

Tuesday 31 May – Wednesday 1 June

12:00pm – 12:00pm

Part IB, Paper 3

EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE AND ITS CONTEXTS, 1066-1350

Answer **three** questions.

*You should demonstrate substantial knowledge of the literature of the British Isles in **at least two** of the following three languages: Early Middle English, Anglo-Norman, Latin.*

By 'substantial knowledge' is meant the equivalent of approximately one question or about a third of your script as a whole.

Do not present the same material twice, either in this paper or in the examination as a whole.

Irrelevant answers, or answers only tenuously related to the question, will be penalised.

In the case of handwritten scripts, Illegible handwriting may place candidates at a disadvantage.

*Include your **number**, not your name, on submitted scripts.*

All papers that would usually have been sat as three-hour 'closed-book' and invigilated exams will now be sat online as 'open-book open-web' exams within a 24-hour window. There will be no restrictions on referring during the assessment to books and other materials, whether on paper, online, or in computer files. There will be a word-count range of 800-1200 per essay, which is intended to approximate to the amount that can be written by hand under normal examination conditions. For papers which include a 'Section A' made up of multiple parts, the word-count for a candidate's responses to Section A as a whole must be within the range of 800–1200 words.

Examination responses should conform to the following presentation requirements: they should be in minimum 12pt type; should use a sans serif typeface (e.g. Arial or Calibri); should be 1.5 or double-spaced; and should be submitted as a word-processed document (in .docx or .pdf format).

1. 'Þu art lodlich to biholde,
& þu art lōþ in monievolde:
Þi bodi is short; þi swore is smal;
Grettere is þin heued þan þu al.
Þin ezene bōþ col-blake & brode,
Riȝt swo ho weren ipeint mid wode:
Þu starest so þu wille abiten
Al þat þu mist mid cliure smiten.'

(ANON., *The Owl and the Nightingale*)

Discuss notions of beauty, and the values that attend to them, in the literature of this period.

2. 'So while we live, we take in air through the mouth and exhale it again. What is exhaled and inhaled is called "breath". Thus, in one kiss two spirits meet one another, and they are mixed together and so made one. From this mingling of spirits there grows up a kind of mental agreeableness, which elicits and joins together the affection of those who kiss.'

(AELRED OF RIEVAULX)

Evaluate some uses of mixture, **and/or** ways of mixing things, in early medieval writing.

3. 'Mesone ne clos nē ount duree
Vers femme, quar son engyn pase
Tot ce q'autre engyn compase.'

[Neither house nor enclosure can stand firm against a woman, for her ingeniousness exceeds all that any other ingenuity encompasses.]

(ANON., *De la veille e de la corbayle (Le chevalier a la corbeille)*,
in MS Harley 2253, ca. 1330–40)

In what ways do texts in this period attest to the ingenuity of women?

4. 'Many existing medieval books were subsequently used as repositories for documenting information that their owners or caretakers deemed worth preserving. Writing is linked to security through generations; it is the vehicle for the relic of deeds and promises past.'

(ELAINE TREHARNE)

Discuss ways in which manuscripts **and/or** texts of this period relay the old anew.

5. 'Stond wel, moder, ounder rode,
Bihold þi child wiþ glade mode,
Moder bliþe miȝt þou be.'
'Sone, hou may ich bliþe stonde?
Ich se þine fet and þine honde
I-nayled to þe harde tre.'

(ANON., thirteenth century)

Discuss beholdings **and/or** appearances in literature of this period.

6. 'Si requiert a toz les oïanz
Ki mais orrunt cest soen rumanz,
Qu'il ne seit pur ço avilé
Se femme l'ad si translaté.
Pur ço nel deit hoem pas despire
Ne le bien qu'il i ad desdire.
Mercie crie si quiert pardun
Qu'el' emprist la presumption
De translater ceste vie.
Desqu'ele n'est mielz acumplie
Or emblasmez sun numpueir,
Kar aquité s'ad sun vuleir.'

[And she [the author] requests all those listening, and those who will listen in the future to this, her own narrative in French, that they not denigrate it because it was translated by a woman. No-one should reject it on that account, nor speak pejoratively of the good it contains. She asks for pity, seeking pardon for having the presumption to undertake this translation: that it has not been better done, blame her lack of strength, for here she has accomplished her wish.]

(Attributed to a NUN OF BARKING in *Le Romanz de saint Edward*, late 12th century)

In what ways was it important to early medieval readers to know who wrote a text?

7. 'Recent work with multilingualism as an explicit paradigm for enquiry gives us ways to move beyond rigid associations between language and nation in the exploration of medieval European cultures. Not that multilingualism is in every circumstance a self-evident good, then or now: the medieval paradigm of the tower of Babel as a fall into mutually incomprehensible languages cast a long shadow, even if redeemed by Pentecost's endowment of the apostles with tongues of fire.'

(JOCELYN WOGAN-BROWNE, THELMA FENSTER and DELBERT W RUSSELL)

How well are identities articulated by (or articulated to) language-choice in writing of the multilingual British Isles in this period?

8. 'One day we read together, for pure joy
how Lancelot was taken in Love's palm.
We were alone. We knew no suspicion.
Time after time, the words we read would lift
Our eyes and drain all colour from our faces.
A single point, however, vanquished us.'

(DANTE, *Inferno* 5)

To what extent are texts in this period concerned about the dangers of reading?

9. '... Dame, if hit is þi wille,
Boþ dernelike and stille,
Ich wille þe loue.'
'þat wold I don for non þing,
Bi houre Louerd, heuene-king,
þat ous is boue!'

(ANON., *Dame Sirith*)

Does the literature of this period demonstrate an appreciation for the will of women?

10. 'In Cokainge is met and drink
Wiþvte care, how, and swink;
þe met is trie, þe drink is clere,
To none, russin, and sopper.'

(ANON., *The Land of Cokayne*)

Discuss attitudes to consumption **and/or** nourishment in early medieval texts.

11. '... like syntax, phonology, morphology, and lexicon, beliefs about the status of a language—including its social meanings, its uses, and its speakers—have histories too. They, too, come about in particular sociolinguistic contexts for particular reasons.'

(TIM MACHAN)

To what extent are 'beliefs about the status of... language' articulated in the post-Conquest British Isles compatible with evidence from historical linguistics **and/or** medieval theories of language?

12. 'Fowr heaued-luuen me ifind i þis world: bitweone gode iferen; bitweone mon ant wummon; bitweone wif ant hire child; bitweone licome ant sawle.'

[Four main kinds of love are found in this world: between good friends; between man and woman; between a woman and her child; between body and soul.]

(ANON., *Ancrene Wisse*)

In what ways are early medieval texts attentive to the complexities of human love?

13. 'Ren ne poet 1'alme esvogler fors amur de akune temporele chose ki prent fin.'

[Nothing can blind the soul except love for some finite worldly thing.]

(ADAM OF EXETER)

Discuss the portrayal of love for 'finite worldly things' in the literature of this period.

14. DIABOLUS Li quell est ço?

Tunc erigat manum Adam et ostendat ei fructum vetitum, dicens:

ADAM Veez le tu la?

Çolui tres bien me devia.

[DEVIL Which one is that?

Then let Adam raise his hand and point out to him the forbidden fruit, saying:

ADAM Do you see that there?

That one has been forbidden to me.]

(ANON., *Ordo Repraesentationis Adae*)

Discuss the relationship between word and action in writing from this period.

15. 'N'esteit pas tenuz pur curteis
Escot ne Bretun ne Franceis,
Normant, Angevin ne Flamenc
Ne Burguinun ne Loherenc,
De ki que il tenist sun feu,
Des occident jesqu'a Muntgeu,
Ki ala curt Artur n'alout
E ki od lui ne sujurnout,
E ki n'en aveit vesteüre
E cunuissance e armeüre
A la guise que cil teneient
Ki a la curt Artur serveient.'

[No one - whether Scot, Briton, Frenchman, Norman, Angevin, Fleming, Burgundian or Lorrainer - whoever he held his fief from, from the West as far as Muntgieu, was accounted courtly if he did not go to Arthur's court and stay with him and wear the livery, device and armour in the fashion of those who served at that court.]

(WACE, *Roman de Brut*)

Discuss the ways in which the culture of the court is used by writers in the period to integrate people from different countries.

16. 'Aduertite,
omnes populi,
ridiculum
et audite, quomodo
Sueuum mulier
et ipse illam
defraudarat.'

[Listen, all you people, to an amusing story and hear, how a wife deceived a Swabian and how he deceived her in turn.]

(ANON., *Carmina Cantabrigiensia*)

In what ways do early medieval texts ridicule **and/or** amuse?

17. 'Si m'esguarda et mot ne dist,
Ne plus qu'une beste feïst;
Et je cuidai que il n'eüst
Reisun ne parler ne seüst.'

[He looked at me and spoke no word, no more than a beast would do; and I thought that he lacked Reason, and did not know how to speak.]

(CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES, *Yvain*)

How might the quotation above help us to understand the presentation of talking animals in the literature of this period?

18. 'Une aventure vus dirai
Dunt li Bretun firent un lai.
Laüstic ad nun, ceo m'est vis,
Si l'apelent en lur païs;
Ceo est russignol en franceis
E nightegale en dreit engleis.'

[I shall relate an adventure to you from which the Bretons composed a lay. *Laüstic* is its name, I believe, and that is what the Bretons call it in their land. In French the title is *Rossignol*, and Nightingale is the correct English word.]

(MARIE DE FRANCE, *Laüstic*)

Write an essay about the ways in which language and land are interconnected in texts from this period.

19. '... friendship exhibits a special token, in that among those who are joined to each other by the bond of friendship all things are felt to be pleasing, all things seem secure, sweet, and delightful.'

(AELRED OF RIEVAULX)

In what ways do writings of the period agree with this view, and in what ways do they challenge it?

20. 'Love is a certain inborn suffering from the sight of and excessive meditation upon the beauty of the opposite sex, which causes each one to wish above all things the embraces of the other and by common desire to carry out all of love's precepts in the other's embrace.'

(ANDREAS CAPELLANUS)

To what extent does writing of the period ratify this definition of love?

21. 'Forced away from where we dwelt
We go like cattle to the slaughter.
A slayer stands above us all.
We burn and die.'

(MEYER OF NORWICH)

How do texts in this period bear witness to the exclusion or persecution people?

22. 'Vacillantis trutine
libramine,
mens suspensa fluctuat
et estuat
in tumultus anxios
dum se vertit
et bipertit
motus in contrarios.'

[My mind hangs in the balance of the wavering scales; it is wave-tossed and boils over in troubled confusion as it twists and splits into opposing emotions.]

(ANON., *Vacillantis Trutine*)

Write on 'balance' in the literature of this period.

23. 'Swote beoð þeos songes; ah al is meidenes song unilich þeose, wið engles imeane, dream ouer alle þe dreames in heouene.'

['These songs are sweet; but a virgin's song is quite different from these, shared with angels, a melody above all the melodies in heaven.']

(HALI MEIÐHAD)

Discuss exaltation in writing of this period.

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