

4 *Old and Middle Continental West Germanic*

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4.1 Introduction

Old and Middle Continental West Germanic comprises four language areas: Dutch (Old Dutch and Middle Dutch), High German (Old High German and Middle High German), Low German (Old Saxon and Middle Low German) and Frisian (Old Frisian). Our focus will be on the earlier stages of Dutch and German. The description of Dutch will mainly concentrate on Middle Dutch, since little material is left from the Old Dutch period. Middle Dutch embraces the period of time which extends from the first Middle Dutch records about 1170 to 1500, after which Modern Dutch begins. In the German part of the survey both the High German language developments and the Low German data are discussed. Within the limits of this chapter choices have to be made: emphasis will be laid on the earliest stages, Old High German and Old Saxon, while both Middle High and Middle Low German will be dealt with in far less detail. Old High German and Old Saxon extend from the oldest texts of the eighth century to about 1100; Middle High German and Middle Low German are the common terms for the following period which is considered as ending either around 1400 or about 1500.

Sources differ in amount and genre as well as in time and place. The scarce Old Dutch (Old Low Franconian) material consists of glosses, a short verse line and a psalter translation, the fragmentary *Wachtendonck Psalms*. Apart from glosses and minor texts, the most important Old Saxon document is the *Heliand*, a lengthy biblical epic in alliterative verse. Translations and adaptations from Latin religious texts form the bulk of the Old High German records. The Middle Dutch, Middle High and Middle Low German sources are more abundant and show a greater diversity than those of the earlier period. Administrative and legal documents such as charters and laws abound and secular and religious literature, both in poetry and prose, is well preserved.

Old and Middle High German were spoken and written in central and southern Germany, south of the so-called Benrath line. Low German was the language of the north, i.e. the northern parts of Germany and the eastern provinces of the Netherlands. Both High and Low German cover a group of several dialects. The three major Old High German dialects are (Upper) Franconian, Bavarian and Alemannic. The common feature of those dialects is the second or Old High German sound shift. This shift probably occurred in the sixth century and divided the continental Germanic dialects into a High German and a Low German group. The last includes not only Low German, but also Dutch. Neither language was affected by the sound shift. Old Saxon differs from Old Dutch in a number of phonemic and morphological characteristics. It shares some of the so-called 'ingvaeonisms' with Old Frisian and Old English, e.g. *ôthar* 'other', *ûs* 'us', *fiif* 'five'. Dialect variation is also present in the subsequent period, although a tendency to avoid dialect characteristics can be observed. The Middle High German literary works from 1150 onwards were written in a language which is remarkably uniform. This supraregional tendency was lost when this courtly literature fell into decay (about 1250). Middle Low German was used from 1370 as the official language in all its correspondence by the Hansa, the important commercial league. This meant that Middle Low German became the international language of the Baltic, and as such it exercised a considerable impact on the Scandinavian languages. During the sixteenth century the importance of the Hansa waned and High German replaced Low German as the written language both in the cities and among the upper classes in northern Germany. Low German – or, as it later was called, *Platt* – was the lower-class language; it was banned from the schools, as it was considered to be vulgar.

For neither High nor Low German did a uniform standard language emerge during the Middle German period. The situation is similar for the early stages of Dutch. The major Middle Dutch dialects, used in the present-day area of the Netherlands (with the exception of Friesland and Groningen) and the northern parts of Belgium during the Middle Ages, are Brabantian, Flemish, Hollandish, the Limburg and the so-called eastern dialect. The last was the language of the northeastern provinces of the Netherlands which had several characteristics such as long vowel mutation (*quemen*, *weren* instead of *quamen*, *waren* 'came, were') and retention of the /l/-cluster (*solde*, *wolde* instead of *soude*, *woude* 'should, would'). The eastern dialect, covering the area from the River IJssel northeastwards, gradually passed into Low German, so that the linguistic borderline did not coincide with the present-day national frontier. The Limburg dialect shared several features with High German.

The German and Dutch dialectal variations will only occasionally be discussed in the following description of the major Old and Middle Continental West Germanic characteristics.

Old and Middle Dutch

4.2 Phonology

The earliest Dutch texts show phonological characteristics which differ from the corresponding ones in (High) German. The West Germanic consonant cluster /ft/ developed into /xt/ in Old Dutch (cf. Old Dutch *stihtan*, Modern Dutch *stichten* vs Modern German *stiften* 'to found'). Assimilation in the case of West Germanic /xs/ marks another important difference: /ss/ in Old Dutch *vusso* (gen. pl.), Modern Dutch *vossen* versus /xs/ (<ch>, [ks]) in Modern German *Füchse*, 'foxes'. The Old Dutch cluster /ol/ + dental (from earlier /ol/, /ul/ and /al/ + dental) diphthongized to /ou/ + dental. Hence we find Middle Dutch *gout*, *schout*, *wout* but Middle High German (and Modern German) *Gold*, *Schuld*, *Wald* 'gold, guilt, forest'. The /l/-cluster was also retained in Low German and the Lower Saxon dialect.

An important Old Dutch development is the lengthening of short vowels in stressed open syllables. The operation of this sound law accounts for vowel differences between the singular and plural of Middle Dutch words, e.g.: *spēl* : *spēle* 'game', *lōt* : *lōte* 'lot', *vāt* : *vāte* 'vessel', *smīt* : *smēde* 'smith'. These vowel differences in the paradigm generally survive in Modern Dutch. Lengthening did not occur in closed syllables, hence e.g. *bed(de)* : *bedden* 'bed', *cop(pe)* : *coppen* 'cup', *lat(te)* : *latten* 'lath', *pit(te)* : *pitten* 'pith'.

As in all other Germanic languages, stress is initial (on the stem) in Old and Middle Dutch. In the long run initial stress caused weakening of unstressed syllables. In Old Dutch various vowels occurred in unstressed syllables (cf. *hebban* 'they have'; *vogala* 'birds'; *singit* 'sing!'; *namon* 'name'; *sulun* 'shall/will'). In Middle Dutch, however, the weakening of such unstressed vowels became a rule, resulting in the vowel schwa, spelled <e> (cf. *hebben*; *vogele*; *singer*; *name(n)*; *sullen*). This phenomenon allows us to make a clear-cut division between the Old and Middle Dutch period. Further reduction of unstressed syllables took place in Middle Dutch and, consequently, most morphological endings were obscured and eventually disappeared. On the morphological level these phonetic changes resulted in the nearly complete erosion of case endings, a process almost completed by the end of the Middle Ages.

Middle Dutch orthography is inconsistent and phonetic or, at any rate, more phonetic than present-day Dutch orthography. Spelling conventions such as the principle of uniformity and that of analogy were not yet valid. Hence we meet such Middle Dutch phonetic spellings as *lant* 'land', *hi vint* 'he finds' as opposed to Modern Dutch *land* (pl. *landen*) and *hij vindt* (stem *vind* + *t*, cf. stem *woon* + *t*). Apart from this, Middle Dutch orthography reflects cliticization and phonetic reduction. Inconsistency is due not only to dialectal variations and chronological changes, but also to scribes with different spelling conventions. One should note, for instance, the three ways of representing a long vowel, particularly in closed syllables: by adding either

an <e> to the sign of the short vowel, <ae, oe, ue, ee>, or an <i>, <ai, oi, ui, ei>, or by doubling the single vowel sign, <aa, oo, uu, ee>. Concerning the pronunciation of Middle Dutch, we only notice that <ue/ui/uu> on the one hand and <ij> on the other were both long monophthongs, as the diphthongization of these vowels took place mainly after the medieval period.

4.3 Morphology

The Nominal Group

Noun and Adjective

Middle Dutch nouns have a two-declension, four-case, three-gender system. The strong and the weak declensions are the two main declension classes. Nouns ending in a consonant mostly belong to the strong declension and nouns ending in *-e* generally belong to the weak declension. Middle Dutch distinguishes four cases: nominative, accusative, genitive and dative. These are signalled by inflectional endings on the noun, the adjective and the determiner. The gender distinctions in Middle Dutch are masculine, feminine and neuter. The number distinctions are singular and plural. Adjectives vary according to the case, gender and number of the noun with which they are combined. The Middle Dutch adjectives have only one paradigm. The former distinction between strong and weak adjectives is no longer found in Middle Dutch, but in genitive, singular masculine and neuter both *goets* and *goeden* occur. The declensions of the nominal group consisting of a definite article, an adjective (*goet* 'good') and a noun (*gast* 'guest', *mensche* 'man', *hof* 'garden, court', *herte* 'heart', *daet* 'action', *siele* 'soul') are given in Table 4.1. In the feminine singular strong and weak paradigm, genitive and dative *dade* and *sielen* are found alongside *daet* and *siele*. In origin the definite article is identical with the demonstrative pronoun *die*. The indefinite article has the same form as the numeral *een*.

Plural inflectional morphemes of the noun are *-e* (dative *-en*), marking the strong plurals, and *-n*, marking the weak ones. Apart from these, the markers *-s* and *-er* occur. Plural *-s* (of disputed origin) is to be found in loans (*pelgrims* 'pilgrims') and in words ending in *-el*, *-en*, *-er* (cf. *duvels* 'devils', *tekens* 'tokens', *cloosters* 'cloisters'). Only a few words, as *kint* 'child' – *kinder*; *ei* 'egg' – *eier*; *hoen* 'hen' – *hoender* (with inserted *d*), have the *-er* plural. These historically limited *-er* plurals were subject to accumulative pluralization: in Middle Dutch we find *kindere/kinderen/kinders* beside *kinder*, *eiere/eieren* beside *eier*, and *hoenders* beside *hoender*. Analogy also took place in the case of monosyllabic long-stemmed neuter words of which the plural form was identical to that of the singular (e.g. *been* 'leg', *dinc* 'thing', *jaer* 'year'). Apart from regular *been*, *dinc*, *jaer*, also *beene(n)*, *dinghe(n)*, *jaere(n)* appear in texts. Plural marker *-n* gained some ground from plural *-e* in Middle Dutch

Table 4.1 Strong and weak declensions of the nominal group

	<i>Singular</i>			<i>Plural</i>		
		Strong	Weak		Strong	Weak
Masculine						
Nom.	die goede	gast	mensche	die goede	gaste	menschen
Acc.	dien goeden	gast	mensche	die goede	gaste	menschen
Gen.	des goets/goeden	gast(e)s	menschen	der goeder	gaste	menschen
Dat.	dien goeden	gaste	mensche	dien goeden	gasten	menschen
Feminine						
Nom.	die goede	daet	siele	die goede	dade	sielen
Acc.	die goede	daet	siele	die goede	dade	sielen
Gen.	der goeder	daet/dade	siele(n)	der goeder	dade	sielen
Dat.	der goeder	daet/dade	siele(n)	dien goeden	daden	sielen
Neuter						
Nom.	dat goede	hof	herte	die goede	hove	herten
Acc.	dat goede	hof	herte	die goede	hove	herten
Gen.	des goets/goeden	hoves	herten	der goeder	hove	herten
Dat.	dien goeden	hove	herte	dien goeden	hoven	herten

and prevailed, alongside *-s*, as regular plural marker *-en* in Modern Dutch.

It should be noted that in predicative position the uninflected adjectival form appears: *goet* (*die coninc es goet* 'the king is good'). The adverb is usually formed by adding *-e* to the uninflected adjective (e.g. *diepe* 'deeply', *langhe* 'long', *stille* 'quietly'). The comparative and superlative of adjectives (and adverbs) are formed by adding the suffixes *-er/-re (-der)* and *-(e)st* to the positive: *scoen(d)er* 'more beautiful', *swaerre* 'heavier' and *scoenst* 'most beautiful', *swaerest* 'heaviest'. Some adjectives and adverbs have irregular comparison such as *goet* 'good' – *better* – *best*, *wel* 'well' – *bet/bat* – *best*, *clein* 'little' – *minre/minder* – *minst*, *groot* 'big' – *meere* – *meest*. Comparatives and superlatives as well as the possessive pronouns (*mijn* 'mine', *dijn* 'your', *sijn* 'his', *haer* 'her', *ons* 'our', *uw*, 'your', *haer* 'their') are declined like the adjective.

Pronouns

Some of the various pronoun types are dealt with here. The declension of the demonstrative pronoun *die* 'that' is, with a few exceptions, identical to the definite article forms in Table 4.1: *dies* instead of gen. sg. m./n. *des* and *dier* instead of gen. sg. f. and gen. pl. *der*. Other Middle Dutch demonstratives are *dese* 'this' and *ghene* 'that'. Apart from functioning as an article or a demonstrative pronoun, *die* may also play a role as relative pronoun. The relative pronoun varies according to the gender and number of its antecedent.

The declension of the personal pronouns is given in Table 4.2. The pronouns of address were *du* and *ghi*, *du* being originally used for the singular and *ghi* for the plural. In Middle Dutch the relationship between *du* and *ghi* is not a straightforward singular–plural one. In the singular *ghi* functions as a polite pronoun (owing to courtly fashions) and *du* as a pronoun of familiarity. This implies that *ghi* was used to mark respect, *du* being limited either to intimate contexts, or used in an asymmetric relationship. In the course of time the usage of pronouns of address has changed considerably. *Du* gradually fell into disuse and new pronouns such as *u* (polite pronoun singular and plural), *jij* (singular pronoun of familiarity) and *jullie* (plural pronoun of familiarity) arose. Since these developments took place after 1500, no further attention will be paid to them here. Both *du* and *ghi* may be used clitically: *slaepstu* (= *slaepes du* 'do you sleep?'), *wildi* (= *wilt ghi* 'do you want?'; *-i* is the clitic form of *ghi*). Third-person personal pronouns distinguish between full forms and clitics in all cases.

In Middle Dutch reflexivity is generally expressed through the personal pronoun. The personal pronoun forms *hem* (clitic *-em, -en*), *haer*, *hare* and *hen* were used as reflexives, for example: *God, die hem crucen liet* 'God who had himself be crucified'; *si rechte haer op* 'she raised herself'; *si wapenden hem* 'they armed themselves'. The reflexive pronoun *sich*, a High German loan serving for all genders and both numbers, occurs in fourteenth-century eastern Middle Dutch, but did not spread westward before the sixteenth century.

Table 4.2 Personal pronouns

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
1 sg.	ic	mi	mijns	mi
2 sg.fam.	du	di	dijns	di
pol.	ghi	u	uwer, uw(es)	u
3 sg.m.	hi, -i	hem, -ene, -ne, -en	sijns, -(e)s	hem, -em, -en
f.	si, -se	haer, -se	haer, -ere, -er, -re	haer, -ere, -er, -re
n.	het, -(e)t	het -(e)t	-(e)s	hem, -em
1 pl.	wi	ons	onser	ons
2 pl.	ghi	u	uwer, uw(es)	u
3 pl.	si, -se	hem, hen, -se	haer, -ere, -er, -re	hem, hen, -en

Some Remarks on Case Distinctions

The morphological case distinctions have syntactic functions. The nominative expresses the subject function. Possession and various other relationships are indicated by the genitive. The indirect object (or second object) has dative case, the direct object is in the accusative. Furthermore, some verbs may assign genitive case to their object: *Gods pleghen* 'to worship God'; *der ondaet loochenen* 'to deny the misdeed', others have a dative complement: *den kinderen slachten* 'to be like children'. Some adjectives assign genitive case (*werdich enechs prijs* 'worthy of some praise', *des wits voets girech* 'eager for the white foot [of a deer]') or dative case (*den kinderen vriendelic* 'kind to the children', *den wive gram* 'angry on the woman'). A preposition as head of a prepositional phrase may assign accusative (*up die vaert* 'on the trip'), dative (*met luder sprake* 'in a loud voice') and sometimes genitive case (*binnen huses* 'inside the house'). Some prepositions govern both dative and accusative (*in der zalen* 'in the hall', *tote in die zale* 'into the hall'), a choice which does not always involve a static-directional opposition.

The decline of the case system during the Middle Dutch period is obvious: distinct case endings collapse or disappear. Prepositional phrases take over functions previously performed by case endings. Possession, for instance, is indicated by the preposition *van* ('of') and verbs with genitival objects increasingly occur with accusative objects or prepositional phrases such as *gedinc van dinen quade* 'think of your wickedness'. Verbs which originally govern the dative may occur together with prepositional phrases (cf. *na den wolf slachten* 'to be like the wolf'). Thus, semantic and grammatical relationships originally marked by suffixed case morphemes were replaced by various prepositional syntagms.

The Verbal Group

The Germanic languages originally indicated person and number by suffixed person markers, a subject pronoun being a later development. In Old Dutch

texts the subject pronoun is present in the majority of the instances. Mood, too, was marked by verbal morphology: the subjunctive and imperative endings differed from the indicative ones. There were two tenses: the present, indicating present and future time, and the preterite, indicating the past. The preterite and the past participle may be formed in two different ways: for the so-called strong verbs by vowel gradation (ablaut) and for the weak verbs by means of a dental suffix. Middle Dutch *keren* 'to turn' is an example of a weak verb, and *nemen* 'to take' of a strong one. Both strong and weak verbs share most of the endings. The conjugations given in Table 4.3 show that the differences between the indicative and the subjunctive have been considerably reduced due to weakening of the endings. Subjunctive markers are limited to the third-person singular present for both the weak and the strong verbs and to the first- and third-person singular preterite for only the strong verbs.

Table 4.3 Verbal conjugation

	<i>Weak verbs</i> <i>keren</i> 'to turn'		<i>Strong verbs</i> <i>nemen</i> 'to take'	
Present	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>
1 sg.	ic kere	ic kere	ic neme	ic neme
2 sg.	du keers	du keers	du neems	du neems
3 sg.	hi keert	hi kere	hi neemt	hi neme
1 pl.	wi keren	wi keren	wi nemen	wi nemen
2 pl.	ghi keert	ghi keert	ghi neemt	ghi neemt
3 pl.	si keren	si keren	si nemen	si nemen
Preterite	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>	<i>Indicative</i>	<i>Subjunctive</i>
1 sg.	ic keerde	ic keerde	ic nam	ic name
2 sg.	du keertes	du keertes	du naems	du naems
3 sg.	hi keerde	hi keerde	hi nam	hi name
1 pl.	wi keerden	wi keerden	wi namen	wi namen
2 pl.	ghi keerdet	ghi keerdet	ghi naemt	ghi naemt
3 pl.	si keerden	si keerden	si namen	si namen
Imperative				
Sg.	keer/kere		neem/neme	
Pl.	keert/keret		neemt/nemet	
Present participle				
	kerende		nemende	
Past participle				
	ghekeert		ghenomen	
Infinitive				
	keren		nemen	

The Middle Dutch subjunctive may indicate a wish: *God hoede dit ghesinde* 'God may save this company'; an incitement: *men slaese doot!* 'one must kill them'; or a supposition: *hadde mi yeman geleent sijn huus, in ware dus niet bereent* 'had anyone given me shelter, I would not have been so soaked'. The subjunctive is also found in various subordinated contexts: *Amelant waende dat hi doet ware* 'Amelant feared that he was dead', *hi sal hulpen der maget rike, dat si hare ere behoude* 'he will help the high-born maiden in order that she keeps her honour'. Except for a few stereotyped relics such as *leve de koningin* 'long live the queen' in Modern Dutch the subjunctive has become obsolete and is replaced by an indicative, if possible, or by the periphrastic combination of the verbs *mogen* 'may' or *moeten* 'must' with the infinitive.

The infinitive, a verbal noun, can be declined: cf. *hem begonste slapens lusten* 'he began to long to sleep'. The dative commonly occurs after the preposition *te*: *daer hi vele te ligghene plach* 'where he used to lie often'.

The weak preterite is formed by means of the suffixes *-de* (*keerde* 'turned') or *-te* (*maecte* 'made'), depending on the phonetic context. In the case of a voiceless final stem consonant, *-de* is assimilated to *-te*. The past participle consists of prefix *g(h)e-* + verbal stem + *-(e)t* (*ghekeert*, *ghemaect*). The past participle of strong verbs is formed by means of the prefix *g(h)e-*, the suffix *-en* and the verbal stem which generally has vowel change (*genomen* 'taken'). Most past participles take the prefix *g(h)e-*, the function of which originally was to indicate the completed action. Some verbs, e.g. *comen* 'to come', *vinden* 'to find', *brenghen* 'to bring', *liden* 'to pass', which are by their very nature perfective, had prefixless participles, but through analogy they also adopted *g(h)e-*.

Vowel gradation (ablaut) in the strong verbs, a typically Germanic feature, falls into seven major patterns, all of which survive into Middle Dutch. All seven classes have four principal parts: infinitive, preterite singular, preterite plural and past participle.

Table 4.4 Strong verb classes

	<i>Infinitive</i>		<i>Preterite</i>		<i>Past participle</i>
			Singular	Plural	
Class I	riden	'to ride'	reet	reden	gereden
Class II	gieten	'to pour'	goot	goten	gegoten
	stupen	'to steep'	stoop	stopen	gestopen
Class III	vinden	'to find'	vant	vonden	(ge)vonden
	werpen	'to throw'	warp	worpen	geworpen
Class IV	nemen	'to take'	nam	namen	genomen
Class V	meten	'to measure'	mat	maten	gemeten
Class VI	lachen	'to laugh'	loech	loechen	gelachen
Class VII	laten	'to let'	liet	lieten	gelaten

Table 4.4 shows that Middle Dutch still had two preterite forms, a singular and plural. The difference between the two was levelled in the course of time: for instance, *vant* became *vond*. This merger of two originally distinct forms also took place in German. In Dutch the plural vowel became predominant, whilst in German the singular form prevailed (cf. preterite *fand* – *fanden*).

Apart from the strong and weak verbs, some irregular verbs can also be found in Middle Dutch. The group of irregular verbs includes verbs with vowel gradation in the present tense (the so-called preterite-present verbs; e.g. *connen* ‘to be able’, *ic can*, *wi connen* ‘I am able, we are able’; *moghen* ‘to be allowed’, *ic mach*, *wi moghen* ‘I am allowed, we are allowed’) and weak verbs with a deviant preterite (e.g. *brenghen* ‘to bring’ – *bracht*; *denken* ‘to think’ – *dacht*). The verbs *sijn* ‘to be’ and *hebben* ‘to have’ also show several idiosyncratic features. The paradigms of these verbs, which are important in the formation of the compound tenses, are as follows: *sijn*: present indicative *ic bem* (*ben*), *du bist* (*best*), *hi es* (*is*), *wi sijn*, *ghi sijt*, *si sijn*; preterite indicative *ic was*, *du waers*, *hi was*, *wi waren*, *ghi waert*, *si waren*; present subjunctive *si*; preterite subjunctive *ware*. *Hebben*: present indicative *ic hebbe*, *du heves* (*heefst*), *hi hevet* (*heeft*), *wi hebben*, *ghi hebbet* (*hebt*), *si hebben*; preterite indicative *ic hadde*, etc.

4.4 Syntax

The Nominal Group

The structure of the noun phrase consisting of a noun, an adjective and a determiner (article or demonstrative) is generally determiner–adjective–noun in Middle Dutch, although postposition of the adjective and the possessive pronoun does occur, e.g. *Doen Elegast, die ridder goet, quam in des conincs sale* ‘when Elegast, the excellent knight, came into the King’s hall’. The word order of the elements noun and adjective, the position of the relative clause and many other word-order phenomena have been related to the basic word orders SOV and SVO in language typology research. In Middle Dutch attributive adjectives normally precede the noun with which they are collocated, a situation not uncommon in SOV languages. Possession is expressed by a genitive or a prepositional group. Both postposition (SOV) and preposition (SVO) of the genitive occur in Middle Dutch. A prepositional group generally follows the noun. In conclusion, the Middle Dutch word-order phenomena show both SOV and SVO characteristics. This observation fits in with the word order in the verbal group, as will be shown in the following section.

Extrapolation of the prepositional phrase yields various uncommon types of word order, such as *so dat die bisscop staerf van der stede* ‘so that the bishop of the town died’. Extrapolation may also take place with a preposed genitive including a PP, as is shown by *sijn neve Jan, sGraven zone van*

Henegouwen 'his nephew Jan, the son of the count of Henegouwen'. The relative clause normally follows its antecedent, but there may be some distance between the two components, exemplified by the relative clause *die ... mede* with its antecedent *die hope*: *dus weert die hope van hem die doet, die hem geeft troest ende coenheit mede* 'thus the hope which gives him support and courage too, averts death from him'.

The Verbal Group

The West Germanic languages developed strong analytical tendencies and Dutch was no exception. The obligatory subject pronoun and the rise of periphrastic verbal patterns are typical of this development. In Middle Dutch the subject pronoun has become obligatory. Even in the Old Dutch material in the vast majority of instances, the subject pronoun is present for at least the first- and second-person pronouns. Observe the following Old Dutch example: *offran sal ic thi ohsson mit buckin* 'I will offer thee bullocks with goats'. As it had only two inflected tenses, present and preterite, Middle Dutch (and the other West Germanic languages) formed the perfect and the pluperfect with periphrastic combinations of the verbs *hebben* 'to have' and *sijn* 'to be' and the past participle. Only a few examples of periphrastic tenses show up in the earliest texts. Apart from the well-known Old Dutch sentence: *hebban olla vogala nestas hagunnan* 'all the birds have begun their nests', only one more Old Dutch example is attested, *faruuart heuit* 'has ruined'. The occurrence of periphrastic tenses with *hebben* and *sijn*, indicating the perfect and pluperfect, increases considerably in Middle Dutch. The rule which must have governed the use of the two verbs is as follows: *sijn* is used in the case of the unaccusatives, mutative intransitive verbs which express a change, while *hebben* appears in the case of transitive verbs and the other intransitive verbs. For instance: *si sijn comen* 'they have come', *hi vraechde wiet gedaen hadde* 'he asked who had done it', *hi hadde gheslapen* 'he had slept'.

The passive in particular illustrates the development from a synthetic to an analytic language. In Gothic a restricted synthetic passive is still present beside a periphrastic passive consisting of the past participle and the verbs *wisan* or *wairþan*. The West Germanic languages have a periphrastic passive and originally they all had the possibility of two auxiliaries in the present and preterite. In Middle Dutch the uncompleted passive event can be expressed by either *sijn* + past participle, or *werden* + past participle. This variation can be illustrated by the following examples: *hi wart gedragen* 'he was carried' and *een sward was gegeven* 'a sword was given'. In addition to these striking similarities in the imperfect tenses, the perfect tenses in Dutch and German were originally more alike than the present differences would suggest. In both languages the passive perfect consisted of *sijn* or *sein*, respectively, plus a past participle. Middle Dutch *had verbrant geworden* 'had been burnt down' and *mishandelt hadden geweest* 'had been ill treated', so-called tripartite constructions, and its German equivalents arose as a more recent development

during the Middle Dutch and Middle High German period. The constructions with *geworden* and with *geweest* were both variants of the combination commonly used to refer to a perfect-tense event, namely *sijn* + past participle in e.g. *seyden dat dit slot verbrant was van viere* 'they said that this castle had been burnt down by fire'.

The situation just described, in which the interpretation of Middle Dutch *sijn* + past participle wavers ambiguously between an imperfect and a perfect tense, did not continue. Dutch kept *worden* to indicate the uncompleted event, while the earlier possibility of using *sijn* was no longer available. The change in favour of *worden* can be observed very clearly in the Middle Dutch period: the occurrence of the *sijn/werden* variation steadily decreases. The line of development is from a more frequent occurrence of *sijn* + past participle as compared with *werden* + past participle, through an increase of *werden* + past participle, to a higher occurrence of *werden* + past participle, expressing the uncompleted event, in fifteenth-century texts. As far as the perfect tenses are concerned, the development towards the tripartite construction was consolidated in High German and ousted the original combination *sein* + past participle. In Dutch the tripartite construction did not take the place of *zijn* + past participle. As a result Modern Dutch has the following system: the *worden*-combination for the imperfect tenses and the *zijn*-combination for the perfect tenses. Some ambiguity has been maintained, as *zijn* + past participle, not unlike Middle Dutch *sijn* + past participle, may also indicate a state.

In addition to the analytic constructions with a past participle, several combinations with the infinitive arose. The future was expressed by the present in the Germanic languages, but periphrasis with modal verbs + infinitive also occurred. In Old Dutch *sulon* + infinitive may indicate the future. In Middle Dutch the verbs *sullen*, *willen*, *moeten* play this role. Ultimately one of them, *zullen*, prevailed in present-day Dutch. As it became formally identical with the indicative, the subjunctive could no longer play an important part in the language. In Middle Dutch constructions with *mogen*, *moeten* and *sullen* gradually replace the subjunctive, in expressing volition, incitement or supposition.

As the above survey has shown, the development of a range of compound paradigms took place, involving a variety of auxiliaries in combination with either the past participle or the infinitive. Combinations of the verbs *werden*, *sijn* or *bliven* with the present participle, expressing either an ingressive (*werden*) or a durative aspect (*sijn*, *bliven*), also occurred, but never became consolidated patterns in later Dutch.

Grammatical Relations: The Passive and Impersonal Constructions

Two further points should be noted about the Middle Dutch passive. First, it permits the use of an agentive (prepositional) phrase which may vary. This is illustrated in *hoe Mariken seer schandelijcken toeghesproken wert van haerder moeyen* 'how Mariken was spoken to very disgracefully by her aunt'

and *dat hi seide, dat desen brief bi hem alleene ware ghescreven* 'that he said that this letter was written all by himself'. The present-day agent indication by *door* 'through' arose after the medieval period and ousted the other possibilities completely. Apart from the usual passive pattern with a subject, Middle Dutch also knew subjectless passives. The handbooks occasionally label these passives as unreal or pseudo-passives. As far as the auxiliaries are concerned, the pseudo-passives show complete similarity with the passives. The *sijn/werden* variation occurs in the imperfect tenses, e.g. *menichwerff wart dair gecust* 'frequently kissing was done there' and *hem (dat.) was gedient wel utermaten* 'he was extremely well served'; and the auxiliary *sijn* is used for the perfect tenses, e.g. *hier van is nu ghenoech ghehoert* 'enough has been heard about this'.

Pseudo-passives are not the only type of subjectless sentences. A well-known phenomenon in this respect is the so-called 'impersonal construction', in which no subject in the nominative is available. A certain number of verbs, which seem to share some semantic core (they all indicate various types of experience), occurred in impersonal constructions. The option between personal and impersonal construction was associated with a difference in emphasis. The impersonal construction originally consisted of the third-person singular verb form (*lanct*), a dative element (*mi*) and a genitive element (*waters*), e.g. *mi lanct waters* 'I long for water'. However, the genitive object may be replaced by a prepositional phrase (*mi lanct na di* 'I long for you'), an infinitive (*mi lanct te comene* 'I long to come') or a *dat*-clause (*mi lanct dat ghi comt* 'I long for your coming'). In such sentences as the last, a provisional genitive object *des* may precede the *dat*-sentence: *mi lanct des dat ghi comt*. The impersonal construction became obsolete after the medieval period and disappeared in Dutch. Several hypotheses have been put forward to explain its disappearance. According to some linguists syntactic reinterpretation took place: after the inflectional ending was lost, the dative constituent was reinterpreted as the subject. Others maintain that the disappearance of the impersonal construction can be explained by the loss of inflection. Inflectional loss for the nouns and the reduction of the personal pronouns to only two forms, subject and oblique, made it impossible for the impersonal construction to survive. As the outcome, verbs with impersonal constructions only maintain their personal constructions, cf. Modern Dutch *ik verwonder me erover* 'I wonder at it' or *het verwondert mij* 'it surprises me' instead of Middle Dutch *mi wondert des* or *des wondert mi*. Unlike *mi lanct des dat ghi comt*, in which the provisional genitive object clarifies the nature of the following *dat*-clause, a clause such as *mi lanct dat ghi comt* may be interpreted as having either a genitive object or a subject. A further development is the requirement of the pronoun *het* which functions as a provisional subject, cf. Modern Dutch *het verwondert me dat hij komt* 'it surprises me that he comes'.

The Sentence

Word Order

In Middle Dutch various word-order patterns occur in main clauses and subordinate clauses. The constituent order in unmarked declarative sentences is SVO (Subject–Verb–Object or other complements), as in Modern Dutch and Modern German. In present-day Dutch and German the word order in subordinate clauses is SOV, although movement to a position behind the verb (*Ausklammerung* or exbraciation) is possible: extraposition of prepositional phrase, in the spoken language especially. The word order in Middle Dutch subordinate clauses with conjunction, relative pronoun, interrogative pronoun or relative/interrogative adverbs, shows more variety than does Modern Dutch. Verb-second word order such as in *ende dit doet hi/datmen sal weten verre ende bi/sine scalcheit ende sine quaethede* ‘he does this in order that people far and near will know his malice and his wickedness’, verb-final word order, e.g. *doe so bat heme Lanceloet/dat hi tote hem daer quame* ‘then Lanceloet asked him to come to him there’, and any word order in between, cf. *daer naer wart hi [= the cup] gegeven voert,/dat hi te Roeme quam in die poert* ‘after that it was passed on, until it came within the city of Rome’, are possible. The finite verb can take every position in the subordinate clause, except the first position, which is the subject position.

Further Main-clause Patterns and Subordinative Structures

Verb-second structures are a regular phenomenon in Middle Dutch. The finite verb immediately follows after one, and only one, preceding element, whether or not this is the subject. If a non-subject constituent takes the first position in a declarative sentence, inversion is entailed: the subject follows the finite verb which maintains its second position in the sentence, e.g. *ende dit doet hi* ‘and this he does’ and *des margens vor hi rechte vort* ‘in the morning he went straightaway’. The verb-second rule enables us to distinguish main clauses from subordinate ones with initial ambiguous elements such as, for example, *die*, both demonstrative and relative pronoun, and *doe*, both temporal adverb and conjunction. It specifically provides a discriminating rule, important in a period when subordinate clauses do not yet have the verb-final position as a common feature.

Questions introduced by an interrogative element do not deviate from the word-order rules set out above. A verb-first pattern, VS(O), is found in yes/no questions. Imperative sentences show the same verb-first word-order structure, although they may be preceded by another constituent, e.g. *wiset mi dan den wech* ‘show me the way’ and *nu leide mi tote daer* ‘now bring me there’.

Another word-order pattern, used for topicalization purposes, involves dislocation of a nominal element associated with the verb to the left or to the right of the core sentence: *die coninc, hi seide* ‘the king, he said’; *hi sprac vele, die coninc* ‘he said much, the king’. Besides these examples with a

personal pronoun, the construction also occurs with a demonstrative: *die ridder, die seide* (lit.) 'the knight, that one said'.

In addition to the subordinate clauses dealt with above, types of non-finite subordination and a subordinate verb-first structure occur. No special attention will be paid to non-finite subordination here. The verb-first structure may indicate a conditional relationship, as in the sentence: *ghiet mer eerst olye inne, hi blijfter langhe vet af binnen* 'if one pours oil in it [= the pot] first, it will stay greasy for a long time'.

Compound Sentences

Nothing special needs to be said about the word order of coordinate clauses. Subject and object clauses either precede or follow the main clause. A demonstrative or personal pronoun may be used as a provisional or repeating element, e.g. *laetti dit bliven onghewroken, dat u verde dus es tebroken* 'if you leave this unrevenged, that your peace has been disturbed in this way' and *dat die riddere swiget stille, dat doet hi dor minen wille* 'that the knight keeps silent, that he does for my sake'. Changes in word order become obvious in the case of fronted adverbial clauses, resulting in three different word-order patterns: (a) *alst evel wast, men soude het weeren int beghin* 'when evil grows, one ought to fight it from the start'; (b) *alst evel wast, so soude men het weeren int beghin* (lit.) '... then one ought ...' and *alst evel wast, soude men het weeren int beghin* (lit.) '... ought one ...'. (a) represents the original pattern: the fronted adverbial clause, which does not occupy the forefield position, does not involve inversion. In (b) the adverb *so* repeats the fronted clause and occupies the forefield position. In due course a connection was made between this pattern and the preposed adverbial clause, hence inversion occurred even when the repeating element *so* was not available, as in (c). The preposed adverbial clause had become a part of the sentence, involving inversion as did any non-subject part. Consequently, the first pattern was bound to disappear. In Modern Dutch only the second and third patterns survive, but the correlative element was replaced by *dan*.

Additional Remarks

So far the most important word-order phenomena have been discussed. Some striking differences in usage emerge between Middle and Modern Dutch. For discourse-pragmatic purposes the object sometimes took the first place in main clauses and relative clauses. Owing to case endings, misinterpretation could generally be avoided in Middle Dutch. The accusative clarified the meaning of the sentence *dien carbonkel hadde in den voet een vogel* 'a bird had that carbuncle in its claw'. A similar instance in a relative clause is presented by the following sentence: *Van Job, den gheduldighen, dien nyemant en mochte beschuldighen* 'about the patient Hiob, whom nobody could accuse'. In present-day Dutch the former type tends to be avoided or, in the latter case, preference is given to the passive construction. The loss of

case endings has limited the usage of certain word-order patterns in Modern Dutch.

Negation

Sentence negation has undergone important changes in Dutch as well as in the other West Germanic languages. The original sentence negation *ne* (*n*, *en*) with its position in front of the finite verb, is the only option in Old Dutch, e.g. *geuigit got thie ne faruuarp gebet min* 'blessed be God, who did not turn away my prayer'. In Middle Dutch the pre-verbal negation element has a limited distribution: it occurs with certain verbs (e.g. *weten* 'to know', *roeken* 'to care', *mogen* 'to be able, may', *willen* 'to want', *connen* 'to be able') and in specific sentence patterns, e.g. *Die knape seide: 'Lieve here, /Van u en scedic nemmermere, /Ghi en gefi mi ridders abijt'* 'The youth said: "Dear lord, I do not go away from you **unless** you give me the garments of a knight"'. The regular sentence negation for Middle Dutch was an embracing structure, in the main clause at least, consisting of the elements *ne/en* and *niet*: *hi en sprac niet* 'he did not speak'. *Niet* was a post-verbal element in the main clause. In subordinate clauses the word order was different: *dat hi niet en sprac* 'that he did not speak'. *Niet* was originally used in the case of constituent negation (cf. *ic ontsie u niet een haer* 'I fear you not a bit' (lit. 'not a hair'), *die zee was diep ende niet te wijt* 'the lake was deep but not too wide') and might have had reinforced the simplex sentence negation. After a period of free variation between *ne* and *en ... niet*, the latter became the regular sentence negation, the negation *ne* being exceptional. A similar development took place with respect to German *nicht*, English *not*, Frisian *nat*. 'Double' negation is also found with negative words, as *en ... niemen* 'nobody', *en ... nie* 'never', *en ... niewer* 'nowhere'.

A further development concerning negation started in Middle Dutch: single *niet* by itself may function as sentence negation. The following sentences give examples in which pre-verbal *en* is omitted: *lieghe ic niet, soe seg ic waer* 'if I don't lie, I say the truth', *want sonder u magic niet leven* 'for without you I can not live', *dat hem tcoude niet mochte deeren* 'that the cold could not harm him'. *Niet* has become the common sentence negator in Modern Dutch, a stage only reached in the second half of the seventeenth century.

In Middle Dutch, therefore, three forms of sentence negation were available: 'double' negation (the rule); pre-verbal negation *en* (the exception); and negation *niet*, the new pattern. The development of pre-verbal negation *ne/en* via double negation to post-verbal negation *niet* has been the subject of extensive scholarly debate. Some describe the process in terms of reinforcement by means of *niet* and subsequent redundancy and weakening of *ne*. Others refer to a stricter word order, which made it difficult to maintain pre-verbal *ne*. Even the change from a system of affix negation to a system of adverbial negation has been taken into consideration. The negation changes cannot be brought into direct relationship with changing basic word order,

since the independent uninflected negator is pre-verbal in many languages, regardless of the basic word order.

In Middle Dutch multiple negation also occurs, that is, a collocation of several negation elements such as in *Daerne quam oec nie geen man* (lit.) 'no man never came there' and *In mijn huus dat gaen, dat comen, dan* (= *dat en*) *was niewerinc noit vernomen* (lit.) 'the going and coming in my house, that was nowhere never seen'. These negation elements reinforce the negative meaning of the sentences. In similar cases in Modern Dutch they neutralize each other, at least in the written language and in formal spoken styles, under the influence of prescriptive grammar, while the reinforcing usage of multiple negation remains a common feature of informal speech.

4.5 Lexis

Middle Dutch shares part of its lexicon with the other West Germanic languages. Even in the field of loans, striking similarities can be noticed which go back to a common past, such as the cultural influence of the Roman Empire and the spread of Christianity. An indication of the extent of borrowing during the Old and Middle Dutch period will be given here.

Extensive borrowing from Latin took place during the first centuries of our era. Words associated with the military system, trade, building and agriculture are conspicuously present. For example:

strate (via strata)	'street'
wal (vallum)	'rampart'
kerker (carcer)	'dungeon'
ketene (catena)	'chain'
pijl (pilum)	'arrow'
wijn (vinum)	'wine'
peper (piper)	'pepper'
pont/pond (pondus)	'pound'
munte (moneta)	'coin'
muur (murus)	'stone wall'
venstre (fenestra)	'window'
poorte (porta)	'gate'
solre (solarium)	'loft'
kelre (cellarium)	'cellar'
camer(e) (camera)	'chamber'
vrucht (fructus)	'fruit'
pere (pirum)	'pear'
cole (caulis)	'cabbage'

These form only a small selection from a great number of words which survived in more or less the same form in present-day Dutch.

Christianization is amply reflected in the lexicon as well. The main source of many specifically Christian words was Latin: Middle Dutch *kersten* 'Christian', *duvel* 'devil', *engel* 'angel', *cruce* 'cross', *pape* 'priest', *clerc* 'cleric', *leec* 'lay man', *capelle* 'chapel'; and the verbs *jubelen* 'to jubilate', *offeren* 'to sacrifice', *prediken* 'to preach', *vieren* 'to celebrate'. Both spoken and written medieval Latin may have played their roles in this process of borrowing. Introduction of new concepts and phenomena did not only take place through the borrowing of foreign words. Several Germanic words underwent a change of meaning during the spread of Christianity. *Boeten*, which originally meant 'to make something good/better, to compensate' acquired the Christian meaning of 'penance'; *doop* 'immersion', got the specific meaning of 'baptism'; *heilig* (originally full of *heil* 'welfare') obtained the religious meaning 'holy'. A third mainstream of loans passed into the language from Old French, owing to contacts in the border area of the German- and Romance-speaking parts in western Europe, in trade centres and in aristocratic circles. From the many French loan words, especially those belonging to the domain of courtly life and chivalry, only a few examples are given here: *cameriere/cameniere* 'servant', *bottelgier/bottelier* 'cupbearer' (= 'butler'), *garsoen* 'squire', *tapijt* 'carpet', *faisaen* 'pheasant', *taerte* 'tart'. The profound influence of French is evidenced by the fact that loanwords are not confined to the domain of concrete objects but include words concerning inner life, e.g. *joye* and *jolijt* 'joy', *grief* and *vernooi* 'grief'. The extent of the influence of French is borne out further by the fact that French loan suffixes, e.g. *-ier*, *-age* and *-ie*, appear at an early stage in Middle Dutch words such as *herbergier(e)* 'landlord', *timmerage* 'carpentry', *schulage* 'hiding-place', *heerschappie* 'power' and *voghedie* 'guardianship'. This must be the result of analogical derivation modelled upon French loans with such suffixes, as *bottelier* 'cupbearer', *pelgrim-age* 'pilgrimage'.

In addition three points should be noted. First of all, it is not always possible to determine whether a loan was borrowed directly from Latin or indirectly via Old French. This indeterminacy applies in the cases of *creature* 'creature', *persone* 'person', *nature* 'nature', *purper* 'purple'. Second, dating the loan might be problematic. Occasionally, certain characteristics are indicative of the period of borrowing. For instance, Latin *altare* is to be found in Middle Dutch as *outaer* 'altar' which had been subject to the Old Dutch sound law *alt > olt > out*. Therefore, in an early stage, before or during that of Old Dutch, the word must have passed into the Dutch language. In Middle Dutch borrowing once more took place from Latin which is shown by the existence of the word *altare/altaar* in Middle and Modern Dutch. Third, new words may not just be borrowed, but modelled upon a foreign example. Middle Dutch *hovesch*, a derivation consisting of the noun *hof* 'court' and the suffix *-esch*, is a loan translation of French *courtois* 'courtly'.

Verrisenisse (*ver-* + verbal stem *ris-* 'to rise' + *-enisse*; Lat. *resurrectio* 'resurrection'), *bekeringe* (*be-* + verbal stem *ker-* 'to turn' + *-inge*; Lat. *conversio* 'conversion') and *almachtig* (*almachtig*; Lat. *omnipotens* 'almighty') are further examples of this phenomenon of loan translation or calque.

Old and Middle High German, Old Saxon and Middle Low German

4.6 Phonology

The Old High German and Old Saxon scribes adopted the Latin orthographical system. The difficulty in representing the German sounds caused spelling inconsistency. In the eleventh century some new signs were introduced to represent the sounds that resulted from vowel mutation, such as <æ> OHG *mâri* > MHG *mære* 'famous', <oe> OHG *hôren* > MHG *hoeren* 'to hear' and <iu> OHG *hûsir* > MHG *hiuser* 'houses'. In Middle Low German these graphemes could also represent long vowels.

Consonants

The most remarkable feature of Old High German is the so-called second sound shift. It still is uncertain whether or not this sound shift started in the south (in the Alemannic and Bavarian dialects) and subsequently spread to the north until it stopped at the Benrath line. According to some scholars the Franconian dialects had their own variant of this sound shift. This opinion is based on the Franconian form *hase* 'hate' which is found in an early eighth-century manuscript from Echternach.

The Old High German sound shift affected the voiceless plosives /p/ /t/ /k/ and the voiced plosives and fricatives /b/ /d/ /g/. The first group in particular had an almost complete shift, dependent on the position in the word and on the dialect. The initial /p/ /t/ /k/ developed into the corresponding affricates /pf/ /ts/ /kh/: cf. OSax. *pîl* vs OHG *pfîl* 'arrow'; OSax. *tîd* vs OHG *zît* 'time'; OSax. *kunni* vs OHG *chunni* 'gender'. The same occurred in post-consonantal position (OSax. *thorp* vs OHG *dor(p)f* 'village'; OSax. *kurt* vs OHG *kurz* 'short'; OSax. *werk* vs OHG *werch* 'work') and in the geminated plosives (OSax. *skeppian* vs OHG *skepfen* 'to create'; OSax. *sittian* vs OHG *sizzen* 'to sit'; OSax. *wekkian* vs OHG *wecchen* 'to wake up'). In the other positions /p/ /t/ /k/ shifted to the corresponding fricatives /f/ /z/ /x/ e.g. OSax. *diop* vs OHG *tiof* 'deep', OSax. *lâtan* vs OHG *lâzzan* 'to let', OSax. *makon* vs OHG *mahhôn* 'to make'. The changes did not affect the Old High German dialects uniformly. The southern dialects (Bavarian and Alemannic) showed its most complete form. The sound shift became increasingly less complete towards the north.

The consonants /b/ /d/ /g/ developed into /p/ /t/ /k/: e.g. OSax. *beran* vs OHG *peran* 'to bear', OSax. *dag* vs OHG *tag* 'day', OSax. *geban* vs OHG *kepan* 'to give'. Here, too, the southern dialects show the complete shift. The forms *peran* and *kepan* appear in Bavarian and Alemannic texts, while Franconian texts keep /b/ and /g/, with the exception of the position in geminates. There all dialects show /pp/ /tt/ /kk/: OSax. *sibbia* vs OHG *sippa* 'kin', OSax. *weddian* vs OHG *wetten* 'to bet', OSax. *hruggi* vs OHG *rücki* 'back'.

In Old High German the Germanic fricatives /þ/ /v/ became plosives /d/ /b/ in all positions, e.g. OSax. *thing* vs OHG *ding* 'thing', OSax. *gevan* vs OHG *geban* 'to give' (or even *kepan* in Bavarian). In the consonant clusters /hr/, /hn/, /hl/, /hw/, /wr/, and /wl/ the /h/ or /w/ disappeared in initial position, e.g., OSax. *hring*, *hniosan*, *hlôpan*, *hwat*, *wrîvan* vs OHG *ring*, *niosan*, *loufen*, *waz*, *rîban* 'ring', 'sneeze', 'to run', 'what', 'to rub'.

In Middle High German and Middle Low German the voiced /b/ /d/ /g/ became voiceless /p/ /t/ /k/ in final position: MHG *lîp* vs *lîbes*, *nît* vs *nîdes*, *tac* vs *tages*; MLG *lîf* vs *lîves*, *nît* vs *nîdes*, *dach* vs *dages* 'life, body', 'hate, anger', 'day'. As in Old High German, initial /hl/, /hr/, /hw/ and /hn/ – still existing in Old Saxon – became /l/, /r/, /w/ and /n/ in Middle Low German.

Vowels

Several changes in the Old High German vowel system occurred. Short [a] was mutated to [e] under the influence of /i/ in the following syllable, e.g. sg. *gast*, pl. *gesti* 'guest(s)'. The same so-called *i*-mutation is found in Old Saxon. Other vowels were also subject to *i*-mutation, but the writing system of the Old High German and Old Saxon period had no means to express it. In the eleventh century forms like *hîute* (instead of *hûti*), plural of *hût* 'skin', show that *i*-mutation was no longer felt to be a variant form, but a phoneme. The /e/ before /i/, /j/, /u/ or /w/ in the next syllable changed into /i/ in Old High German and Old Saxon. Compare the present indicative of strong verbs like OHG *neman* 'to take': *ih nimu*, *dû nimis*, *er nimit* vs *wir nememes*, *ir nemet*, *sia nemant*. The /u/ before /a/, /e/ and /o/ in the next syllable became /o/ (so-called 'breaking'). This phenomenon appears in the past plural forms of certain strong verbs: e.g. OHG *wurfum*, OSax. *wurpun* 'we threw' – *giworfan*, *giworpan* 'thrown'.

Diphthongization in Old High German took place in /o:/ and /e:/. In the pre-Old High German period Germanic /o:/ already started to develop into /uo/. Germanic /e²/ was diphthongized to <ea>, <ia>, <ie> during the ninth century. The /e²/ (> <ia>, <ie>) is found in the past tense of strong verbs of class VII, e.g. *heizzan* – *hiaz* – *hiazzum* – *giheizzan* 'to order'.

The Germanic diphthongs /ai/, /au/, /eu/ also changed in Old High German and Old Saxon. The Germanic /ai/ became /e:/ before /r/, /h/ and /w/: OHG *mêro* 'more', *êht* 'possession'. In other positions /ai/ remained, written as <ei> or <ai>. Monophthongization probably started in the north, since Old Saxon

has /e:/ in all positions, e.g. OHG *stein*, OSax. *stên* 'stone'. Germanic /au/ became /o:/ before /h/ and all dentals in Old High German, e.g. *hōh* 'high', *tōd* 'death'. Like the development of Germanic /ai/, this change occurred in the seventh and eighth centuries, beginning in the north. In all other positions /au/ remained, written as <ou> or <au>. In Old Saxon /au/ developed into /o:/ in all positions: OHG *boum* vs OSax. *bôm* 'tree'. In Old Saxon even the development of /au/ into /a:/ occurred, the common development for Old Frisian, e.g. OSax. *âst*- 'east' in place-names. From Germanic /eu/ two different diphthongs developed, depending on the vowel in the next syllable: Old High German and Old Saxon /eo/ (further developing into /io/) before /a/, /e/, /o/, e.g. OHG *beotan*, OSax. *biodan* 'to offer' and Old High German and Old Saxon /iu/ in all other positions, e.g. OHG *biutu*, OSax. *biudu* 'I offer'. In its complete form this development appears only in Old Saxon and Franconian texts. In Bavarian and Alemannic /eo/ and /io/ only resulted before dental consonants and before /x/.

The most striking feature of Middle High German and Middle Low German is the reduction of the vowels in the unstressed syllables. Only suffixes with secondary stress keep their vowel: *-bar*, *-dom*, *-heit*, *-unge*. The reduction to the vowel schwa, written <e>, e.g. OHG *salbon*, *faran* vs MHG *salben*, *faren* 'to anoint', 'to go', and OSax. *skriban* vs MLG *schriven* 'to write', implied conflation of the morphological endings in the declensions and conjugations. The relative richness of forms of the Old High German and Old Saxon period disappeared. The second most significant characteristic is the spread of *i*-mutation. In Old High German and Old Saxon only mutation of /a/ was expressed in orthography. During the tenth and eleventh centuries the differences between mutated and non-mutated vowels became significant and were also expressed. In Old High German and Old Saxon *i*-mutation had a complementary distribution according to the vowel in the following syllable. In Middle High German and Middle Low German the mutation gradually became a phonemic feature which was used in declensions and conjugations, e.g. to distinguish singular and plural forms such as *gast*, *geste* 'guest(s)'.

As in Middle Dutch the Middle Low German short vowels were lengthened in open syllables: OSax. *gripum*, MLG *wi grepen* 'we grasped'. This caused a difference between singular and plural of Middle Low German words like: *vat*, *vate* 'vessel(s)'. Lengthening did not take place in closed syllables: *osse*, *ossen* 'ox(en)'. In late Middle High German lengthening also occurred.

4.7 Morphology

The Nominal Group

Nouns

In Old High German and Old Saxon the old system of vocalic and consonantal declensions had deteriorated considerably. Some classes only have rest-forms and especially in the younger texts there can be considerable mixing of stems. Old High German and Old Saxon distinguish five cases: nominative, accusative, genitive, dative and instrumental. These are mainly signalled by inflectional endings of the noun, the adjective and the determiner. The three gender distinctions are masculine, feminine and neuter; and the number distinctions, singular and plural. The old dual forms have almost completely disappeared in Old High German, although remnants in Middle High German show that they existed in some dialects. Old Saxon has dual forms in the personal pronoun. Adjectives vary according to the case, gender and number of the noun with which they are collocated. In Old High German, Old Saxon, Middle High German and Middle Low German there still are two paradigms: a weak and a strong one. The former appears when a determiner is used. So, for example, there is a difference between *guot(êr) man* and *der guoto man*, cf. OSax. *gôd man* and *thie gôdo man* 'a (the) good man'.

The *a*-stems comprise masculine and neuter nouns (Table 4.5). The Old High German system no longer differentiated between long and short stems. The instrumental only appears in the singular.

The endings of Old Saxon *dag* and *word* are in most cases the same. The difference lies in nominative and accusative plural of masculine nouns, where *-os/-as* is the ending: *dagos*, *-as* 'days'. Endings with <a> in the unaccented syllable appear in genitive and dative singular of both masculine and neuter nouns: *dagas*, *daga*. The Old Saxon system still differentiated between long and short stems in the neuter forms, e.g. *graf* 'grave' and *hros(s)* 'horse'. Here the plural forms differ in the nominative and accusative: *gravu* 'graves' vs *hros* 'horses'.

Table 4.5 *a*-declension

	<i>Masculine</i> Singular		Plural		<i>Neuter</i> Singular		Plural	
Nom.	der	tag 'day'	dia	taga	daz	wort 'word'	diu	wort
Acc.	den	tag	dia	taga	daz	wort	diu	wort
Gen.	des	tages	dero	tago	des	wortes	dero	worto
Dat.	demo	tage	dem	tagum	demo	worte	dem	wortum
Instr.	diu	tagu			diu	wortu		

The so-called *iz/az*-stems are a special group. In the earliest texts forms like *kelbires* (gen. sg.; nom. sg. *kalb* 'calf') and *kelbire* (dat. sg.) are found. Generally in the singular these nouns have the case endings of the *a*-stems. In the plural they keep their original form together with the endings of the neuter *a*-stems: *kelbir – kelbir – kelbiro – kelbirum*. Originally, only a few words e.g. (*h*)*rint* 'cattle', *lamb* 'lamb' belonged to this group, but already in the Old High German period it extended to other neuter nouns e.g. *hûs* 'house', *feld* 'field'. In Old Saxon only a few representatives are found and there are no traces of other words joining this group.

To the *ô*-stems (Table 4.6) belong most feminine nouns. In some formulas and in adverbial use old endingless forms of the nominative survived e.g. *stunt* 'hour, time'. Feminine words in *-în*, such as *kuningîn* 'queen', also keep the endingless nominative. In Old Saxon essentially the same endings were used. Especially in later Old Saxon there is a tendency of the *ô*-stems to mix with feminine weak nouns (*n*-stems).

The *i*-stems include both masculine and feminine nouns. In the singular the masculine nouns had already merged with the *a*-stems. Cf. OHG *gast* 'guest' and *kraft* 'power' (Table 4.7).

Among the *u*-stems there is a strong tendency to converge with other declensions, especially *i*-stems. Only a few words retain historical forms and these appear only in the earliest texts.

The group of *n*-stems, or weak nouns, includes all genders. The endings differ in the various Old High German dialects: in masculine and neuter nouns

Table 4.6 *ô*-declension, *geba* 'gift'

	Singular		Plural	
Nom.	diu	geba	dio	gebâ
Acc.	dia	geba	dio	gebâ
Gen.	dera	geba	dero	gebôno
Dat.	deru	gebu	dem	gebôm

Table 4.7 *i*-declension

	Singular		Plural	
Nom.	gast	gesti	kraft	krefti
Acc.	gast	gesti	kraft	krefti
Gen.	gastes	gestio, -o	krefti	kreftio
Dat.	gaste	gestim	krefti	kreftim
Instr.	gastiu, -u			

Table 4.8 *n*-declension

	Singular		Plural	
Masculine				
Nom.	der	hano	die	hanon, -un
Acc.	den	hanon, -un	die	hanon, -un
Gen.	des	hanen, -in	dero	hanôno
Dat.	demu	hanen, -in	dem	hanôm
Neuter				
Nom.	daz	herza	diu	herzun
Acc.	daz	herza	diu	herzun
Gen.	des	herzen, -in	dero	herzôno
Dat.	demu	herzen, -in	dem	herzôm
Feminine				
Nom.	diu	zunga	dio	zungûn, -on
Acc.	dia	zungûn, -on	dio	zungûn, -on
Gen.	dera	zungûn, -on	dero	zungôno
Dat.	deru	zungûn, -on	dem	zungôm

-en/-in and *-on/-un* in the singular; in the plural *-on/-un*. In feminine nouns the variation *-un/-on* occurs (Table 4.8). Like in the Old High German dialects, in Old Saxon the vocalism of the ending varies from text to text. In masculine and neuter words the ending *-an* appears, too, while in feminine words *-on* instead of *-un* is quite common.

The system of vocalic and consonantal stems as it existed in Old High German and Old Saxon continued into Middle High German and Middle Low German. In the course of the Middle High German and Middle Low German period the differences between the vocalic stems were further reduced. By then only a distinction between the strong (vocalic) declension and the weak (consonantal) declension could be made.

Adjectives

In Old High German and Old Saxon the adjective had two declensions, weak and strong. An adjective preceded by a determiner (i.e. possessives and demonstratives) is declined weak, otherwise it is declined strong. The weak declension corresponds to the endings of the *n*-stems (cf. Table 4.8). The strong declension has the endings of the vocalic stems and several pronominal endings which partly replaced the originally nominal ones. In Old High German both the nominal ending and the pronominal ending occur in the nominative singular of all genders; in Old Saxon only the nominal ending (cf. Table 4.9). The nominal ending usually appears in predicative use. Even in nominative and accusative plural endingless forms appear in predicative use.

Table 4.9 Strong declension of adjectives

		Old High German		Old Saxon	
Masculine					
Singular					
Nom.	blint, -êr	man	blind	man	'blind man'
Acc.	blintan	man	blindan	man	
Gen.	blintes	mannes	blindes	mannes	
Dat.	blintemu	manne	blindum	manne	
Instr.	blintu	mannu	blindu	mannu	
Plural					
Nom.	blinte	man	blinda	man	
Acc.	blinte	man	blinda	man	
Gen.	blintero	manno	blintero	manno	
Dat.	blintê̄m	mannum	blindun	mannum	
Feminine					
Singular					
Nom.	blint, -iu	frouwa	blind	quena	'blind woman'
Acc.	blinta	frouwûn	blinda	quenun	
Gen.	blintera	frouwûn	blintero	quenun	
Dat.	blinteru	frouwûn	blindaru	quenun	
Plural					
Nom.	blinto	frouwûn	blinda	quenun	
Acc.	blinto	frouwûn	blinda	quenun	
Gen.	blintero	frouwôno	blindaro	quenono	
Dat.	blintê̄m	frouwôm	blindun	quenun	
Neuter					
Singular					
Nom.	blint, -az	barn	blind	barn	'blind child'
Acc.	blint, -az	barn	blind	barn	
Gen.	blintes	barnes	blindes	barnes	
Dat.	blintemo	barne	blindum	barne	
Plural					
Nom.	blintiu	barn	blindiu	barn	
Acc.	blintiu	barn	blindiu	barn	
Gen.	blintero	barno	blindaro	barno	
Dat.	blintê̄m	barnum	blindun	barnum	

Table 4.10 Irregular comparative and superlative forms

Adjective		Comparative		Superlative		
Old High German	Old Saxon	Old High German	Old Saxon	Old High German	Old Saxon	
guot	gôd	'good'	bezziro	betiro	bezzist	bezt
ubil	ubil	'evil'	wirsiro	wirsa	wirsist	
mihhil	mikil	'big'	mêro	mêro	meist	mêst
luzzil	luttil	'little'	minniro	minniro	minnist	minnist

In Middle High German and Middle Low German the number of different forms was greatly reduced, because of vowel reduction in unstressed syllables. In the plural all genders had the same forms in Middle Low German. In Middle High German only the plural neuter forms were distinctive, as they kept *-iu* in the nominative and accusative. Probably due to Middle High German influence Middle Low German also had pronominal forms like *blinder* (m. nom. sg.) and *blinde* (f. nom. sg.).

Comparison of Adjectives

In Old High German and Old Saxon the comparative and superlative suffixes are *-ir/-ôr* and *-ist/-ôst*, respectively. Adjectives with more than one syllable tend to use the forms with *ô*, e.g. *sâligôro* 'more blessed'. The monosyllabic adjectives use both suffixes (e.g. *hôhiro*, *hôhôro* 'higher'), but the old *ja*-stems prefer forms with *-i-* such as *suoziro* 'sweeter'. The usage of the *i*-forms and *o*-forms in the superlative is roughly the same as in the comparative: *sâligôst* 'most blessed', *suozist* 'sweetest', *hôhist/hôhôst* 'highest'. The comparative only has a weak declension. The superlative has both the strong and the weak declension. Some adjectives derive their comparative and superlative from other roots, as shown in Table 4.10.

Adverbs

The regular adverbs in Old High German and Old Saxon are derived from adjectives with the suffix *-o*, such as *ubilo* 'badly'. This regards also *ja*-stems so that there is a difference between *scôni* 'beautiful' and *scôno* 'beautifully'. In Middle High German and Middle Low German a mutated vowel signifies this difference: *schône* vs *schoene*. The comparison of adverbs only has *-ôr* and *-ôst*, even if the adjective has *i*-forms, e.g. *altiro* 'older', *altôr* 'elderly'. Another possibility of constructing adverbs is the use of the suffix *-lihho*, OSax. *-liko*.

Personal Pronouns

Old Saxon and Middle Low German shared the common Ingvaemonic convergence of dative and accusative forms of the personal pronoun. Another

Table 4.11 Personal pronouns

<i>Old High German</i>							<i>Old Saxon</i>							
First person	sg.			pl.			sg.			du.		pl.		
Nom.	ih			wir			ik			wit		wî		
Acc.	mih			unsih			mî			unk		ûs		
Gen.	mîn			unsêr			mîn			unkaro		ûser		
Dat.	mir			uns			mî			unk		ûs		
Second person	sg.			pl.			sg.			du		pl.		
Nom.	dû			ir			thû			git		gi		
Acc.	dih			iuwih			thî			inc		iu		
Gen.	dîn			iuwêr			thîn					iuwar		
Dat.	dir			iu			thî			inc		iu		
Third person	sg. m.	sg. f.	sg. n.	pl. m.	pl. f.	pl. n.	sg. m.	sg. f.	sg. n.			pl. m.	pl. f.	pl. n.
Nom.	er	siu	iz	sie	sio	siu	hê, hie	siu	it			sie,	sia	siu
Acc.	ina, in	sia	iz	sie	sio	siu	ina, in	sia	it			sie,	sia	siu
Gen.	sîn	ira	is		iro		is	iro, ira	is				iro	
Dat.	imu, -o	iru	imu, -o		im		im, imo	iru, iro	im, imu				im	

special feature of Old Saxon is the existence of dual forms in the first and second person (Table 4.11). In Old High German the dual does not appear, in Middle High German there are a very few examples of it in some dialects.

In Middle High German and Middle Low German the number of different forms diminished as a result of the loss of the final vowels and of the development of /m/ to /n/.

Some Remarks on Other Pronouns

Old High German and Middle High German had reflexive pronouns in the accusative singular and plural of all genders: *sich*. In other cases the personal pronoun was used. Old Saxon and Middle Low German originally had no reflexive pronoun. The accusative personal pronoun was used instead. Under the influence of Old High German and Middle High German the dative and accusative form *sik/sek* is found in some texts.

In Old High German the following possessive pronouns appear: *mîn, dîn, unsêr, iuwêr* (OSax. *unsa, iuwa*). They are declined as strong adjectives. The possessive pronoun of the third person was taken from the reflexive pronoun: *sîn*. Because of this it relates only to masculine and neuter singular forms as a subject. For feminine singular and for the plural forms the genitive of the personal pronoun was used: OHG/OSax. *ira*, MHG/MLG *ir*. Being a genitive this pronoun could not be declined. During the Middle High German and Middle Low German period declined forms appear: *iren lîp* 'her life'.

The declension of the demonstrative pronoun is identical to that of the definite article forms. In the course of time a new demonstrative developed, formed with the particle *-se* that was added to the demonstrative forms: m. sg. nom. MHG *dise*, MLG *desse* and a great number of varying forms.

The interrogative pronoun is declined in the same way as the definite article. There are no plural forms and the same form is used for both masculine and feminine. Cf. m. f. nom. MHG *wer, wê*, MLG *wie, wi*, n. nom. MHG. *waz*, MLG *wat*.

The Verbal Group

In the Germanic languages person and number were originally indicated by suffixed person markers, but in Old High German the subject pronoun already appears in most instances. Mood, too, was marked by verbal morphology: the subjunctive and imperative endings differed from the indicative ones. There were two tenses: the present, indicating present and future time, and the preterite, indicating the past. The preterite and the past participle are formed in two different ways: for the strong verbs by vowel gradation, and for the weak verbs by means of a dental suffix. In Old High German there existed seven classes of strong verbs and three classes of weak verbs, besides some irregular verbs.

In Old High German and Old Saxon the subjunctive and indicative have different forms. Compare the present and preterite of the Old High German

Table 4.12 Verbal conjugation of OHG *helfan*

Indicative			Subjunctive	
Present				
1 sg.	ih	hilfu	ih	helfe
2 sg.	dû	hilfis	dû	helfès
3 sg.	er	hilfit	er	helfe
1 pl.	wir	helfamês	wir	helfêm
2 pl.	ir	helfet	ir	helfêt
3 pl.	sia	helfant	sia	helfên
Preterite				
1 sg.	ih	half	ih	hulfi
2 sg.	dû	hulfi	dû	hulfîs
3 sg.	er	half	er	hulfi
1 pl.	wir	hulfum	wir	hulfîm
2 pl.	ir	hulfut	ir	hulfît
3 pl.	sia	hulfun	sia	hulfîn

strong verb *helfan* (Table 4.12). Another important difference between Old High German and Old Saxon – besides the High German sound shift – is the common plural form in Old Saxon: all three persons have the same form: pres. ind. *wi, gi, sia helpad*; pret. ind. *wi, gi, sia hulpun*. The nominal forms are: inf. *helfan* (OSax. *helfan*), pres. part. *helfanti* (OSax. *helfandi*), pp. *giholfan* (OSax. *giholpan*). The imperative forms are: sg. *hilf* (OSax. *hilp*), pl. *helfet* (OSax. *helpad*).

Vowel gradation in the strong verbs, as in all Germanic languages, follows definite patterns. In Old High German and Old Saxon seven main patterns are

Table 4.13 Strong verb classes

	Infinitive		Preterite		Past participle
			Singular	Plural	
Class I	grifan	'to grasp'	greif	grifum	gigrifan
Class II	biotan	'to offer'	bôt	butum	gibotan
	lûhhan	'to close'	lôh	luhum	gilohhan
Class III	bintan	'to bind'	bant	buntum	gibuntan
	helfan	'to help'	half	hulfum	giholfan
Class IV	beran	'to bear'	bar	bârum	giboran
Class V	geban	'to give'	gab	gâbum	gigeban
Class VI	graban	'to dig'	gruob	gruobum	gigraban
Class VII	haltan	'to hold'	hialt	hialtum	gihaltan
	lâzzan	'to let'	liaz	liazzum	gilâzzan
	heizzan	'to order'	hiaz	hiazzum	giheizzan
	ruofan	'to cry'	riaf	riafum	giruofan

clearly discernible. As the Old High German examples in Table 4.13 show, all seven classes have four categories: infinitive, preterite singular, preterite plural and past participle.

The preterite of weak verbs in Old High German is formed by means of the suffix *-ta*. There are three classes of weak verbs, according to the final vowel of the infinitive ending: *-en* e.g. *hören* 'to hear'; *-ôn*, e.g. *salbôn* 'to anoint'; *-ên* e.g. *habên* 'to have'. The first group takes *-i-* as its stem vowel, the second *-ô-* and the third *-ê-*. Hence the preterites *nerita*, *salbôta*, *habêta*. The endings of the three classes are the same, except for the first person present indicative: in the *-ên-* and *-ôn-* groups *-m* is found instead of *-u*, e.g. *ih suohhu* 'I seek' vs *ih salbôm*, *habêm* 'I anoint, have'.

The present indicative forms are: *ih suohhu – du suohhis – er suohhit – wir suohhemês – ir suohhet – sia suohhent*; the present subjunctive forms: *suohhe – suohhês – suohhe – suohhêm – suohhêt – suohhên*. The preterite of Class I weak verbs distinguishes between short and long stems. Long-stemmed verbs lost /i/ before the ending: *ih suohta* vs *ih nerita*. The endings of the past tense indicative are: *-ta, -tôs, -ta, -tum, -tut, -tun*. Thus: *suohta, nerita, salbôta, habêta*, etc. In the subjunctive the endings are: *-ti, -tîs, -ti, -tîm, -tît, -tîn*. Thus: *suohti, neriti, salbôti, habêti*, etc. In the imperative: sg. *suohhi, neri, salbo, habe*, pl. *suohhet, neriet, salbôt, habêt*. The infinitives are: *suohhen, nerien, salbôn, habên*, the present participles: *suohhenti, nerienti, salbônti, habênti*, and past participles: *gisuohhit, ginerit, gisalbôt, gihabêt*.

In Old Saxon the weak verbs appear in two classes: those with original *-ian* and those with *-ôn*. Traces of a third class are rare. The two classes differ in the same way as in Old High German. There is, however, one complication: long stems of the first class lose *-i-* in the preterite, e.g. *hôrean, hôrda* 'heard'. This could have consequences for the following dental consonant which was devoiced after a voiceless consonant, e.g. *lôsian, lôsda/lôsta* 'to release'.

Vowel reduction strongly reduced the number of forms in Middle High German and Middle Low German. Here only two groups of weak verbs existed: (1) weak verbs with *e* before the preterital suffix e.g. MLG *he makede*; (2) verbs without a vowel e.g. MHG *hôrte* 'heard', *dâhte* 'thought', MLG *he hôrde*. The seven classes of the strong verbs are still to be found in Middle High German and Middle Low German.

The anomalous verbs *sîn* 'to be', *tuon* 'to do', *gân/gên* 'to go' and *stân/stên* 'to stand' have special forms in the preterite and the past participle, both in Old High German and Old Saxon. Verbs with vowel gradation in the present tense belong also to the group of irregular verbs. All these verbs have been preserved in the Middle High and Middle Low German period.

4.8 Syntax

On the whole Old High German and Old Saxon manifest a development from a synthetic to an analytic language. This means that syntactic and semantic

functions are no longer exclusively and clearly expressed by case endings, but by obligatory specifiers of the noun (article, preposition) and of the verb (personal pronouns, auxiliary verbs). The Old High German sentence *uuili mih dinu speru uuerpan* becomes *du willst mich mit deinem Speer werfen* 'you want to throw your spear at me' in Modern German. In Middle High German the use of the article became obligatory with count nouns.

Almost all Old High German texts are translations from a Latin source. Given this situation, it is highly probable that some characteristics, such as the use of participial constructions, betray Latin influence.

The Nominal Group

The word order in the early period was rather free, as the case endings were still discernible. There is a tendency to place the adjective before the noun, e.g. *dhese chisalbodo got* 'this anointed god'. The same applies to genitivals which are commonly put before the noun, even when the Latin source had a different word order: *widar mannes sune* 'against man's son'. Vowel reductions of vowels in the endings necessitated the use of personal and demonstrative pronouns to show the function of the nouns and verbs, e.g. *thô quad in thér heilant: ir irrot ni uuizenti giscrib noh gotes megin* 'then the Saviour said to them: you err, neither knowing the scriptures nor God's power'.

Nouns

The nominative is the case of the subject and of the predicative noun referring to the subject. In Old High German and Old Saxon it also adopted the functions of the vocative.

The accusative is the case of the direct object; it is governed by a transitive verb. In some instances double accusatives existed: *lêrit iuuuuh al uuâr* 'he teaches you the whole truth', cf. OSax. *lêrda thia liudi langsamana râd* 'he taught the people long during advice'. In its absolute use the accusative could signify place, e.g. *thô fuar er mit imo hôhe berga* 'then he went with him on high mountains', and duration of time, e.g. *wâron se allo worolti zi thir zeigônti* 'they have pointed to you throughout all ages'.

The genitive normally expresses possession: *mannes sune* 'man's son'. Besides this we very often find a partitive function. In this function it was also used after numerals, e.g. OHG *sumaro enti wintro sehstic* 'sixty summers and winters'; OSax. *twêntig wintro* 'twenty winters', and after nouns and adjectives denoting a measure or a quantity: OSax. *tehan embar honiges* 'ten buckets honey'. In both languages the genitive was also used after certain adjectives like *fruot*, *lôs*, cf. OHG *arbo laosa* 'without heritage'; OSax. *barno lôs* 'without children'. In Old High German and Old Saxon, case forms still had the possibility of expressing circumstantial relations, e.g. OHG *se wara geloufan walde odo weges odo heido* 'they run in the wood or along the path or over the heath'; *wârin mir mîne trâne brôt tages unde nahtes* 'my

tears were bread to me day and night', *managero dingo* 'in manifold ways'. In Old Saxon we find e.g. *hie gibôd torhtaro tēkno* 'he commanded with clear signs' (in this use we also find the dative or the instrumental).

The dative primarily is the case of the indirect object: *so imo se der chuning gap* 'as the king gave them to him'; *hilph mīnan liutin* 'help my people'. Frequently used, especially with verbs of motion, is the ethic dative, in particular in Old Saxon: *tho geng im thanan* 'then he went away'. The dative is also used in combination with adjectives like *sēr*, *liob*, etc.: *imo was eo fehta ti leop* 'he always loved fighting too much'. In Old High German and Old Saxon the dative is often used in instrumental function, especially in plural forms. In the singular the earliest texts still had the instrumental: OHG *her fragên gistuont fōhem uuortum* 'he began to ask with few words'; OSax. *handon sluog* 'beat with his hands'.

In early Old High German and Old Saxon a number of masculine and neuter nouns preserve traces of the old instrumental in the singular, but even in the earliest texts *mit* or *mid* 'with' could be used with the instrumental: OHG *nu scal mih suâsat chind suertu hauwan*, *lbretton mit sīnu billiu* 'now my own child shall hew me with the sword/strike me down with his brand'; OSax. *awekid mit wīnu* 'waked up with wine'. If the noun is accompanied by a qualifying word the dative is used: *mit drōstu* 'with comfort', *mit themo drōste* 'with the comfort'. In fact the instrumental was already redundant in the Old High German and Old Saxon period. After the eleventh century only traces of the instrumental are preserved, especially with pronouns: MHG *z(w)iu* 'wherefore?'. Up to this day OHG *hiutu* (< **hiu tagu*) and *hiuru* (< **hiu jāru*) – cf. OSax. *hiudu* (< **hiu dagu*) – have remained in use: Mod. Ger. *heute*, *heuer* 'today', 'this year'.

Adjectives

Originally in the Germanic languages the strong declension of adjectives was used both in definite and indefinite contexts. With the rise of the article in the Old High German period the strong declension was used for indefinite use and the weak declension for the definite one: *guot man* vs *thu guoto scalc*. Because of this the strong declension – unlike in Modern German – was also used after the indefinite article: e.g. *einemo diuremo merigrioze* 'an expensive pearl'. Both inflected and uninflected forms of the strong adjective were used without semantic difference in the Old High German and the Middle High German periods. In southern Germany the inflected forms were more frequent than in the north. Old Saxon did not have inflected forms in the nominative: OHG *arm(az) barn* vs OSax. *arm barn* 'poor child'. In postposition and in predicative use both inflected and uninflected forms were used: OHG *in einemo felde scōnemo* 'in a fair field', *ther puzz ist filu diofēr* 'this well is very deep', *disiu buzza ist sō tiuf* 'this well is so deep'.

The weak declension referred to something definite. At first it was not necessary to have a definite article, e.g. *ni ist in kihuctin himiliskin gotē* 'he

is not in the mind of the heavenly Lord'. But already in Old High German and Old Saxon the definite marker was regularly used.

The Verbal Group

The analytical tendencies were strong in both Old High German and Old Saxon. The subject pronoun became increasingly obligatory during the period, e.g. (about 800) *suohhemes* 'we search', (about 1020) *dû habest mih kenómen* 'you have received me'. Originally both languages had only two tenses: the present and the preterite. The Latin future tense is normally translated by the present tense. Only rarely is the future expressed by an auxiliary, usually *sculan* 'shall'. In Old Saxon, it is quite commonly expressed with auxiliaries, also *sculan*, although the present is also used. In Old High German perfect and pluperfect can be expressed with the help of *sîn/wesan* 'to be' and *habên/eigan* 'to have', e.g. *intfangan eigut* 'you have received'. The rule governing the use of the verbs is the following: *sîn/wesan* is used in the case of ergative (unaccusative) verbs, i.e. verbs which express a change (*uuas erbolgan* 'was incensed'); *habên/eigan* is used in the case of transitive verbs and the other intransitive verbs: *eigun funtan* 'they have found'.

Like the other West Germanic languages Old High German, Middle High German, Old Saxon and Middle Low German had no synthetic passive, but an analytic one, consisting of the past participle with the auxiliaries *sîn/wesan* (MHG *sîn, wesan*) and *werdan/werthan* (MHG, MLG *werden*). The imperfect passive tenses are formed with the help of *sîn/wesan* 'to be' or *werdan* 'to become', e.g. *uuas gitragan* 'he was carried', *wirdu gitaufit* 'I am baptized', *mîn tohter ubilo fon themo tiuwale giweigit ist* 'my daughter is strongly vexed by the devil'. *werdan* + past participle may refer to future time: *this cunni diuuolo ni uuirdit aruuorfan noba thuruh gibet* 'this race of devils will not be driven out except by prayer'. *sîn/wesan* + past participle may indicate a state in Old High German (and Old Saxon): *bin gitruobit, bim gisentit* (lit.) 'I am one who has been sent'. This phenomenon is sometimes labelled 'stative passive' in the handbooks. Already at the close of the Old High German period the resultative construction with *sîn/wesan* was grammaticalized as a perfect and pluperfect (e.g. *ist/was gimachot*). Eventually this development implied a decreasing usage of the auxiliary *sîn/wesan* in the present and preterite, except in the imperative, as in Modern German: *sei gegrüßt. werden* remained as the only option: *Gothi wurten dannân vertriben fone Narsete patricio* 'the Goths were driven thence by Narses the Patrician'. During the Middle High German and Middle Low German period tripartite constructions came into use in the perfect tenses: ... *daz Gahmuret geprîset ... was worden* 'that Gahmuret has been praised'. They did not become common until after the Middle Ages.

Impersonal passives like *thes êr iu ward giwahanit* 'you were told before about that' deserve special mention. Impersonal (active) constructions have been used since the oldest times, above all with impersonal verbs, e.g. OHG

uuanta iz âbandêt 'because it became evening'. In Middle High German the group of occasional impersonals arose: *den wîben ez durch diu ôren klanc* 'it sounded in the women's ears'. Another group that appears during the Middle High German period consists of constructions such as *ez troumte mir* or *mir troumte* 'I dreamed'.

The Sentence

Word order in Old High German and Old Saxon was rather free. The modern SVO or verb-second order in unmarked declarative sentences is by no means obligatory in the earliest texts: *fater meinida dhar sinan sun, dhuo ir chiminnan chneht nemnida* (lit.) 'the father meant his son by that, when he said beloved servant', but: *dhes martyrunga endi dodh uuir findemes* (lit.) 'of him the martyrdom and death we find' and: *quimit der brûtigomo* (lit.) 'comes the bridegroom'. In subordinate sentences SOV is possible but not necessary: *dhazs fater endi sunu endi heilac gheist got sii* (lit.) 'that Father and Son and Holy Spirit God is', but: *dat du habes heme* (lit.) 'that you have at home'.

Main Clause

In Old High German and Old Saxon asyndetic linking of main clauses regularly occurred: *gistirri zâltun wir io, ni sâhun wir nan ér io* 'we used to count the stars, we never saw it before'. If clauses shared the subject, it was not necessary to repeat it: *denne varant engila upar dio marcha, /wechant deota, wîssant ze dinge* 'then angels fly over the lands, awaken the people, lead [them] to judgement'. Even in Middle High German this was quite common: *dô sâhen Bloedelînes man, ir herre lac erslagen* 'then Bloedelîn's men saw, [that] their lord was killed'. Interrogative sentences have the verb in initial position, if they are not introduced by an interrogative pronoun. The verb could also occupy the initial position in other sentence types: *garutun se iro gudhamun* 'they prepared their battle-dresses'.

Subordinate Clauses

Even in the earliest texts there are beginnings of compound sentences. Asyndetic linking was possible, especially in a conditional sense, of which the word order with an initial verb is a sufficient indication: *bistu Krist guato, sage uns iz gimuato* 'if you are the good Christ, please tell us so'. The earliest form also requires the use of the subjunctive to express subordination: *Hêrro, ih thicho ze dir: thaz wazzer gâbîst dû mir* 'Lord, I ask you, [that] you might give me that water'.

The next move is the use of conjunctions that clearly show the subordination. The most important conjunction in the early texts is OHG *daz*, OSax. *that*. Originally this was the accusative singular neuter of the demonstrative pronoun and used in the first clause to introduce the next: *joh gizâlta in sar thâz: thiû sâliba untar in was* 'and he quickly told them that: the salvation was among them'. The rhyme shows that *thaz* still is part of the first clause.

Normally, however, the pronoun was transferred to the second clause: *wánt er deta mári, thaz druhtin quéman wari* 'for he made known, that the Lord had come'. In Old High German, structures with more than one subordinate clause are quite rare. One example is found in the *Hildebrandlied*: *dat sagetun mi usere liuti, alte anti frote, dea erhina warun, dat Hiltibrant hætti min fater . . .* 'Our people, old and wise, who lived for a long time, told me that, that Hildebrand was my father's name'. In Old Saxon much more complicated sentences were common. The *Heliand* has e.g. *manega uuâron, the sia iro môd gespôn,/. . . that sia begunnun uuord godes, /reckean that girûni, that thie rîceo Crist/undar mancunnea mârîda gifrumîda* 'there were many [people], whose mood caused them, that they began to relate the word of God, the secret that the mighty Christ wrought famous things among mankind'. It is, however, possible that the stylistic variation of the text caused these constructions to be used.

Other conjunctions already in use in Old High German and Old Saxon were: *thanne* 'then' in a conditional sense, e.g. *thanne ir betôt, duet iz kurzlîchaz* 'whenever you pray, make it brief' – in Middle High German this conjunction was replaced by (*s*)*wenne*: *die lûhten sô mit glanze, /swenne er gie bî dem tanze* 'they [the buttons] shone with such brightness whenever he danced'; *thô* 'when' in a temporal sense: *tho thaz gihorta Herodes ther cuning, uuard gitruobit* 'when king Herod heard this, he was disturbed'; *wanda* 'for' in a causal sense: *ni uuolta sih fluobiren, uuanta sie ni uuârun* 'and she [Rachel] would not be consoled, for they [her sons] were not there'.

Even the relative clause could be asyndetic in the earliest texts: *in droume sie in zelitun then weg sie faran scoltun* 'in a dream they told them the way they should go'. The relative pronoun in Old High German and Old Saxon is formally identical to the demonstrative pronoun. The starting point for relative clauses probably was the Latin construction from the type *ego sum qui loquor tecum*. This was translated: *ih bin thê sprichu mit thir* originally: 'I am the one, I speak with you'. Demonstrative and relative pronoun are united in one word, cf. MHG *sie bienen die si wolten, Junt niht den si solten* 'they excommunicated those whom they wanted to and not him whom they should have'. Often the relative pronoun had the same case as the antecedent, even if that was not in accordance with its function in the subordinate clause: *thes thigit worolt ellu thes ih thir hiar nu zellu* 'for this all the world is pleading, which I am here now telling you'. In the first clause the genitive *thes* is correct, in the second clause it should have been the accusative. The tendency is, however, to take the case that is required in the subordinate clause. Even interrogative pronouns could develop into relatives. The connection between the two functions can be seen in: *inu ni lârut ir hwaz David teta?* 'have you not read what David did?'. An example for the use of an interrogative as a relative pronoun can be found in: *hërro, thu nu ni habes mit hîu scefes* 'Lord, you have nothing to draw with'. In Old High German and Old Saxon the

interrogative pronoun in combination with *sô* could serve as indefinite relative pronoun: *sô uúer so fúrlaze sina quenun*, ... 'whoever leaves his wife ...'.

4.9 Lexis

Early Period

As a heritage from Old Germanic times Old High German and Old Saxon share the greater part of their lexicon with the other West Germanic languages. In the earliest instances of Old High German and in the Old Saxon biblical epics we even find words that probably belong to a common Germanic literary language, e.g. *ferah* 'life, people', cf. Go. *fairhvus*, OEng. *feorh*, OFris. *ferech*, ON *fför*. The Roman occupation and the influence of Roman culture brought many loanwords to Old High German and, to a lesser extent, to Old Saxon. The periods of borrowing can in many cases clearly be distinguished, as loans from the earliest period went through the second sound shift, e.g. OHG *strazza* (< *via strata*) 'street', *phorza* (< *porta*) 'gate'. This suggests that also Old Saxon *strata*, *porta* originate from that period.

During and after the conversion many (Graeco-)Latin Christian loanwords came into use. Even here there is an old group of early loans that were borrowed before the High German sound shift: e.g. *kirihha* 'church', *phaffo* 'cleric' – cf. OSax. *kirika*, *Paping-* (in place-names) – and a younger group that lacks signs of the shift and probably were borrowed later (or lost those signs under the continuous influence of the Latin language).

An important feature of Old High German is the search for adequate translations of Latin words in religious literature. Many attempts were made to translate abstract words. As a large body of the surviving Old High German texts consists of glosses in Latin manuscripts there is a great number of hapaxes. As central an idea as Latin *resurrectio* 'resurrection' has no less than fifteen translations: *ur-stant*, *ur-rist*, *ur-stend-i*, *ur-rest-î*, *ur-stend-ida*, *ur-stend-idi*, *ur-stôd-ali*, *ar-stant-nessi*, *ar-stant-nunga*, *ir-stand-ini*, *ûf-er-stend-e*, *ûf-er-stand-unge*, *ûf-er-stand-en-keit*, *ûf-er-stent-nisse*, *ûf-er-stê-unge*. Only the last one survived: *Auferstehung*. It has to be assumed that part of the Old High German religious vocabulary never got farther than certain scriptoria or schools. As the amount of Old Saxon glosses is far less than that of the Old High German, it is difficult to assess whether Old Saxon showed a similar development. But it is highly probable that the situation there was the same.

Middle High German and Middle Low German Period

In the course of the eleventh and twelfth centuries Middle High German and to a lesser extent Middle Low German developed into a literary language. Old French exercised a strong influence on the language of the Middle High German courtly literature. Many words were introduced directly – or

indirectly through Middle Dutch. In particular, the technical terms of courtly life were French: *aventure* 'adventure', *tjostieren* 'fight in a tournament' etc. The meaning of other words was influenced by French equivalents, e.g. *hövesch* 'courtly'. The French influence went so far that even French suffixes like *-fe*, *-ieren* were attached to German words: *jegerfe* 'hunt', *stolzieren* 'to walk proudly'. After the decline of courtly literature most technical terms disappeared again, but the suffixes remained. In Middle Low German the influence of courtly literature was far less important. Here the urban vernacular remained quite free of foreign influences. The many translations from Middle Dutch resulted in a certain influence from that language, although the resemblance between these two languages makes it difficult to ascertain whether or not a word is a loan.

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