M	wa-stems N
<i>Nom.</i> fisc	scip	dēor	ende	cnēo(w)
<i>Gen.</i> fishes	scipes	dēores	endes	cnēowes
<i>Dat.</i> fisce	scipe	dēore	ende	cnēowe
<i>Acc.</i> fisc	scip	dēor	ende	cnēo(w)
<i>Plural</i>				
<i>Nom.</i> fishes	scipu	dēor	endas	cnēo(w)
<i>Gen.</i> fisca	scipa	dēora	enda	cnēowa
<i>Dat.</i> fiscum	scipum	dēorum	endum	cnēowum
<i>Acc.</i> fiscas (NE fish)	scipu (NE scip)	dēor (NE deer)	endas (NE end)	cnēo(w) (NE knee)

# The pronoun in OE

- personal,
  - demonstrative,
  - interrogative,
  - indefinite
- 

# Personal pronouns

- 3 persons, 3 numbers: singular, plural and the remains of the dual number in the second person, 3 genders, 4 (5) cases;
- **the genitive case of personal pronouns: used as an object**, or an **attribute** (like modern possessives): sunu mīn, his fæder (his son, his father);
- no separate class of possessive pronouns;
- personal pronoun+self: served as reflexive: him selfum.

# Demonstrative pronouns

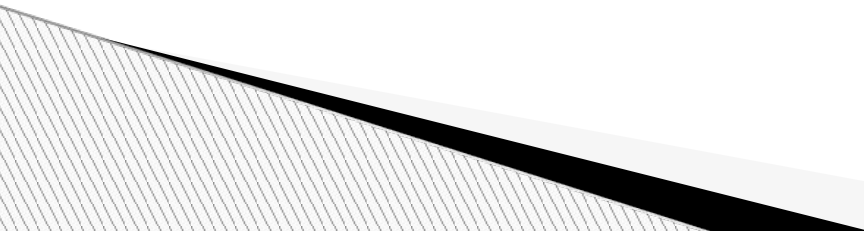
- the prototype of NE that: *sē* (m.), *ðæt* (n.), *sēo* (f.)
- the prototype of NE this: *ðes* (m.), *ðis* (n.), *ðēos/ðīos* (f.).
- indicated the noun's number, gender and case;
- sometimes their meaning was weakened and approached the function of an article.



# Interrogative pronouns

- hwā (m., f.) hwæt (n.) had a four-case paradigm ('who, what');
- the Instrumental Case of hwæt – a separate interrogative word hwy ('why'). **!**

# Indefinite pronouns

- numerous;
  - simple and compound:  
ān 'one, any',  
nān 'none' = ān+ negative particle ne;  
nānḥin 'nothing' = nān + ḥin
- 

First person				
Case	Singular		Dual	Plural
<i>Nom.</i>	ic		wit	wē
<i>Gen.</i>	mīn		uncer	ūre, ūser
<i>Dat.</i>	mē		unc	ūs
<i>Acc.</i>	mec, mē		uncit	ūsic, ūs
Second person				
<i>Nom.</i>	þū		git	gē
<i>Gen.</i>	þīn		incer	ēower
<i>Dat.</i>	þē		inc	ēow
<i>Acc.</i>	þēc, þē		incit, inc	ēowic, ēow
Third person				
	Singular			Plural
	M	F	N	All genders
<i>Nom.</i>	hē	hēo, hīo	hit	hīe, hī, hȳ, hēo
<i>Gen.</i>	his	hire, hiere	his	hīra, heora, hīera, hyra
<i>Dat.</i>	him	hire, hiere	him	him, heom
<i>Acc.</i>	hine	hīe, hī, hȳ	hit	hīe, hī, hȳ, hēo

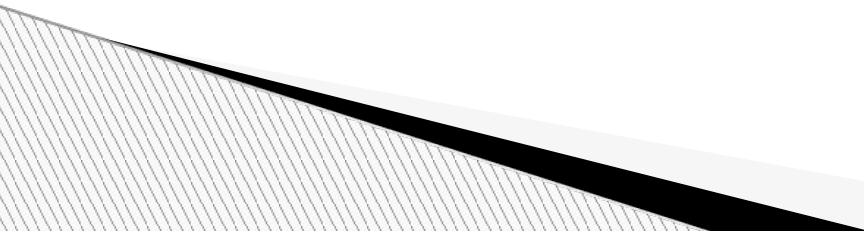
# The Adjective in OE

- the number of adjectives in Old English is not very significant.
- **Categories:** number, gender, case + purely adjectival (the degrees of comparison– the positive, the comparative and the superlative).

# The degrees of comparison

- made synthetically, by adding suffixes *-ra* and *-ost/-est*: *soft – softra – softest*;
- **NO ANALYTICAL FORMATIONS**;
- suffixation could be accompanied by i-mutation of a root vowel: *eald – ieldra – ieldest* (old), *stronȝ – strenȝa – strenȝest*.
- four adjectives in Old English had **suppletive degrees of comparison**: *ȝōd – betera – betst* (good), *yfel – wiesra – wierest* (bad), *mycel – māra – mæst* (much), *lytel – læssa – læst* (little).

# OE Adjective Declensions

- strong and weak (the difference both formal and semantic)
  - most adjectives could be declined in both ways;
  - **strong declension:** used predicatively, used attributively without any determiners;
  - **weak declension:** was preceded by a demonstrative pronoun or the Gen. case of personal pronouns (determiners).
- 

## Declension of Adjectives

Singular						
Strong (pure $\alpha$ - and $\delta$ -stems) <sup>1</sup>			Weak			
	M	N	F	M	N	F
<i>Nom.</i>	blind	blind	blind	blinda	blinde	blinde
<i>Gen.</i>	blindes	blindes	blindre	blindan	blindan	blindan
<i>Dat.</i>	blindum	blindum	blindre	blindan	blindan	blindan
<i>Acc.</i>	blindne	blind	blinde	blindan	blinde	blindan
<i>Instr.</i>	blinde	blinde	blindre	blindan	blindan	blindan
Plural						
<i>Nom.</i>	blinde	blind	blinda, -e	All genders blindan		
<i>Gen.</i>	blindra	blindra	blindra	blindra, -ena		
<i>Dat.</i>	blindum	blindum	blindum	blindum		
<i>Acc.</i>	blinde	blind	blinda, -e	blindan		
<i>Instr.</i>	blindum (NE <i>blind</i> )	blindum	blindum	blindum		

<sup>1</sup> *Blind* is a long-stemmed adjective; short-stemmed adjectives had the same forms except *Nom. sg. Fem.*, which took *-u* or *-o*, e. g. *blacu*, *gladu*.

# The OE Verb

- **finite and non-finite forms (infinitive and two participles);**
  - **categories (tense, mood, number, person);**
- **the morphological classification: strong and weak verbs;**
  - **the stems of the verb.**



# The non-finite forms: Infinitive

- being a verbal noun by origin it had **the grammatical category of case**;
- the nominative **-an, -ian** (often used with such verbs as ***willan, sculan, weorðan*** to render various grammatical meanings;
- the dative (suffix ***-enne/anne: writan - to writenne***; the preposition ***to*** was associated with the dative case and used to indicate the direction or purpose of an action).

# The non-finite forms: Participles

- **Participle I:** the root + **-ende** (**writan** – **writende** ‘to write, writing’); was active in meaning;
- **Participle II:** **strong verbs: vowels interchange in the root + -en, weak** – the dental suffix **-d/t**; was passive in meaning;

# The categories of the verb

- person, number, tense and mood;
- **number** (singular and plural, a form of agreement between the subject and the predicate);
- **person** (three persons), though the opposition is neutralised in many positions;
- **mood:** Indicative – Subjunctive – Imperative;
- **tense:** the opposition of past – non-past.

For **future time reference:** adverbs of future time, by the use of special verbs like the verbs of wishes and commands; the verbs ***willan,*** ***sculan,*** etc.).

# **The morphological classification of OE verbs**

- it determined the application of form-building means in various groups of verbs;
- strong verbs, weak verbs, preterite-present verbs; anomalous verbs and some other minor classes.

# Strong and weak verbs

## Strong verbs

- about 300 in Old English;
- native verbs of Proto-Germanic origin; developed as the result of vowel alternation (ablaut);
- the number of strong verbs in Germanic was steadily being reduced.

## Weak verbs

- more than strong and constantly growing;
- the use of the dental suffix;
- among the weak verbs there were derivatives of OE noun and adjective stems and also derivatives of strong verbs built from one of their stems.

# Strong and weak verbs

- strong and weak verbs are **further subdivided** into a number of morphological classes;
- **strong verbs** are divided into seven classes on the basis of the differences in vowel gradation; Classes 1 and 3 were the most numerous of all, Class 2 included almost 40 verbs. The rest had from 10 to 15 verbs each.
- **weak verbs** are divided into three classes depending on the ending of the infinitive, the sonority of the suffix and the sounds preceding the suffix.

□



# Preterite-present verbs

- combine the qualities of the strong verbs as well as the weak ones:
- their present tense is formed according to the rules of formation of the past tense of the strong verbs (gradation or vowel interchange);
- their past tense has all the peculiarities of the weak verbs;
- participle II meanwhile retains the suffix **-en** of the strong verbs.
- 12 of them in OE;
- six of them have survived in Mod E: they are Modern English modals.

# Anomalous verbs

with irregular forms:

bēon/wesan 'be',

Ʒan 'go',

dōn (do)

willan 'will'.



# Verbal stems

- derived from a set of ‘stems’ or principal parts of the verb:

**the Present tense;**  
**the Past Tense stems;**  
**the Past Participle stem.**

Strong verbs

beran	bær	bæron	zeboren	‘bear’
dēman	dēmde		dēmed	deem

## Strong Verbs in Old English

Principal forms  Classes	Infinitive	Past Singular <sup>1</sup>	Past Plural	Partici- ple II <sup>2</sup>	NE
1	wrītan	wrāt	writon	writen	<i>write</i>
2	(a) cēosan (b) būzan	cēas bēaȝ	curon bugon	coren bozen	<i>choose</i> <i>bow</i>
3	(a) findan (b) helpan (c) feohtan	fand healp feiht	fundon hulpon fuhton	funden holpen fohten	<i>find</i> <i>help</i> <i>fight</i>
4	beran	bær	bæron	boren	<i>bear</i>
5	(a) cweðan (b) sittan	cwæð sæt	cwædon sæton	cweden seten	'say' (obs. <i>quoth</i> ) <i>sit</i>
6	scacan	scōc	scōcon	scacen	<i>shake</i>
7	(a) hātan (b) ȝrōwan	hēt (heht) ȝrēow	hēton (hehton) ȝrēowon	hāten ȝrōwen	'call', 'name' <i>grow</i>

# Syntax

- a synthetic language → the functional load of syntactic ways of word connection was relatively small;
- mostly spoken → the written forms resembles oral speech; simple syntax.

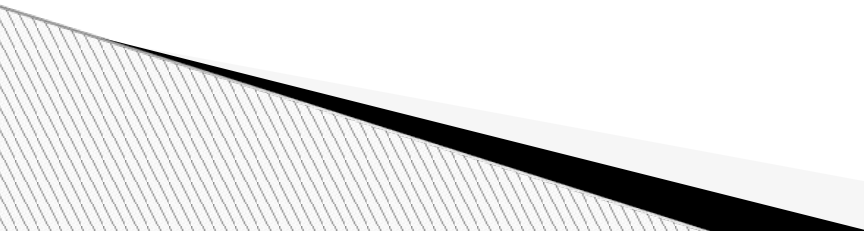
# Simple Sentence

*Sōðlice sum mann hæfde twēzen suna*

Truly a certain man had two sons

- ✓ the connection between the parts of the words is shown by the forms of the words;
- ✓ some parts of the sentences that are obligatory for NE could be omitted;
- ✓ multiple negation (ne+ nāht or nōht).

# Compound and Complex Sentences

- existed since the earliest times;
  - though the structures were numerous, they were a bit clumsy and not very precise;
  - coordinate, subordinate, asyndetic connection.
- 

# Word Order

- relatively free, influenced by logical and stylistic factors;
- the freedom of word order should not be overestimate (question vs. statements)

*Hwæt sceal ic sinzan?*

*What shall I sing?* (partial inversion)

*Hēr cuōm sē here tō Rēadinzum...*

*In this year came that army to Reading* (full inversion, after an adverbial modifier)

# Word order

- Ōhthere sǣde his hlāforde, Ɔlfrēde cyninze  
pæt hē ealra Nordmonna norpmest būde
- Ohthere said (to) his lord Alfred king that he  
(of) all Northman to the North lived (had  
lived)

(the subject in the subordinate clause is followed by the connective and ends with the predicate)

# Vocabulary

- difficult to estimate (30000 to 100000);
- **etymologically:** native words (common IE words, common Germanic words, specifically OE words); borrowings from Celtic, Latin);
- **word structure:** simple, derived. compound.
- **word-formation:** suffixation; prefixation; sound interchange; word stress; word-composition;
- **stylistically:** neutral, learned, poetic (the use of numerous synonyms; 37 words for the concept of warrior).