The British Isles:

England Ireland Scotland Wales

England

500BC – 449AD

Early Development in England

- In about 500BC England was under the Celts.

- The Romans invaded the country in 55BC and 43AD.

- The Romans exiled the Celts north into Scotland and west into Wales

- The Romans ruled in Albion (their name for England) until they were driven out by the Germans in 449AD

Anglo-Saxon England

449AD – 1066AD

Anglo-Saxon England

➤ **Angles** \
➤ **Saxons   Germanic tribes**
➤ **Jutes   /**

- **The Germans referred to England as "Angle Land"**

- **The Germans were warlike tribes. They were also the source of early English Literature.**

- **Originally, the Germans were pagans, but later, they converted to Christianity when the Roman Cleric St. Augustine came to England.**

- **Scop – a minstrel who chanted memorized poetry to a group**

Anglo-Saxon England

- In 664, England established a church. As a result, conversion and partiality spread.

- Once religious unity was established, they established one set language.

- Anglo-Saxon (Old English) was influenced by German, Latin, and French. Unfortunately, the language did not spread very far, because there was no printing press.

- Values

  1) war - brutal; short lives (war casualties)

  2) *wyrd* - fate; destiny (cannot improve life; destiny is controlled)

  3) companionship (*Comitatus*) - warriors were extremely faithful to their tribe.

  4) heroism - have courage in times of adversity

Anglo-Saxon England

- **Qualities of Old English Poetry**
  1) alliteration - no rhyme; repetition of initial consonant sounds
  2) oral formulaic - spoken from memory (repeat to remember)
  3) synonyms - many forms for one word (keeps the alliteration)
  4) kenning - odd compound words that evoke thought-provoking imagery (i.e. swan-road/ whale-road "sea" or word-hoard "vocabulary")
  5) caesura – a deliberate pause or break in a line of poetry, usually ner the middle of the lline

- **genre - dream vision (popular from the time of the Bible)**

- **date - Vercelli manuscript @ ninth century; but fragments were found in a stone cross (Ruthwell Cross) in Ireland @ the eighth century.**

- **tri-partite structure**
  1) opening --- words of the dreamer
  2) middle ---- the cross id the speaker
  3) closure --- the dreamer tells of how he carried out the charge

Beowulf: "Lay of the Lone Survivor's Speech" (ll 2247-2266)

`Heald pu nu, hruse, nu haeleo ne mostan,eorla aehte!
Hwaet, hyt aer on oe
gode begeaton; guodeao fornam,
feorhbealo frecne fyra gehwylcne
leoda minra para oe pis [lif] ofgeaf,
gesawon seledream.Nah, hwa sweord wege
oooe fe(o)r(mie) faeted waege,
dryncfaet deore; dug(uo) ellor s[c]eoc.
Sceal se hearda helm (hyr)stedgolde,
faetum befeallen; feormynd swefao,
pa oe beadogriman bywan sceoldon;
ge swylce seo herepad, sio aet hilde gebad
ofer borda gebraec bite irena,
brosnao aefter beorne. Ne maeg byrnan hring
aefter wigfruman wide feran,
haeleoum be healfe. Naes hearpan wyn,
gomen gleobeames, ne god hafoc
geond sael swingeo, ne se swifta mearh
burhstede beateo. Bealocwealm hafao
fela feorhcynna foro onsended!'

- **Chaucer: The Canterbury Tales, General Prologue (ll 1-18)**

- Whan that Aprille with his shoures sote
- The droghte of Marche hath perced to the rote,
- And bathed every veyne in swich licour,
- Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
- When Zephirus eek with his swete breeth
- Inspired hath in every hot and heeth
- The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
- Hath in the Ram his halfe cours y-roonne,
- And smale fowles maken malidye,
- That slepen al the night with open ye,
- So priketh hem nature in hir corages:
- Than longen folk to goon on pilgrimages
- And palmers for to seken straunge strandes
- To ferne halwes, couthe in sondry landes;
- And specially, from every shires ende
- Of Engeland, to Caunterbury they wende,
- The holy blisful martir for to seke,
- That hem hath holpen, whan that they were seke.

- **Shakespeare: <u>Hamlet</u>, Act II, Scene I (ll 181-190)**

- Rest, rest, perturbed spirit!
-      [*They swear.*]
-    So, gentleman,
-    With all my love I do commend me to you:
-    And what so poor a man as he is
-    May do, to express his love and friending to you,
-    God willing, shall not lack. Let us go together;
-    And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
-    The time is out of joint: O cursed spite,
-    That ever I was born to set it right!
-    Nay, come, let's go together.
-      [*Exeunt.*]

[1] Fæder ure þu þe eart on heofonum,
[2] Si þin nama gehalgod.
[3] To becume þin rice,
[4] gewurþe ðin willa, on eorðan swa swa on heofonum.
[5] Urne gedæghwamlican hlaf syle us todæg,
[6] and forgyf us ure gyltas, swa swa we forgyfað urum gyltendum.[]
[7] And ne gelæd þu us on costnunge, ac alys us of yfele.

[8] Soþlice.

[1]Father ours, thou that art in heaven
[2] *Be* thy name hallowed.
[3]Come thy rich (kingdom),
[4]Worth (manifest) thy will, on earth also as in heaven.
[5] Our daily loaf sell (give) us today,
[6] And forgive us our guilts as also we forgive our guilty
[7]And lead thou us not in temptation, but loose (release) us of evil
[8]Soothly

- **Click to listen**

Oure fadir that art in heuenes,
halewid be thi name;
thi kyngdoom come to;
be thi wille don, in erthe as in heuene.
Yyue to vs this dai oure breed ouer othir substaunce,
and foryyue to vs oure dettis, as we foryyuen to oure dettouris;
and lede vs not in to temptacioun, but delyuere vs fro yuel.
Amen.

Beowulf

- A. Cultural Background
- * Anglo-Saxon culture
- * Germanic past - fifth and sixth century Scandinavia
- - glorified body of literature, but they destroyed parts; therefore they left loose ends on some of the allusions but in that time people would have known about those references
- - preservation of the people and culture through literature (the dying past)
- B. Literary Structure (very unique and original)
- * has balance: talks about a hero in youth and in old age
- * speaks about how young men should be/ act
- C. Manuscript History
- * part of an oral tradition
- * probably had more than one author
- * probably written @ 1000 A.D.
- * probably composed @ 650-850 A.D.
- * The original script was burned; therefore some of the sections seem rather confusing (lost in fire).

- D. Themes and Issues in <u>Beowulf</u>

- 1) treasure - highly descriptive; significant part in the plot; part of the <u>Comitatus</u> relationship (lord gives treasure to his retainers); weapons were considered wealth (protection in case of invasion)

- Sutton Hoo Ship Burial - Anglo-Saxon treasure that helped understand the symbolism of $ and jewels (not materialistic)

- $ - a symbol of loyalty; rewards as gratitude; generous, because treasure should not be kept in the ground by itself -> UNLUCKY

- Social standing dealt with the amount of wealth (even with generosity)

- 2.) revenge - was the primary conflict between the Germanic culture (obligated to pay a wergild <A monetary retribution for killing a member of another's family. This was to curb the useless killing of numerous family members to extract retribution. The money value depended on the individual's social status.>)

- 3) digressions
- - poetry wasn't meant to be linear
- - the art was linear and overlapped, the literature did, too (interwoven)

- Beowulf is:
-       - humble and doesn't brag about his strength
-       - wise, especially for man as young as he insight -> uncanny how Beowulf knows that weapons wouldn't   work against Grendel
-
-       - boasts to re-assert his strength
-       - strong man
-       - acts extremely well with rhetoric

- The <u>Comitatus</u> is strong between Beowulf, Hrothgar, and his men.
-
- Socially Beowulf is:
-       - trusting (when Beowulf arrives in Hrothgar's land)
-       - hospitable (introduction of self, feasting, the discussion of business)

Beowulf: "Lay of the Lone Survivor's Speech" (11 2247-2266)

'Heald pū nū, hrūse,   nū haeleo ne mōstan,

eorla āēhte!   Hwaet, hyt āēr on oē

gōde begēaton;   gūodēao fornam,

feorhbealo frēcne   fȳra gehwylcne

lēoda mīnra   pāra oe pis [lif] ofgeaf,

gesāwon seledrēam.   Nāh, hwā sweord wege

oooe fe(o)r(mie)   fāēted wāēge,

dryncfaet dēore;   dug(uo) ellor s[c]eōc.

Sceal se hearda helm   (hyr)stedgolde,'

fāētum befeallen;   feormynd swefao,

pā oe beadogrīman   bȳwan sceoldon;

gē swylce sēo herepād,   sīo aet hilde gebād