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# Literary Texts

## 1<sup>ST</sup> Semester - 1<sup>ST</sup> Lecture

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**Political Terms** Reading & comprehension  
**Consecutive Translation** phonetics  
**Culture** Scientific Texts & Idioms Essay  
**Contrastive Analysis** Dictionaries عربي  
**GRAMMAR** Semantics & Syntax Translation  
**Speaking & Listening**  
**Literary Texts** Interpretation  
**Science of Translation** Discourse Analysis

## **Hello Every one:**

This is the first lecture actually today and it's about “**literary texts for translators**”

Actually, I don't know what is the relation between “literary texts for translators” and the content of this book which is “poetry”. So, it doesn't seem that we are going to translate poetry as much as we are going to have an idea about the background: how the poetry was found in the English literature, how it started and what are the factors that led to its development and the life.

**Professor:** Since we have mentioned the word POETRY, what do you think the word POETRY means? What it is indicate?

**Student:** Some words get together to describe feeling of the poet.

**Professor:** The major factor is words, it consists of words, they are coined together to describe a situation, it expresses feelings, describing a story of something or person, emotions or feelings.

The main point about poetry is that it consists of words, these words are put together in a specific order, and this depends on a poet himself /herself, depends on the situation, on the kind, whatever ... expressing a special case, a feeling, an emotion, describing a place, a person.

And now HOW different it is from PROSE?

\***PROSE** is the same, it has the same content, it consists of words describing a situation, speaking about people, expressing emotions or feelings of people. etc.

**Student:** a rhyme?

**Professor:** If we're talking about poetry in general, then we cannot depend on rhyme. In the past we used to have rhymed poems and that was the case all over the world not only in the English literature. Also, here in the Arabic world we used to have long poems which were really set to a specific rhyme that's why we have “المعلقات”, and they all had the same ending and the same rhyme, with the same divisions of words.

We have the same, all the time that past, but now a days we can have “الشعر العامودي” or “شعر التفعيلة” that doesn't end in any rhyme; you might have one word in the first line and the rhyme might come –if there was a rhyme- at the last line, so we can't consider this as a rhyme.

That's why we can't say that “rhyming words” or “rhyming parts” are the most important in any kind of poetry.

So WORDS are the most important. But what is the difference between words in prose and words in poetry?

**Student:** The words in the poetry it's almost like symbols.

**Professor:** We might have symbolic or figurative words.

Don't you think that there is a kind of music also in prose?

Sometimes the ideas go smoothly from one sentence to another, and you feel there is music, a special music that keep the coherence of all the ideas together. But definitely the music appears more in verse.

There is more figurative language used in poetry. Suppose we have a picture, for example: a lady who is heartbroken, her lover left here for another woman and there was a big hurt inside her.

In how many sentences or words can we describe this picture in prose and in poetry?

In poetry, we may have one word, this depends on the word itself, in poetry words are used in a condensed way just to reflect a picture, while in prose it's not the case; we elaborate a lot for the sake of giving more details.

\*In one word, we have a lot of guesses and we can link between the words and the indications of the words to have a greater explanation of the image, while in prose we have everything available. That's why we don't feel that this is really difficult to understand, the figurative (symbolic) picture is more difficult and sophisticated to understand, sometimes it is incomprehensible (we cannot understand it well). But in prose it's that available but we still dive for something else behind reading prose.

So, we have density (of ideas) and condensity (a lot of images in one word or a few words connected together, in a specific order, over a lot of lines that maybe rhymed or unrhymed), depending on the era or the type of poet that is setting the verbs.

Maybe I am a classical person, like just to listen to this music out-load (I want to see it) that's why I set some rhymed poetry.

If I am not classical and have something that comes from out of the blue, expresses my feelings so openly, I might not get limited to any kind of rhyme, and set my own music which is internal right now. So, there is a connection between the ideas. and this reflected through the connecting of the words together.

**Professor:** Are there kinds of poetry?

**Student:** Romantic poetry.

**Professor:** When we say romantic, this means there is a romantic period, we are connecting with the periods of poetry.

That's what I want to focus on; I don't care for romantic period. But there are periods can have a reflection on poetry depending on: the used words, the political situations, the culture.

Is the English poetry the same from the beginning of early times until of history up to the present moment? No, there were **phases**. (فترات أو حقبات زمنية)

The first phase started with **Anglo-Saxons**. That was called **the old English**, then we proceeded to have the **middle English** and then end up with **modern English**.

The modern English started in 16<sup>th</sup> with the advent of Shakespeare, up to the present moment.

We cannot call this contemporary; because contemporary it is what we are experiencing right now. It's completely different from modern. How?

- The terminology difference: (اختلاف في المصطلحات)

In old English, they used the **old words**; we had a special set of terminology used in the old English. Nowadays we cannot understand these words because they are no more used, that's why we need to join a course in old English if we want to tackle old English poetry. Even the native speakers themselves cannot have access to this old literature unless they are familiar with it.

- The register and words used are different, these words are called **archaic words** that means a very old use of words.

◀ كلمات قديمة جداً أو مهجورة مثل (eek) في الإنكليزية القديمة فهي كلمة لم تعد مستخدمة حالياً.

- The difference in the themes or the topics tackled.

◀ اختلاف في المواضيع التي تتم معالجتها.

### Old English

The old history started with the **Anglo-Saxons**, they are **Germanic groups** from Germanic origins, invaded Britain with invaders, and because they came and settled, the British people definitely mixed with the invaders, that is why the language is part and parcel of the English language that we know today. This was not the only influence that affected the English language. They mixed with the British people of that period and try to inject them with their own culture, and the result was: **tough words, tough literature** given to people.

By the way, when Ottoman Empire invaded us for a long time the result was: having a lot of terminology inserted into our language, like the words: (كجاية ، كفكير ، قاطان) they are all inserted into our language, so it's not pure Arabic words and that is because of the invasion, so every invasion has a lot of effects and influences that affect the different parts of our society not only language.

Also, the bureaucracy (the paper work) that we have it taken from the French people.

### **Open your books on page 11 and read:**

\*The following lines from the *Canterbury Tales* may serve a good example of how Middle English looked and sounded:

Why sholde I noghte as wel eek telle yow al  
The portreiture that was upon the wal  
Withinne the temple of mighty Mars the rede?  
Al peynted was the wal in lengthe and brede,  
Lyk to the estres of the grisly place  
That highte the grete temple of Mars in Trace  
In thilke colde, frosty regioun  
There as Mars hath his sovereyn mansioun.

Just notice the spelling of the words they are tough, difficult to understand from the first hearing but if you read the explanation according to Modern Poetry:

\*In Modern English, the above lines would be:

Why should I not as well also tell you  
Of the paintings that were upon the wall  
Inside the temple of mighty Mars the Red?  
The walls were covered in paintings, in length and breadth  
Similar in style to the interior of the terrible place  
That is known as the great temple of Mars, in Thrace.  
It is in that cold and frosty area  
That the home of Mars is to be found.

If you notice the writing in the first part, you will feel that is really Sanskrit (you cannot decode it).

These lines are from the middle English language, just notice that old English is tougher because it is closely related with the tough Germanic originated groups.

The reader would most likely notice the difference in spelling between the two versions. Some are easily noticed (rede/red, and wal/wall). Others are more difficult to detect (brede/breadth, and sovereyn/sovereign). More challenge for reader of modern English are the archaic words such as (eek/also, and portriecture/painting).

The above passage is also significant in that it exemplifies a shift that we see in English poetry, indeed in most European traditions of the late Medieval and early Renaissance period.

An interest in classical allusions and themes. The reference to Mars, the ancient god of war shows the tension that begins to rise between the sacred and the profane or the secular. One of the pilgrims of Chaucer's work is depicting an image in the center of which stands the temple of a pagan god. As has been mentioned above, the pilgrims were telling stories on their way to another, albeit figurative "temple", that of the Christian saint.

This conflation of the sacred (the Christian, or the dogmatic) with the secular or the profane (the non-Christian or the anti-Christian) becomes an important trend to follow throughout the history of not only English literature, but European literature and arts in general, even to the present day.



## Open your books on page 9:

### Old English

Old English traces its beginning to the Anglo-Saxon conquest of the southern parts of Britain. The Angles and the Saxons were Germanic tribes that poured into Britain in successive waves of **conquest and migration**. The origin of these tribes explains why Old English “displays its kinship with other Germanic languages... much more clearly than does contemporary British and American English.”.

- That was in the old English in the **southern** part of Britain, in the **northern** we have Normans, another invasion.
- So, it was not only one kind of invasion, not for one time, a lot of invasions.
- That’s why they have waves, every part of the group just invades after a period they decided to invade again, or to follow their ancestor, so they invaded and settled, so this is the problem.
- They were Germanic tribes that poured into English in successive waves of conquest and migration.
- The later invaders were more civilized, that’s why they migrated but not invaded. They were peaceful.
- This explains the availability of some words that are similar between two languages.
- There is a big difference between old and modern. Maybe there is only a very small percentage in common but not a lot.

To the ears and eyes of the native speaker of Modern English, Old English sounds and reads like a very foreign language.

Old English poetry survived “thanks to the early **Christians conversions** of the Anglo-Saxon Kingdome and the **literacy** associated with **monastic culture**” (NPE, 333). The connection between the spread of literacy and the advent of Christianity in Britain explains the religious themes and subject matter of Old English poetry, although strong secular pre-Christian themes and motifs continued to manifest themselves in the literacy production of that era.

☞ **Christians conversions:** معتنقي الديانة المسيحية

☞ **Literacy:** معرفة القراءة والكتابة

☞ **monastic culture:** ثقافة الدير

- The Anglo-Saxons were not Christian they came from another religion. When they came to Britain they converted to Christianity. So, it’s already known that when you convert ‘from..to’ you are going to change your literature, the themes of your literature are going to be different.

**For example**, if we speak about Buddhist, we are going to speak about Buddha and his instructions. And when we just convert to Christianity we are going to speak about cries, peace, serenity of mind, spreading peace among people, tolerance. So, images are going to be different, they are going to be full of light, not soiled. You know Buddha was had a lot of tough instructions for life, but because of the environment in which Buddha lived people were more tough and they were not so flexible, but with

cries we have something else, we have flexibility, we had light all over the time, we had serenity, calmness. So even the images are going to differ from one culture to another culture, from one religion to another religion. Definitely, that influence reflected here.

- So, they did not stop having their own culture which was really secular (it was free, it was not connected with any god), there is no super power connection in their poetry. But with the advent of Christianity "conversion to Christianity" there was a change, and it was reflected in the poetry.

### **Middle English**

- In the northern of Britain, there was Normans, another invasion. The Normans are French originated, this means that we have another influence. For example, the word "liaison", is a French word. It means a link between two people or two things.
- The word "reservoir", it means (مخزون) and it used in English with a French spelling and pronunciation. This is because of the French influence of Normand's.
- There were also tribes called "Vikings", who also invaded Britain and had influence.
- **For example**, the word "ox" can be pluralized as a "oxen". the word "man" can be pluralized as a "men". The English language is not original, it takes from different parts from tribes, invaders and so on ..., so we have the Vikings invaders, the Normand invaders, the Anglo-Saxon invaders. So, we have a lot of influences influencing this language and we can imagine, at every period how the English poetry differ.

In 1066 The French-speaking Normans conquered Britain. Within few years of the decisive battle of Hastings that sealed the fate of the British Islands, the predominantly Anglo-Saxon population of Britain found itself under the control of a French-speaking ruling class. Old English had to gradually give way to what we call today Middle English, a new variety of English that was greatly and increasingly exhibiting marked French influences.

- So, they were not able to defied or stand in the face of French that conquest, that's why they just **surrendered**.
- It was so clear. Maybe there is a sunshine, speaking about the vast areas, mountainous areas since they have the Alps, the cold weather. We don't know what the kind of influence was there, and the romance that's why they have some kind of romantic poetry.

Added to influence already exerted by **Latin**, the sacred language of the Catholic Church,

- **Latin** was the language of Europe, and not only the romance but it was circulated in that period. It was also a medium of speaking among different people. Latin was the language of philosophy, medicine, bible. That's why they had to learn Latin, every culture had to learn it, maybe that's why Latin was also move to England. Just notice that England is detached, it's in another place unless it had that kind of conquest it would not have been affected. Maybe it would have remained the same with the Anglo-Saxons or even before them, because it has a sea separating them. While the main land populations in Europe were all affected by the same things because its only main land and they should move

from place to another place. But they did not have an afford just to cross the sea to go to another place.

the transmutation of French vocabulary, idioms and grammatical structures into old English meant that by the **13<sup>th</sup> century** we see examples of poems mixing French, English and Latin (NPE, 335). This rich inter-linguistic exchange and cross-cultural fertilization resulted not only the emergence of novels venues for poetic expression, but also in superb works of literature.

- That's why in the middle area, in the middle period of English we had a flourished of almost everything.

Unarguably the most notable contributions are those of Geoffrey Chaucer in the 14<sup>th</sup> Century whose life and work exhibit marked French influences (OCEL, 188). Chaucer's most celebrated work is *the Canterbury Tales*, a collection of stories narrated by pilgrims on their way to visit the shrine of the famous English saint Thomas a Becket.

- The oldest poetry recorded/found in history was for **Geoffrey Chaucer**. We couldn't have any kind of poetry before Geoffrey Chaucer, maybe there were no writings or maybe it was only oral, moved or passed orally from generation to another generation that's why nothing was recorded and written. There was a kind of writing and reading but maybe there was nothing just to write on. It was only a kind of orally transmitted or passed from one generation to another.
- This is exactly like the Kurdish, it's an oral language, not a written one. In the last century they used the Latin letters to write it.
- For example, if you want to write "هـ" they used "h", but If you want to use the "حـ" they put two dotes over the "h". "x" stands for "خ" if you write two dotes over the "x" it will be "غ" So, it's not a written language.
- There are verbal languages, orally transmitted, and these are not written or recorded in history, that's why we don't know about the Kurdish culture, unless الدكتور محمد رمضان البوطي has written "Memo Zin"; "ميمو زين" in Arabic and in Kurdish, there was a publication for "Memo Zin"; one page in Arabic, and the other in Kurdish.
- People who now know how to read the Kurdish can know well how to read or to understand "Memo Zin" But if you don't, you have just to keep listening because it is moved from generation to another orally. And this the same applied on the old English that was moved from generation to another, but not recorded neither on paper not on stone panels. That's why we don't have any record of that area. But everything started with the Canterbury Tales for Geoffrey Chaucer in the middle ages. We read some poetry for him taken from the Canterbury Tales, just imagine if this period which is called the Middle period is so difficult to understand. Then what about the older English, that had Normandy effect, Anglo-Saxon effect, ... effect. So, we would have a lot of difficulty of understanding that poetry.



- The **Words** can take different connotations from one time to another time, so the word itself will not be restricted to one meaning, it will have a lot of meanings.
- **For example**, “nice man” in the old English means “stupid”, but it is meaning “ a kindness, gentleman.”
- Notice that sometimes we use some words within our own community, within a smaller community. for example, the community of my friend sometimes we use the word that only me and my friend know what its meaning. So, this a word that has another connotation, if I just let other friends know what it means it will spread because you can't restrict it. The moment it goes out of you two it will spread; it will take another connotation. That's why there are differences in meaning from one period to another period .
- **NOTICE:** Latin, it is the church language, language of science in Rome; in philosophy, we have a lot of terminology, and this terminology is Latin originated. At that time, definitely every part of the world has a local language (a native language). But the language of science at that time was Latin, they could not communicate unless they use the Latin.

**That's all for today**

**Next time we will talk about Modern English.**

عنوان مكتبة الكمال: ((كَلِيَّةُ الأَدَابِ – داخل الحرم الجامعيّ - بناء الصحافة/ جانب المدرّج السابع))

**The end ♥**